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► **To cite this version:**

Emiliana Mangone. Territorial Development and Governance: Third Sector Organizations.. In International Conference of Territorial Intelligence, Huelva 2007., Oct 2007, Huelva, Spain. p 471-489. halshs-00516485

HAL Id: halshs-00516485

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00516485>

Submitted on 19 May 2014

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“Territorial Development and Governance: Third Sector Organizations”

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Abstract: The object of this paper is to go deeper into some aspects related to the relationships between the Third Sector and the Public sector, to underline the open problems related to the implementation of the Governance process and the effective participation of Third Sector organizations in this process, in planning and implementing actions for a territorial sustainable development. The problem about the Third Sector's development as a form of social capital of a specific territory is understanding if these Third Sector organizations are looking for a “role” or a “responsibility”, or if they are rather looking for an integration between these two aspects. The interaction between Public and Third Sector, which is an expression of participation, can't be considered an “arena of dispute”, serving to represent things to “say” and not to “do”, because of the gap between politics and the civil society; therefore, regardless of the representative level of different subjects, participation, as it is viewed today, should close with actions of external relevance supported by transparent procedures and visible positions, in which roles and responsibilities and the behaviour of all the actors involved are clear, in such a way that their behaviour will be considered “reliable” by the community.

1. INTRODUCTION

Whenever we talk about development, we usually make reference to economics, but, as is well known, the notion of development is not confined to economic paradigms at all: today when we speak about development we mean *sustainable development* seen as a development process aimed at providing basic environmental, social and economic services to all the members of a community, without impairing the environmental and social setting in which such services are provided.

Sustainability is a mode by which development forms that are not invasive or damaging for the social, environmental and cultural characteristics of a given territory are designed; more specifically, development policies cannot disregard the social capital of a territory, if they are to be sustainable.

Both theoretical thinking and the planning of government economic policies have been focussing on the issue of territorial development in Italy for quite a long time (Garofali, 1992); there are many different theories about local development, which gave rise to a highly complex debate, characterized by diversified and clashing approaches, on the need to change the rationale of some public policies, with special regard to the South of Italy, due to the often poor results obtained by national policies (Bagnasco, 1977; Fuà, Zacchia, 1983). In the light of these analyses, it is absolutely necessary to combine national policies with a bottom-up action for local development, in order to support the processes that make demand explicit and identify intervention priorities.

The issue of development is evolving today in the direction of *sustainable development*, commonly defined as the development process in which, despite the presence of many diversified interests, environmental, social and economic needs are coped with by matching and integrating three macro-objectives:

- *economic competitiveness*: to reach this aim the territory must emerge as a leader in certain specific economic activities: interventions need to be planned depending on the *availability* of some specific factors, such as specialized production, *know how* and human resources. In agreement with these principles, local governments must take action to enhance the assets of the territory and to steer economic development towards activities that have gained a competitive edge on the market;
- *environmental sustainability*: since economic aspects do not constitute the only strengths and weaknesses of a territory to be taken into account when talking about local development, we need to look also at other aspects related to citizens' everyday life, accessibility and physical and psychical liveability of spaces: the territory must be interpreted not only as the space where productive activities are carried out, but also as a space endowed with a peculiar "cultural identity";
- *social cohesion and balance*, since, as we have stressed above, a local development strategy must be aimed at raising the "feeling of belonging to a territory" by building and strengthening consensus and social balance: to this

end, the majority of social groups, that carry different material interests, demands and needs, must share values related to fundamental aspects of society in order to promote law and order, thus avoiding conflicts.

These three objectives must be put on the same footing: the last two objectives should not only be seen as obstacles in the way of territorial development; instead, they may act as remarkable boosters. Therefore a development strategy must be based on an “integrated logic” able to embrace in a non contradictory way the three objectives that determine territorial sustainable development. It is certainly difficult to get an overall view of these objectives because of resistance and overlappings, therefore local governments must act as political intermediaries, by involving all the stakeholders of territorial sustainable development: the process of sustainable development does not come without conflicts between objectives and stakeholders, which should induce us to define and share standards suitable for managing and overcoming such conflicts.

Within the present cultural and political context, participatory citizenship flows from those aspects of territorial government policies that allow citizens to take part in the life of government and/or to strengthen his sense of belonging to a community. The new modes of government based upon *governance* must not only highlight citizens’ actions as they convey their needs, but will also acknowledge the role that they and their associations (both formal and informal) can play as partners in a development process rather than as passive recipients of benefits and services. In the last decades the participatory process has been expanded to increase the number of subjects who somehow and for different reasons participate in the *decision-making* and planning process in a given territory. *Participatory citizenship* is both an objective of government policies in a territory and a methodological approach that characterizes decision-making and planning. So different modes of participatory citizenship can be envisaged from different and complementary perspectives: a) a mode that helps to develop and implement policies designed for preserving and protecting a *common good*; b) a mode enforcing the right to influence in a democratic manner decision-making processes affecting individual and collective life in a territory; c) a mode that is shaped by the right to be included, to be assigned duties and responsibilities in daily life at the local level, as participation begins to take place in each individual’s daily life: everyday life is the place of our *being there* (Jedlowski, Leccardi, 2003).

