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## The Unesco Intangible Heritage As Input For The Development Of Rural Areas: A Theoretical Model For The Valorization Of The Mediterranean Diet

Tiziana Meduri<sup>a,\*</sup>, Daniele Campolo<sup>a</sup>, Immacolata Lorè<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Department of Heritage, Architecture and Urban Studies, Mediterranean University  
Salita Melissari 89124, Reggio Calabria, Italy*

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### Abstract

The study aims to identify guidelines for defining a model of cultural planning, oriented to the development of the city of Reggio Calabria as a metropolitan centre. It will focus specifically on the rural areas, to provide an integrated plan for the advancement of cultural identity. This study develops a theoretical operating model for the valorization of the Mediterranean diet. The methodology consists of a preliminary fact-finding investigation. The second step involves the selection of municipalities able to apply best practices in the area in order to promote the Mediterranean Diet.

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### 1. Introduction

In recent years the cultural heritage field has been affected by intense management and administrative change, at the same time the cause and effect of the different cultural policies that have been implemented over the last two decades, where particular attention was paid to the relationships between the development of cultural resources and

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\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +39-348-889-1225.  
E-mail address: [tiziana.meduri@unirc.it](mailto:tiziana.meduri@unirc.it)

local development. What we want to show in this paper is how to operate in the "strategic key" is the best way to give shape to a common vision to all the actors of the territory, building around it consensus and cooperation.

On one hand we think that new forms of programming are able to take practical action on the transformation and promote the area and on the other, develop shared rules and actions that are supported by the majority of citizens, through interactive, concerted and participatory planning. A proactive approach to this new reality and to these new responsibilities is a basic condition for increasing competitiveness, economic capacity and culture of cities. The objective is to find ways to valorization the existing assets in an intelligent and creative way, by investing resources on specific objectives. It is essential to bring together and gather participants of the discussions around tables for each operation, so as to share not only the strategy but also the formation and management.

## **2. The context: Reggio Calabria's metropolitan city**

The metropolitan city of Reggio Calabria, because of its geographical location in Calabria, which extends to the Mediterranean Sea and is interposed between the Ionian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea, has contributed to the overlap of cultures and identities; this place can be considered as a "big box" of architectural resources and traditional cultural elements, immersed in a unique natural environment that have taken on their own characteristics according to specific settlement dynamics. The province is also characterized by a high incidence of rural municipalities.

The comparison to the other realities of metropolitan cities in the Italian territory, shows that the productive agricultural sector of the Province of Reggio Calabria is almost a driving force for the local economy, showing an incidence of the total farm area of almost fifty percent of province, and an agricultural area among the largest nationwide. It is necessary to point out that the rural land underlies, in its complete meaning, more systems with a complex structure, consisting of a few components: natural resources, landscape and historical-cultural, and their relationships, generating economic phenomena affecting both the primary sector and those secondary and tertiary. In this context, according to some authors, agriculture can ensure the multifunctionality of the territory, acting as the ordering principle in the planning process. This vision means that the area will become the catalyst element, capable of enhancing local human resources, both tangible and intangible, into a common perspective of development and valorization of regional characteristics (Mollica, Sturiale, Calabrò and Della Spina, 2008).

The development of the metropolitan city road should therefore be guided by the search for a balance between the sectoral dimension, in the agricultural and territorial structure, given to land management and the socio-economic development of rural areas.

The first step would be to identify those places that can serve as attractors and activators of cultural development, in which to activate virtuous dynamic catalyst for social and economic development. For identification we choose to use the theme of the Mediterranean Diet, Heritage UNESCO since 2010, as a common thread that binds together the various territories of Reggio Calabria's Province. The choice of Mediterranean Diet is also due to the desire to promote a provincial healthy and sustainable food production system, according to the principles of the Diet itself. This highlights the spirit of conviviality and promotes the use of local and seasonal local produce, in particular by encouraging local networks to support public decisions to protect, promote and advertise the products of the Mediterranean. The recognition of social and economic growth of the Mediterranean diet, is also intended as a safeguard measure to defend against the progressive erosion of the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean people, and it fell within the province takes place against a historical glue of the territories and all cultural system (Cassalia, 2009).

