

POLITECNICO DI TORINO  
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE  
Master of Science in Land, Town and Environment Planning  
***Honors theses***

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**Local development and the Italian South**

**The Crotone area: the re-awakening of the Ionian coast**

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A full century and a half after the unification of Italy, the question of the Italian South is still unresolved. The 'Mezzogiorno', despite its many changes, such as the defeat of poverty and its breakout from isolation, is still failing to take the path to development. New problems make up what, for over a century, has been defined 'the southern question', taking on novel geometries, practices and techniques in the geographical divide. The southern question today looks very different from the shape it had at the end of the Second World War.

The 'southern question' does not run along the same lines today. There are no longer any 'peasants'. Any crippling lack of information has disappeared. The south is no longer painfully backward as heir to eighteenth century miseries and to the consequences of political unification achieved at the cost of serious inequalities. The south is rather an area of uneven development, emigration and maverick urbanisation which have created many problems. These are resolvable only if positive energies are released, and above all, if even in these shifting conditions, young people can find the chance to express themselves.

The basic question is how to re-design the policy for the 'Mezzogiorno' in such a way that it not only reduces the unbearable divide with the rest of the country but also boosts the potential for growth of Italy as a whole. Infrastructure has to be renewed on a massive scale, focussing on tourism and on high quality agricultural products from Rome, down. Also needed are a generous dose of innovation and 'green economy'.

The enquiry carried out is organised, therefore, in two interlinked branches of analysis. In the first, the accent is placed on what the 'southern question' represents or means today with special reference to the current situation in Calabria and the needs this reality creates. An attempt is made to photograph, on the one hand an unsustainable situations in social, economic and environmental terms, deriving from an enormous and long lasting waste of public resources. On the other hand it notes local phenomena which in prospect may have the potential to start new territorial development. In this regard, the Province of Crotona, a modest but rather complex slice of the South is classified in numerous statistical studies and listings as a particularly disadvantaged portion of the 'Mezzogiorno'. This position, in many senses, and with the passing years has begun to seem 'extreme'. Today this is an area marked by the structural problems of economic and social re-conversion, which has a population and geographical extent of importance for the region and where, despite age old problems it is still possible to see signs of renewal. Indeed it is interesting to look into this context through a territorial approach to local development. The second part of the research attempts to explore and describe the different forms of development that derive from active territoriality and from the investment in potential resources, or rather, to investigate the methods and strategies followed to tackle the problem of the territory through the processes of local development in a socio-economic context like that of Crotona. To be able to identify the dynamics which involve the target environment to the full it has proved useful to scrutinise the territory under a project profile. As in a jigsaw puzzle, the territory was rebuilt putting together numerous plans and projects which, although they relate to different parts of the territory, all share the common aim of promoting social and economic development in the area, all being able to generate positive synergies and a resulting exit from the disadvantaged, backward and underdeveloped situation which has been described.

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