The development of a territory cannot neglect the dynamics of identity and belonging that spring from the practice of *participatory citizenship* which is embodied by a partnership model: «in fact it requires an agreement based upon social understanding of the complementary role of institutions and citizens in building plans. The processes that give rise to partnership can be seen as procedures of dialogue-oriented or deliberative democracy: procedures that by the term “democracy” mean the substantial equality of participants *regardless of* the role and status of individual actors, while by the term “deliberative” they mean the commitment to comparing one’s own reasons with those of other people and, if necessary, to change their essence and contents on the basis of more compelling arguments» (Antoniacomì *et al.*, 2002: 52). *Participatory citizenship*, through the protection of rights and the fulfilment of duties, contributes to the conservation, the enhancement and the production of common goods and to the consolidation of the sense of

belonging and identity, turning the citizens into main actors together with the territory as a whole.

The cultural processes described above confirm and support the need to launch initiatives and mobilize resources intended for participatory citizenship, via the increasingly widespread introduction of planning and programming procedures, along with joint management of interventions aimed at territorial development wherever it is possible. Such process is based upon the principle of subsidiarity, that must be seen as a support to widely shared responsibilities and not as a lack of will on the part of the government to shoulder its own responsibility connected to fostering territorial development and citizens' welfare.

At this point there is a need to clarify the principle of subsidiarity: its etymon takes us back to the Latin word *subsidiu(m)* which belonged, to be precise, to the military terminology and stood for the reserves. The word could already be found in ancient Greece (in Plato and Aristotle), but was mostly used with reference to the social sphere by the Church social doctrine. In other words, we might say that the principle of subsidiarity «forbids the state to take action whenever citizens or social aggregations (families, associations, etc.) can act on their own freely and autonomously with democracy and responsibility. Whenever individuals or groups are not able to act, institutions must intervene in a subsidiary manner, but their intervention will have to be temporary inasmuch as it must tend to restore conditions that are conducive to a renewed autonomous action by individual or collective subjects» (Mangone, 2005: 42).

Utilizing subsidiarity as the main governing principle of the new local development policies demands as a prerequisite that municipalities turn themselves into the promoters of people's growth as active subjects and productive members of society. Not only will the new development policies have to strengthen and guarantee the "participatory citizenship" of all the community's members first by taking stock of all their needs, but then they must also understand the role they can play as active partners rather than as passive recipients of benefits and services.

A correct application of vertical subsidiarity (among public agencies) and of horizontal subsidiarity (between public agencies and the civil society seen as a whole made up of both individual and collective subjects) preserves and enhances the role of the territory, on the one hand when it acts as a guarantor for the principles of solidarity among all citizens and, on the other hand, when it monitors and checks adequately the whole range of offers, by assuring fairness and a seamless network of interventions and services covering the whole territory. Hence the role of local government will have to be built upon the management of different subjects, with specific and special interests, interplaying with territorial needs and demand, for the purpose of carving out a comprehensive sustainable development policy.

But what is the local dimension that may allow an adequate implementation of development policies in the territory? Is it possible to reach a single definition of the local that allows a perception shared by all disciplines taking part in territorial development planning?

Certainly it is not possible anymore to equate the local with the administrative boundaries of a territory, especially after the progress of the «process of European integration, that

appears or is increasingly perceived as the place at which two structures intersect: a formal one, resulting from the vertical and horizontal relations among institutional subjects, that is legitimate but slow in acting, and an informal and spontaneous one, made up of open relations networks that offers the advantage of swiftness and flexibility, but is limited by absence or lack of legitimacy. So recognizing each other beyond the boundaries means, for those who choose to venture onto the path of shared administration, to approach complex relations that on the one hand, at the informal level, posit the existence of a community of destiny that can be actively involved in new opportunities for movement and reciprocity, and on the other hand reaffirm the conditions resulting from the legitimate administrative territorial jurisdiction, its allocating power, the distribution of goods, the positioning of its government and representative powers» (Mangone, 2001: 26).

The debate is still open to discussion; nevertheless, from the various stances some common aspects start to emerge that seem useful for us to make a few points:

- the identification of the local dimension will be crucial for the future community coalitions in order to devise shared development strategies;
- the local dimension actually represents the geographic encoding of the social, cultural and economic relations that connect neighbouring communities;
- the local dimension means, although this aspect is threatened by globalization processes, self-determination of territories; but government bodies often fail to consider the right to self-determination;
- the definition of the local dimension and of alliances for development must, together with all their contents, be implemented through agreement processes that must involve all the institutional actors and those who are not present in a given territory.