## **3. The Mediterranean Diet and its social and cultural value**

*The Mediterranean Diet is much more than just food. It promotes social interaction, since the communal meal is the basis of social customs and festivities shared by a given community, and give rise to a considerable body of knowledge, songs, maxims, stories and legends. The Diet is grounded with respect to the territory and biodiversity, and ensures the conservation and development of traditional activities and crafts linked to fishing and farming in the Mediterranean communities* (Inscription 8.COM 8.10, 2013). It is for these reasons that, in November 2010, the Mediterranean Diet was recognized by UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. A heritage that combines the eating habits of the peoples of the Mediterranean Sea: Italy, Spain, Greece, Morocco, Portugal, Croatia

and Cyprus, established over the centuries and which goes beyond a simple list of foods and concerns the culture of life, social, traditional and agricultural practices. To these were subsequently added the regions of Egypt and Israel. *This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and gives them a sense of identity and continuity. All this promotes respect for cultural diversity and human creativity* (UNESCO Convention, 2003).

This important recognition, permits a wonderful and balanced example of natural and cultural integration that is the world excellence of the Mediterranean lifestyle. The greek word "diet" refers to the "lifestyle", that is, all the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, knowledge and cultural spaces with which the peoples of the Mediterranean have created and recreated through the centuries as a synthesis between the cultural, the social organization, the mythical and religious universe around eating. The Mediterranean diet is born from sanctifying idea of showing nutrition as a tradition that goes beyond simple nutrition. It also indicates a way of existing in the world, looking for a balance between the domestic sphere and territory, moderation and quality, including health and pleasure. Eating together produces cohesion and social order and the Mediterranean diet often finds its harmonies and its own historical integration around the shared knowledge of a food culture (Moro, 2014). The Mediterranean Diet is therefore characterized by a nutritional model remained constant over time and space, which becomes a marker of identity and consists mainly of olive oil, cereals, fresh or dried fruit, vegetables and a moderate amount of fish, dairy and meat. With many condiments and spices, all accompanied by wine or infusions, which always respect the traditions of each community. Understanding this eating pattern necessarily implies knowledge through its position of geographical, historical, economic and cultural features of the local sector to which it refers. Specifically, the Mediterranean Sea is geographical space it is the first great civilizations have developed and West state organizations, creating, despite the diversity, a fusion of cultures and histories, in which food becomes important cultural element that preserves the uniqueness of this area. This scenario places Calabria, a land crossed by different peoples: Romans to the Greeks, Byzantines to the Arabs, Normans, Aragonese. It is evident that the customs, traditions, religions of so many guests could only leave deep marks, contributing to an evolution, rich in other disciplines. From a social point of view, the Mediterranean Diet, becomes the symbol of conviviality, sharing with the holidays, religious or otherwise, and the promulgation of knowledge, songs, maxims, tales and legends associated with them. Women, in particular, play an indispensable role in the transmission of expertise, as well as the knowledge of rituals, traditional gestures and celebrations, and the preservation of food processing techniques.

Therefore, this diet must be considered as a system of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, local customs and cultures that, over the centuries, have maintained the exchange between socio-cultural environments, the religious aspects, legendary around the art of eating. The diet is also based on respect for the territory and biodiversity, and ensures the conservation and development of traditional activities and crafts linked to fishing and farming in the Mediterranean communities.

#### **4. The role of the Mediterranean Diet for the development of rural areas**

The consideration of the natural components of the Mediterranean diet means that nature and the landscape acquire a fundamental importance, not only from an aesthetic point of view, but also as a source of wealth and a place of traditional life systems. It also constitutes a cultural model that aims to achieve a better society between man and territory, between the community and its food resources. It therefore recognizes the need to retrieve the relationship with nature in a balanced and dynamic way, without making the landscape static and unchanged, but recovering its natural character of each area that collaborates to qualifying identity of the community that resides there. In this perspective, based on recognition of the features of the Mediterranean diet, we progress in the identification of precise territorial funds which can be associated, through both the rediscovery of traditional forms of land use and the typical products, a component of the diet itself. In this way it is realized biological diversity and the recovery of the traditions of the past, and it shapes the landscape of everyday life, which has as its background the cultural identity of the territory. According to the claims, it is clear that a strategic role is played by internal and/or rural areas, which have a remarkable economic-productive and territorial impact, remarkable about the whole context of Reggio Calabria's metropolitan city, as a pilot area chosen for the wording of the proposed valorization.