From the elements stressed above it follows that a true “local dimension” fit for promotion, planning and implementation of development interventions must be a “median dimension”: a Municipality is usually too small, except for the cities, for it to be able to perform all these functions, whereas a Province coordinates many territories different from each other, Therefore it cannot represent their actual peculiarities and demands. So the “median dimension” stands in between the Municipality and the Province. Actually, when we talk local this term does not certainly identify a single municipality, let alone a province, but rather a territory usually encompassing neighbouring municipalities that can be considered as aggregated in a whole not only because of their geographical proximity but also and mostly because of the characteristics and resources they share: a logic of territorial aggregation occasionally that meets criteria of economic, social, cultural or environmental homogeneity.

In actual reality the local-global dichotomy melts into what Robertson (1992) called *glocalization*, or what Ammaturo (2004) calls *localization* and *relocalization*, or what most people call *glocal*: that is to say, the process by which a local community tries to ward off homologation and globalization, but at the same time does not see globalization as

something that thwarts specificity at particular places or as a totally negative process, but rather as something that allows it to remain open to the global system.

Therefore *Glocalization* results from the application of a *de-hierarchizing* logic that «inspires the globalization processes and gives back to local territories the major role denied to them by the system balance hinged on the “centre/periphery” dichotomy. Glocalization takes place as the loss of efficacy by that intermediate level in between *supra-national instances* and *regional instances* occupied by the *nation state*. In terms of the system balance, the role played by the centre weakens, while peripheries are given (or take on their own initiative) a new status as “local” that changes deeply their action patterns. The shift of a territory from the status of “periphery” to that of “local” is not a mere terminology issue; in fact a breakthrough occurs through which the territory gains (or regains) an *identity* and claims it vis-à-vis other actors (political, economic, territorial, institutional)» (Magnier, Russo, 2002: 129-130). So a new identity is claimed by the territory that leads to an “appropriation of identity by the territory” (Badie, 1995): the local culture and population assert themselves as protagonists, the territory has the autonomous capacity to select intervention strategies and to implement them directly by mobilizing all the resources of the territory itself, in order to build development strategies whose benefits accrue to that area only (expansive glocalism)⁴⁴.

“Expansive glocalism” is certainly favoured by those countries in which laissez-faire and deregulation policies have already reached their maturity, but in Italy, where this has not yet happened, territories can only become main actors by enforcing the subsidiarity principle.

In the light of what we have argued above, we acknowledge that development processes, as active and integrated plan making, hold a strategic value within the more complex framework of global sustainable development, in which quite a number of problems in terms of relation and integration between the public sector and the social parties do arise.

2. OPEN PROBLEMS REGARDING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND THIRD SECTOR

Development policies must try to make the most of territorial resources, by directly choosing the most suitable strategies and the management of their output: the territory must behave like a private actor within a market-driven logic, becoming a competitive actor able to grasp the best opportunities and the most adequate resources, without impairing local characteristics and peculiarities. In line with this logic, local government bodies must play a key role as “helmsmen” steering development, placing the emphasis on

⁴⁴ We may distinguish several “glocalisms”, but in the case of the arguments related to development two forms of localism have been identified: a “defensive” one (Mander, Goldsmith, 1996) and an “expansive” one (Ohmae, 1995). The former was born to preserve the specific features of the territory that are threatened economically, socially and also demographically by the globalization processes: the territory erects a sort of protection barrier; instead the latter mobilizes the specifics of the territory as they are seen as fundamental assets, and it is precisely from them that the territory can start to design those development strategies whose benefits accrue to that area only.

growth and enhancement of some aspects that are crucial for effective implementation of interventions (Mangone, 2001):

- *interventions integration and coordination*: territorial government bodies must carry out the concerted planning of interventions and resources too, in compliance with principles of coordination and integration of actions affecting different areas (social, cultural, economic, etc.);
- *networking* through the development of operative links (supported by fora for the exchange of views and thoughts on the one hand, and common memoranda of agreement and action plans on the other hand) with the different territorial organizations (both institutional and non institutional) that carry out activities aimed at territorial development;
- *stimulating role*: government agencies must urge to action, especially where research activities probing into the transformations of reality emerge, be they conducted in or out of the territory;
- *advocacy and consciousness-raising activities*: it is necessary to build public and collective support (sharing) around action and intervention plans, often accompanied by territorial awareness and reviving campaigns.

The public government role will be performed by putting together different subjects holding specific and particular interests that interplay with the needs and demand for the development of the territory, in pursuit of a comprehensive *community policy*. Such policy will be realized through the enhancement of the community as a resource and as a representation of the territory: starting up a community work means not only putting the citizen in touch with both formal and informal networks that operate in the territory, but also supporting all those solidarity and reciprocity networks that spontaneously arise in a community. «Promoting a close cooperation between formal and informal networks (networking) is a very difficult undertaking, but community policy is characterized precisely by a new role and concept of the “public”, and in particular of the Local Body, which is increasingly oriented towards an activity performed by the coordination and mobilization of subjects in the community, in the civil society, in social formations, through extended action less bound by the government authority» (Mangone, 2001: 33).

New local development paths cannot be paved unless the different decision-making and institutional levels back up the entities springing from the territory. In other words, this is a *bottom-up concerted* development pattern, centred on territorial regeneration and enhancement of available human and social resources. In the last decades, development patterns originating from within the territory (endogenous development) have come to the fore, drawing attention by politics and economics to bottom-up concerted development that often takes place spontaneously and is regulated by *best practices*, rather than by standardized norms, moulded by local territorial reality. So concerted development takes on a less “centralized” dimension in favour of a range of tools more connected to experience, culture, identity of individual places and aimed at creating *opportunities* and *synergies* rather than constraints and norms. The positive outcomes of many concerted processes are visible: they created a cooperative climate conducive to an effective

management of the European community, national and regional intervention tools and enhanced the role of local and social realities in implementing regional policies.

It is therefore necessary to put in place a territorial governance method aimed at a constant utilization and consolidation of social capital (even though such methodology may seem exhausting and inconclusive) as this will ensure a relative effectiveness not only in case a decision must be made, but also, above all when the processes and interventions to be implemented require a strong interaction among different social and/or territorial actors. Development processes and their peculiarities involve a multiplicity of private and public, collective and individual subjects: such specific aspects require instruments fit for systematic concerted efforts and institutional, economic and social partnership. Hence the priority given to instruments for active citizenship that go along with negotiated planning, which, as is well known, is the regulation agreed upon by public subjects or between the public subject involved and the public and private party or the parties interested in implementing different interventions connected to a single development aim, that require an overall evaluation of specific activities.

Any reasoning about development cannot disregard the value of cohesion among different viewpoints and interests, and integration among different instruments and behaviours. Therefore renewed commitment and skill and, above all, the will of subjects involved in development processes not to dodge the responsibility that these entail for local representatives and communities.

In development dynamics resources are crucial; there is no doubt that by this word we do not make exclusive reference to financial resources, but we also indicate territorial capacities and intelligence that must be preserved, promoted and accumulated: to this end it is necessary to define structural and service actions to direct and channel resources, thus matching demand with supply in the territory, with a view to increasing the number of subjects who possess all the necessary information and have a chance to profit from present and future opportunities.

Local development policies cannot leave out interaction and widespread understanding among the different actors involved in the development process; this axiom implies the need to cooperate at the territorial level, and this operation often brings about a cultural “leap forward” that is matched by some specific changes in collective behaviours, such as: a greater capacity for dialogue in subjects belonging to the same context and the decreased number of micro-conflictual initiatives. It follows from all this that those in charge of management must get ready to take up future challenges by setting up new organizational structures and, with respect to that, cooperation constitutes the prime tool for triggering the development process effectively.

From this perspective, the tools of participatory citizenship and negotiated planning allow to implement the subsidiarity principle more effectively, and consequently to strengthen stable forms of partnership between local government and social parties, taking into account realistic feasibility elements that can gear cooperation work to objectives that are actually important. Strong participation and cooperation must be fuelled not only at the institutional level; such modes of action must not be seen only as new instruments for

legitimizing representation, but also and mainly as preconditions for a new start in local development policies that takes its moves from the territory.

However, the administrative decentralization process in Italy, active since decades, hasn't defined yet the role of the territories, related to citizens' rights/duties, to the relationship between central and local Governments, and between local governments and social components. The approbation of recent laws represented a step more towards the clarification of the role of both institutional local bodies and non institutional Third Sector bodies⁴⁵, regarding an idea of sustainable territorial development that is centred upon that field of action ensuring security and welfare for society as a whole. This basic tenet becomes stronger by the end of the last century, when «the idea of a new vision of composition and combination of subjects concurring in the planning and management of activities aimed at citizens' welfare starts to gain momentum. That is how the role of service cooperation in the processes reforming welfare public systems starts to be discovered» (Donati, 1996: 147).

As stated in my previous essay, «the introduction of complexity in the planning and in the decision-making process acted in a way that the recent generation of advanced planning tools reflect a weak rationality, and assume a dimension of complexity and incertitude, including plural interests as values to protect and opportunity to set common objectives. In Public Administrations there's an evolution from the dimension of *government*, as unilateral objectives definition, to the dimension of *governance*, as interests' participated regulation, with the *consensus building* as essential to the programmatic process» (Mangone, 2001: 30-31).