With the aim of creating opportunities in the area of socio-economic development, it is appropriate to focus on those areas, where development processes are more delicate, as constituting the areas still subject to phenomena of demographic depopulation, contributing negatively to land protection and preservation, and of all its components, and at the same time weaken the structure of the social and productive system. The integrated approach, cross-sectoral nature, the exploitation of local resources appears to be the best method to be implemented in order to guide the choices for internal areas: this approach, in fact, is based on awareness that the economic marginality of these areas is the result of several factors: *la concreta possibilità di fondare ipotesi di sviluppo sulle risorse locali non deriva dall'astratta valutazione di un modello di crescita "autocentrato", ... ma parte dalla opportunità di cogliere potenzialità imprenditoriali e professionalità emergenti, di assecondarle e qualificarle sul versante della promozione, della formazione, della assistenza tecnica e finanziaria, favorendone l'integrazione con il sistema e con gli operatori economici esterni, collocando il progetto di sviluppo all'interno di un modello di sviluppo strettamente dipendente dalle reali potenzialità fisiche* (Mollica, 1996).

With rural development it therefore no longer refers to a sectoral policy support but at a territorial support policy, meaning the territory in all its productive, environmental and cultural type events. We need to think of a development strategy based on the search for a new form of competitiveness that refers to all the activities of the surveyed area. Territorial competitiveness is the new element that should characterize the local development strategy. The local system must therefore be understood as the capacity that must possess the local partnership to develop a unique strategy for action where the various components of the territorial capital (physical resources, human and financial, culture and identity; the assets, the know - how and relations with the outside) contribute to the achievement of the development goals (Mollica, Calabrò and Della Spina, 2007; Sturiale, Calabrò and Della Spina, 2012).

## 5. The Commons's Register for the valorization of the Mediterranean Diet

The selection of interior areas suitable for the implementation of activities aimed at valorization of the Mediterranean Diet, through the dissemination of an approach that looks not only at the same nutritional properties of the food as to their implications in terms of organization and development of the territory, imply the need to define a methodology to follow. To this end it foresees the creation of a register of Commons for the establishment, throughout the territory of the metropolitan city of Reggio Calabria, a coordinated and dynamic rural areas with the valorization of their resources can activate safeguards, protection and promotion Mediterranean Diet and of all its many cultural aspects. In fact, the City selected must be able to structure a plan of development and heritage promotion, which revolves around what will be identified as its outstanding product. In parallel, this choice is justified by the desire to establish a cultural route around the study area. This is not, however, solely attributable to an orientation for tourism purposes but is aimed at structuring an integrated cultural plan with the different political realities and the various public needs, which, starting from the need to reactivate growth mechanisms of social, economic and sustainable land, use specific resources for local rediscovery. The integration of the plans, which will be structured by different participating municipalities, will enable you to plan organically the valorization of the elements of the Diet itself.

Everything has been thought to stimulate:

- the enhancement of local resources so that they lose their simple condition "field";
- the rediscovery or strengthening local identity and therefore the relationship between the common good and territorial identity;
- the boost to local products, handicrafts and local entrepreneurship;
- the development of the culture with the improvement of the runtime systems and connection with other territories;
- the preservation of the character of universality and unicity of the elements of the Mediterranean diet;
- the value of the asset "Mediterranean diet" with respect to its ability to generate social growth opportunities through integrated interventions of recovery and improvement of their knowledge and usability;
- the flow of tourists to the economic and social growth of the territory;
- the opening of the metropolitan city to the area of the Strait and beyond.