There isn't yet a common use or definition for *governance*, as for many other words which refer to “new generation” methodologies of negotiation and cooperation. This is because Italian language, as the majority of other languages, doesn't distinguish between government activity (*governance*) and Government as institution (*government*), such Anglophone countries do. In Italian, *governance* indicates the government process, even if the meaning is different from the Anglo-Saxon one. The word *governance* indicates the step from programming systems based on hierarchical models and *policy making* direction, to programming systems based on the principle of subsidiarity (vertical and horizontal) and cooperation between public and private sector (Mayntz, 1999).

For the sake of brevity, we cannot present all the stances that emerged and are still emerging on this issue, so we will try to propose a synthesis of the concept of *governance* with the help of a few authors. The first synthesis defines *governance* as «the sum total of the multiple ways in which individuals and public and private institutions deal with their

⁴⁵ As Third Sector, without entering in the debate on its definition, we generally mean «a set of private *organizations*, acting for social and collective needs, which create profit without distributing it between the members, or produce an income without having disposal on it, because it's used for statutory purposes» (Lazzarini, 2003: 43). Therefore the Third Sector includes «all *private organizations* which are different from commercial companies because *they lack of profit purpose*. They better have social or cultural aims [...] They spread from cultural associations “sons” of social centers to big banking foundation, parochial groups and recovery centers for drug addicts etc.» (Zanini, Fadini, 2001: 313).

common problems. It is a continuous process by which different or conflicting interests can be harmonized through cooperative action. The system of *governance* includes formal institutions and informal initiatives, resulting from the population's decisions or an agreement between them and the institutions for the purpose of a better management of common interests [...] viewed as an innovative mode of policy making implementation, in which some elements are given priority: «the decision-making process is the outcome of interaction among different subjects sharing government responsibilities with the same intensity; decisions are made by the same subjects having direct responsibility in the implementation phase; the subjects concerned in the policy making process fully participate in it» (Moro, 1998: 31-32). A recent interpretation of the concept, based upon a new awareness of citizenship, views *governance* as «a form of *partnership* between public administration and the social subjects seen as citizens, aimed at co-producing social policies. By this approach, the citizen cannot be reduced to a client whose scope for action is limited to free choice», he can and must have something to say, in fact he has «also the right to ask for greater *fairness* in the terms of purchase, and also he claims to be listened to [...] That is why the *partnership* model based on citizenship also copes with the need for humanized and personalized social services considered as *ad personam* services and for a stronger position of the citizen as an active actor in public life following the *empowerment* logic. From this standpoint, *governance* becomes mostly an opportunity to rethink the *Welfare State* from the angle of community participation in concerted planning processes of social services» (Giarelli, 2002: 23).

In other words, «territorial governance presents the challenge of seeing that “territorial engineering” (coordination of plans, programmes and projects in the territori) takes advantage of and effectively stimulates the “organisational capacity of the whole of the social organisation” in order to manage to provide appropriate answers to the democratically expressed needs of the citizens» (Amiotte-Suchet, Miedes Ugarte, Redondo Toronjo 2007: 5-6).

Therefore a new era has come for territorial development policies, with the advent of new planning modes that have forced the public and the social private to co-programming and co-planning⁴⁶ which includes an innovation on policies' contents and an indication of new operational models of participation and organization to be adopted by local bodies in the elaboration of such policies.

Anyway, there's a paradox in participation: citizens can't participate if they aren't represented in an official organization, and in particular in an organizations of the so-called Third Sector who are the link between citizens and Public sector.

This kind of organizations stand as links in the chain binding the citizen to public institutions (the State and local administrations in general) but in terms of service production dynamics they come between the Market and the State. On the other hand that part of the third sector or co-sector (Cipolla, 2002) that along with volunteer work includes

⁴⁶ “Co” must be understood as «contribution that reinforces action, that brings to completion. Existing that happens simultaneously and accepts any contrast [...] common work that is tantamount to help, integration, availability, complementarity, collaboration» Cipolla, 1997: 401 e ss, I vol).

paid work progressively takes up the middle position in a system made up of two poles: the formal one, the State (institutions in general) and the Market, and the informal one, volunteering and primary networks⁴⁷ (Di Nicola, 1986; 1998; Donati, 2003; Donati and Colozzi, 2004). The third sector appears to be «a multi-dimensional crossroads, qualified to provide co-relational services with external solidarity, able to be empathic in its effort to reduce inequality, well trained from the professional and organizational viewpoint, efficiently oriented to targets (social balance), legitimized, despite the asymmetrical difference, by trust, sharing, adhesion (and not out of love) in the place of human affection (primary networks), for law in the place of procedure correctness (local bodies), for profit in the place of the right motivation (pro-social private)» (Cipolla, 2002: 70-71).

The relationship between Public and Third Sector is still changing: the principle of subsidiarity and new forms of solidarity in the society (Ammaturo, 2004) consequently cause that the Public sector adopt a control function, assuring the interaction between individual freedoms and general guarantees, and increasing stakeholders involved in the decisional process on welfare objectives. Because of this feature peculiar to Italy, the relation between the Third Sector and public institutions does not follow any model: «it does not fall into the liberal model due to the scarce independence of non-profit organizations in our country; it is not in line with the social democratic model because of the weak regulation enforced by the state; finally, it does not follow the corporative model owing to the lack of common values and to the poor coordination among sectors. The Italian case seems to be characterized only by contradictory elements: a strong functional interdependence in the absence of an effective coordination; a highly autonomous management in non-profit organizations in the absence of a final piece of legislation that separates them from the state sphere and prevents them from being affected by commercial interests; the tendency to delegate public liabilities in a polity characterized by patronage systems and particularism» (Ranci, 1999: 246).

The problem concerns the type of representativeness that Third Sector organizations, guided by an instrumental rationality, can guarantee to the collectivity. Can the collective interest be represented and guaranteed by organizations whose aim is to increase their competitiveness to survive in a territory with an insufficient application of the principle of subsidiarity and insufficient actions of *governance*?

3. THIRD SECTOR, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

The Third Sector found a space for the autonomous initiative to protect its own interests and collectivity's ones related to welfare and development, moreover after the crisis of political parties.

The Third Sector, in general, has the task to produce a new model of sociality orientated to the creation of “relational goods” characterized by trust and reciprocity (Pasquinelli, 1998:

⁴⁷ *Integration* among different worlds (public/private, social/health care, bodies/practitioners, etc.) becomes necessary for the purpose of building a real system network that puts together the formal and the informal, thus obtaining through a single methodology a social planning addressed to those citizens who do need it.

27). However, while these functions are “latent” (Merton, 1968), those concerning the relations with the Public sector are “manifest”:

- the first one is *service providing*, to increase the competition in a double direction: between Third Sector *organisations*, and between them and privates. In order to face competition, Third Sector organizations must specialize, by devising cutting-edge communication and marketing strategies to preserve their image and activity (Martelli, 2006), and must clearly identify the target for their services;
- the second one is related to *rights protection and denunciation* (in the sense to make individual problems collective ones) to change the political agenda, with the risk to cause a site-specific territorial defense: on the one hand «action taken by advocacy groups can contribute to modify the political agenda, to denounce specific situations, to voice the problems of those who have no say. The role they have come to play- at times unsuccessfully of course – is that of translating into public discourse issues and demands which would otherwise remain hidden between the folds of civil society [...] this is pushed two main drives: progressive specialization of objectives and convergence of energies». But on the other hand such positioning may result in particularism; in fact, if «the particularist logic prevails, so that the organization does nothing but protecting its own territory (be it a social problem, or a certain population group or other), by an approach that clearly separates one’s own (rights that must be preserved and claimed) from the other (the rest of society), a few battles might be won, but no progress towards a greater solidarity would be made in our society» (Pasquinelli, 1998: 28-29);
- the last function is to promote *and produce new employment*: the Third Sector is a container and a promoter of “social capital”, that is to say «networks of reliable and cooperative relations that support the full human development of individuals and social groups by creating the common public space increasingly needed by a multicultural society» (Donati, Colozzi, 2006: 12) and represents an important potential of employment. Delors’ White Paper⁴⁸ pointed to the Third Sector as one of the main areas of job creation which should have created several million new jobs by the end of the last century. Without tackling economic matters, we have to underline the risk that the “occupational growth” becomes an aim itself to let such organizations survive in the “market”. In other words the risk inherent in the present Italian situation is that the legitimation of the Third Sector’s work for territorial development starting from the social is motivated mainly by its

⁴⁸ *Delors’ White Paper* (1993) concerning growth, competitiveness and employment was the first step towards fostering true cooperation among European countries. In fact, on the basis of this report, the European Council at Essen identified five key objectives that would have been pursued by member states in the following years: developing human resources by means of vocational training; supporting productive investments with moderate wage policies; improving the effectiveness of labour market institutions; identifying new employment resources through local initiatives and promoting access to the labour market for some specific categories, such as young people, the long term unemployed and women.

capacity to create jobs, rather than by the provision of effective services, permeated with humanity and responsive to the territory and community demand.

This new model to govern and manage the territory in order to realize a sustainable process of local development can be put into effect only through a mobilization of social resources, relations and opportunities: in other words the effectiveness of territorial development policies depends on and needs the *social capital* of such territory.