Among the fundamental objectives of the policies to be put to internal areas it is to ensure the presence of an active population in the territory, through actions that might hinder the progressive depopulation, the main cause of degradation of the places, and contributes to the development of conditions of convenience and attractiveness for the establishment of young, and therefore generate positive effects in terms of local development, maturation of the civil and economic and employment growth companies. It is also specified that the start of the development does not simply depend on the availability of resources, but by the effective management of interdependent growth factors, which otherwise, would remain latent and at risk of disappearing, as in the case of the endogenous resources of the internal areas. Another requirement is the participation, because it is only through a profound and serious and that can groped to involve economic and social stakeholders to invest on a common line and lay the foundations for a concrete development that makes a modern city of Reggio Calabria with an active role in the Mediterranean scenery (Calabrò, Della Spina, 2013).

## 6. The proposal for an operational model

The nomination initiative is reserved for those rural municipalities that meet specific conditions:

- are characterized by typical and valorization of a specific resource that belongs to the list of the features of the Mediterranean diet;
- have artistic, architectural, intangible and natural;
- demonstrate sensitivity towards the sustainability of the territory and providing high quality landscape and environment;
- want to pursue a route of rediscovery of the original production activities;
- have a historic center well preserved and not compromised by interventions and / or modifications;
- intend to pursue a path of local tourism offer improvement;
- have not elements that threaten the overall attractiveness of the destination (eg. Modern areas of negative visual impact, detractors elements integrity landscaping, etc.).

The presence of these conditions gives the municipality the opportunity to apply for inclusion in the Register; to this end, it shall establish a Valorization Plan, structured on three axes of development, respectively:

- *Built Environment System*, nature and environment, considering the use of the land in the traditional way;
- *Socio-Cultural System*, with reference to the complex system of uses, customs, traditions, featuring local identities;
- *Production System*, in relation to the products on consists.

The identification of these specific sectors stems from the consideration that the Mediterranean diet, in its complete meaning, possesses the intrinsic potential related to its products, intended as a result of a specific use of the ground combined with a exclusive lifestyle of each community capable of creating the identity of the population as a cultural landscape. Diet Food is therefore to be one tangible tool to bring out the identity of the territory with reaching of awareness of the link between the alimentary model of diet and the economic development of the territory; by indirect sensitization of the local community to the benefits from the consumption of typical foods of that model, followed by the subsequent discovery of many new cultivation dedicated to such products, and finally through the reduction of imports of such products grown.

To all this is added the growth of job opportunities resulting from the opening of new agricultural and food companies. However the role of promoter of economic development and social cohesion given to the element "Mediterranean diet" is not limited to the agri-food sector. The proposed operating model is in fact characterized by its multidisciplinary nature, or for its ability to involve different sectors, ranging from issues of "culture", to those of local history / culture and also to those of the socio-economic well connected to the productions local.

As for the cultural axis, the Mediterranean diet may be the *leit motiv* of cultural initiatives that intend to act as additional opportunities for economic and employment development for the territory, even for tourism, through the formulation of an attractive image of the area and an "experiential" unique route, which promotes a type of tourism linked to the theme of the Mediterranean diet.

The aspect of social cohesion, in relation to this axis, it is also connected to the direct participation of the local

population to cultural, educational and entertainment activities that will have to be provided. The multidisciplinary articulation is also designed to develop a new topic tourist exploitation of the territory, which is based on the "philosophy" of which carrier Mediterranean diet that combines synergistically different sectors (UNESCO declaration, 2014). Local development is meant to promote the project with the Mediterranean diet is closely associated with interventions of the different categories of persons involved: in addition to the partner entities that coordinate the execution of the various activities, the business community and the third sector will be one of active participants, offering their specific contribution at the technical level or simply informative. Local development in this case will result from the synergies implemented integrated the activity of the subjects that will join.

Each of these specific plans, moreover, must be accompanied by temporal forecast and budget, according to a programmatic approach and are subject to periodic checks and adjustments over time, in relation to the problems that emerge in the process of implementation (Calabrò, Della Spina and Tramontana, 2015).

**7. The selection procedure of the Valorization Plans**

For the qualitative verification of the Valorization Plans developed by several rural municipalities have a defined operational evaluation method, based on a multi-criteria evaluation, using as a tool the Check List (see fig. 1).