The term *social capital* was introduced by Loury (1977; 1987) who meant by it all the resources existing within family relations and the community social organization that come to be useful for individuals' development- even Bourdieu (1979) saw it from this perspective. Despite that, we should stress that we owe the most important contribution to the definition of the concept of social capital to Coleman (2005), who argues that it «is created when relations among people change in ways that facilitate action» and it is not tangible «as it is incorporated into *relations* among people» (Ibidem: 390). Such relations can be seen as forms of capital because like other capitals they produce material and symbolical value; in fact, the value of social capital is inherent in the fact that it «identifies certain aspects of the social structure depending on its function [...] The function identified by the concept of “social capital” is the value that these aspects of the social structure hold for actors, being resources that they can use to achieve their interests» (Ibidem: 391).

In the last decades analyses of territorial economic development have relied mainly on the explanation based upon the concept of social capital; this is due to the fact that such concept has no clear-cut boundaries, so to spell it out we will refer to Mutti who argues that «social capital, more precisely, is made up of trust relations (strong and weak, extended and interconnected in many ways) apt to give participants the ability to recognize and understand each other, to exchange information, to help each other and to cooperate for common purposes. Such formal and informal reciprocity relations are anyhow regulated by norms that define the form, contents and boundaries of exchanges in a more or less flexible way, and are made effective by sanctions for the individual that are either inner or outer. This relations network is the intentional or unintentional product of social investment strategies oriented towards the establishment and reproduction of social relations that can be used over time, namely lasting and useful relations able to yield material and symbolical profits. Such relations improve the capacity for action of the individual and collective actor and, if extended enough, even the social system's capacity for action» (Mutti, 1998: 13).

The concept of social capital disproves the view according to which it is the market that creates stable relations in the territory; according to Granovetter (1973; 1974; 1987; 1992) the opposite is true: stable relations in the territory determine market structures with their peculiarities. Social capital inherently contains a view of development that is not confined to economic aspects, but is linked to the degree of *civiness* (Putnam, 1992) and community freedom and above all to adopting correct behaviours based on trust (Gambetta, 1990; Fukuyama, 1995), which are all elements that refer to belonging and reciprocity. In development processes social capital, by involving directly social actors, elicits leadership in the territory by means of actions that lead to share the local

development path towards a common objective. Social capital actually appears to be a “multiplier of the possible”, it has a meaning only provided that «it is aimed at ‘multiplying’ its own potential, that is at producing and reproducing itself. We may state that social capital has a meaning when it can differentiate endlessly and continuously from the objectives it pursues and reaches. Hence it holds a value only when it moves (dynamically) in the ceaseless search of well-being in a “conscience” perspective [...] We may briefly point out that the social, value-related, cultural, relational component can represent the multiplier of well-being without which any piece of work, structure, service and so on can be sterile or can be perceived as unimportant. Within this perspective, doing as conscience tells us, feeling first of all part and parcel of a process (in progress), becomes an essential component» (Petricciolla, 2002: 15).

The territory is not something abstract, it's a place of production: it assumes its own identity through the social capital built thanks also to Third Sector organizations, which constitute a new reciprocity between individuals and their territory. Social capital undoubtedly lies at the core of territorial development processes, as it is the main pillar supporting an adequate local development strategy that not only exploits resources, but above all builds and increases them, enhances and accumulates them in order to take account of social and territorial peculiarities in the implementation of local development planning, even to prevent huge migration flows, such as those we are witnessing in some geographical areas, which in the long run would undermine the development process itself. As a matter of fact, being social capital based upon relations, migration of a certain number of actors from a given territory diminishes the potential of that territory.

The social capital for its intangibility and it is generating of collective benefits it hasn't to be considered a property of actors, but it has to be considered as a “public good” (Coleman, 1990) and therefore it must be protected as such: in order to build up social capital instead of wasting it one path only must be followed to strengthen social ties through trust and empowerment; this is the only way in which even territories that may seem, at a superficial glance, “hopeless” would become productive locations and producers themselves of development processes allowing the community to survive and to improve its own quality of life.

The reform of Italian *welfare*, including a new idea of citizenship (Colozzi, 2002), represents both a development tool and a great bond: if Third Sector organizations are responsible with public institutions of social needs' satisfaction, they also risk to be involved in management and bureaucratic responsibilities, going away from their general function of creating new forms of sociality, solidarity and social capital.

Therefore, a definition of territorial development policies needs a great interaction between public and private, and a large understanding between all components involved in the *decision making* process. Shared responsibilities, planning and managing together are necessary but not sufficient to make actions really effective. The cooperation between Public and Third Sector, and between Third Sector organizations (Manfredi, 2003a; 2003b) needs a cultural “revolution”, including changes in collective behaviours, and a better dialogue between actors involved in the same context without micro-conflicts (De Conno, 2004). This means that social actors have to face the future through new organization

models focusing on two key factors: *innovation* and *experimentation*. The first one is based on three strategic factors (Manfredi, 2003a): capacity of *involvement* in the surrounding environment; orientation to internal and external interests; ability to create relationships for a strong and long-lasting collaboration. On the other hand, the *experimentation* has to build new development processes, such as activities, projects and actions with a high management flexibility and a correspondence of programmes to the real needs of the citizens, in order to guarantee the creation of a new sociality and solidarity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The main question about Third Sector as expression of the social capital of a territory is to understand if such organizations are looking for a “role” or a “responsibility”, or an integration between both aspects.