Each section of the plan presented will be structured in two parts, one cognitive and the other project. Through the checklist will be scanned for key components to define the quality of the plan itself. The following is the type of check list formulated, which are distinct for each of the planned enhancement components section.

The compilation of the plan by the municipality concerned, a section in which knowledge must emerge a careful analysis of the resources and features of the territory, and a part of the project will be proposed in which the main actions required to ensure objective general of valorization. The evaluation is however not instantaneous activity but a process that follows throughout the design process, and is therefore called the ex ante, ongoing and ex post. In these three phases we are prepared five types of evaluations for the verification of: consistency, sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency and feasibility.

Section of valorization of the Urban System and Natural and Environmental		Present	Absent	Suitable	Not suitable
COGNITIVE PART	Participatory mapping of the material heritage				
	Cataloging of the material heritage				
	Analysis of built: techniques and materials				
	Historic settlement evolution				
PROJECT PART	Code of practice for the recovery of the built heritage				
	Action program for the valorization of the historical heritage				
	Plan of action for the restoration of sustainable forms of accessibility through the recovery of old paths and intermunicipal routes				
	Plan of measures aimed at restoring convenience systems to residential, through the reuse of unused real estate assets				
Section of valorization of the Socio-Cultural System section		Present	Absent	Suitable	Not suitable
COGNITIVE PART	Participatory mapping of intangible heritage				
	Cataloging the elements of heritage				
	Activities affecting the heritage				
PROJECT PART	Plan activities for the discovery and exploitation of intangible heritage				
	Plan of training activities for the dissemination of the heritage				
	Integrated supply system for the complete use of the heritage				
Section of valorization of the Production System		Present	Absent	Suitable	Not suitable
COGNITIVE PART	Participatory mapping of productive areas				
	Cataloging of typical products				
	Existing production systems				
PROJECT PART	Product specification				
	Plan of measures for the improvement of productivity				
	Plan of measures for the improvement of the corporate system				

Fig. 1. Schematic of the components respectively for the compilation of the System Socio-Cultural of valorization's Section and Production System of valorization's Section. Developed by T. Meduri

The next step will be to establish a system of indicators in order to monitor the implementation of the plan, then be able to quantify the goals to be achieved and, therefore, to verify during and after the degree of achievement of objectives, as well as shown in chart (see Fig. 2).

CRITERIA	INDICATORS
Permanence of the identity character	Year of construction
	Type of construction / building
Conservation of historical buildings	Level of degradation
Conservation of the original urban morphology	Consistency of the built
Conservation and valorization of the existing cultural heritage	mq of recovered historical buildings
	mq of buildings for re-use activities
Conservation of ancient nature trails.	Tourist attraction index
Preservation and improvement of landscape quality	The population density
Strengthening of the housing system	Historical proportion used
CRITERIA	INDICATORS
Conservation and valorization of the elements that express the cultural identity of the area	Tourist attraction index
Conservation and valorization of intangible heritage	Tourist attraction index
Dissemination of knowledge of intangible heritage	Active Business Services
Presence of services for tourism, culture and free time	
CRITERIA	INDICATORS
Conservation / increase in rural areas	Utilized agricultural area extension
Preservation and promotion of local products	Production level
Valorization of the companies present	Companies active
Density of activities in cooperation and partnership	Occupancy rate
	Disposable income
Improving the attractiveness and economic competitiveness	Companies active

Fig. 2. Verification criteria and indicators..Developed by T. Meduri

## 8. Conclusions

Good planning effectively pursues its objectives if it determines positive cross-externalities on the basis of the combination of different actions and interventions, which must first be evaluated and estimated, and whether such externalities result in greater added value and / or a risk reduction the effects expected from individual actions (Bollino and Brancati, 2001). At the conclusion of this process of Valorization Plans selection, chosen for the valorization of the Mediterranean Diet, the metropolitan city area is available, the various local administrators, a number of effective and strategic tools to guide operational decisions in the heritage sector cultural integrating the different levels of development. The development network of all actions outlined in the territory enables innovative models of economic and tourist attraction for the use of the products of the Mediterranean diet within specific landscape contexts and historical-cultural.

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