Problems in the interaction between public and private and the peculiarities themselves, let us say that Third Sector is looking for an executive role, more than a responsibility one: the participation doesn't happen in *governance* processes, but in the phase of project and realization of events, not only for a lack of a common based orientation, but also because these organizations couldn't find and value two important resources: *trust*, that can be defined as «the actor's expectation for positive experience, built under conditions of uncertainty, but in the presence of a cognitive and/or emotional burden that allows to go beyond the threshold of mere hope» (Mutti, 1994) and *knowledge*, seen as «the whole made up of meanings and interpretations worked out and assigned to data and information grasped by the individual within a given context [...] “Knowing” does not mean to record mechanically information coming from the outside, but rather reorganize, rework out, represent and interpret such information [...] knowledge issues from a constructive process, meaning that the individual works out knowledge in an *active* way. That is to say he produces knowledge, as he is able to learn and to work out acquired information, instead of internalizing it passively, as if his mind were a tabula rasa» (Livolsi, 2004: 67 e ss.)

Such a status is due to lack of *involvement* in the setting he lives in, which would have allowed instead «the establishment and intensification of relationships with the main supporters of social and institutional change, with those “social actors”, who are able to provide innovative contributions in the form of new organizational and behavioural dynamics» (Manfredi, 2003a: 19).

The risk we face is that Third Sector organizations orient themselves towards a logic of “appropriation” (of spaces and positions) covered by solidarity and participation matters.

The problems discussed can be synthesized as follows: a) lack of inter-organizational cooperation and common action with many micro-conflictual situations; b) excessive search of a role focused on the organizations' surviving; c) Scanty use and improving of the trust and knowledge resources.

It is clear that when we talk about the Third Sector we do not refer to it as a negative element in the chain of *governance* or focus only on the negative aspects that characterize it, on the contrary we think that the Third Sector is potentially the social party that can still

contribute a lot to building a new sociality and new participatory forms conducive to *governance* processes. In fact, it has not yet taken the lead as a promoter and actor of change the way it could. While in the next few years we will witness highly competitive dynamics because of the progressive growth of social enterprises, the Third Sector needs to adopt a strategy to occupy centre stage within *governance* and subsidiarity principle implementation processes. But in order for them to achieve this aim, the Third Sector organizations must take a direction that points to:

- the shift from “appropriation logic” to “solidarity logic”, being fully aware of the limitations of an individual action fighting against the feelings of insecurity and fear elicited by contemporary society, thus giving rise to new cooperation and social solidarity forms, viewed as joint and organized risk offsetting (Zoll, 2000);
- the integration between the role that Third Sector organizations have already been able to design for themselves, and the responsibility they have as a form of expression of collective needs that can have an impact, being a social force, upon the political agenda and the new alliances based on autonomous subjectivities and specific parties (public and Third Sector) at play on the political and social level;
- enhancement of knowledge and trust as resources that allow a full and widespread involvement with the surrounding environment, starting from the stimulus provided by the latter to the improvement of individual organizational and collective knowledge, to deeper trust relations and above all to the increment of social capital.

Interactions between Public and Third Sector, which are expression of participation, can't simply become an “arena for fighting”, used to “say” and not to decide or “do”, because the trust relationship between politicians (institutional *decision makers*) and civil society is eroded. Therefore the participation has to be concluded with external orientated action, with transparent procedures and visible positions, in which it's clear the actors' role, responsibilities and behaviour, in order to let them considered “reliable” by the collectivity.

The challenge Third Sector has to face is to grant the plural voice of citizens who want to express their needs in the political arenas, where they can't be directly considered because under or bad represented or deprived of a relationship based on trust with their representatives. Third Sector organizations have not only to play a role in providing services, but also to undertake action of promotion and qualification of activities aiming to protect *common goods*⁴⁹ and collective rights.

⁴⁹ The “common good” is different from “public good”: the first one is related to individuals as members of a State and can be pursued on a base of solidarity; the second one is related to the collectivity. The concept of “common good” has a catholic origin and it's typical of the Church social doctrine, such as the subsidiarity as solidarity cooperation; it was elaborated for rural and religious communities, but it's used today with reference to economic theories related to *new contractualism*: this term includes each good generating undivided advantages for the collectivity, trying a social integration based on consensus.

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