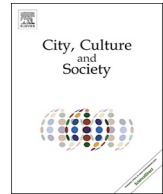


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Vesuvius, pizza, coffee and...Innovation: Is a new paradigm possible for the creative “Vesuvius Valley”, Naples, Italy?

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ABSTRACT

To approach, in a scientific form, the issue of the analysis of the innovative character of the city of Naples, is a delicate and risky operation: positive and negative consolidated city representation paradigms represent a cumbersome burden which physiologically should be taken in charge.

Any approach to the “Naples” issue, from the landscape, historical, artistic, cultural, economic, social, up to sports, has a boundless and ever growing evolution upon previous literature.

In this article, there is neither presumption nor the aim of wanting one; in fact it provides an overview of the many different features of the Neapolitan territory that are as a result of an algorithm starting from assumptions, determined by the statement of the theorem that Naples is an innovative city.

The aim, in a particularly happy and creative time for Naples, (Apple and Deloitte have settled in the east area of Naples, while Cisco might invest in the area as well; Dolce & Gabbana recently organized a global event), is to try to check the validity of the “Florida’s theorem” for this city, leaving, however, the reader the chance, the opportunity, and perhaps the pleasure, to judge the true and complete paradigm that governs the “Vesuvius Valley” and so answer this question:

Are the famous folk icons of the city of Naples, such as Vesuvius, pizza and coffee, urban factors that help to create and to facilitate the urban creativity and innovation, or hinder them, because they obscure the part of science and scientific culture of the city?

This aim will be reached, less as a scientific theorem and more as a proposal supported by objective elements to be “delivered” to the reader, through the following statement complex:

- I) it is true that in the Vesuvius valley people live in a creative climate;
- II) the creative climate of the Vesuvius valley is not generated “by necessity” caused by the absence of industries because Naples, in the past, was a Fordist city;
- III) Vesuvius valley is a post-Fordist urban area where a major effort is being made to enhance the knowledge economy and where Florida’s third T, or Technology, is very present within Universities, research centers and the most technological companies in the world (Apple’s settlement is an example).

1. Conceptual framework

Scientific literature offers many recent and less recent works on the topic of urban innovation (e.g. see [Beretta, 2018](#); [Dirks & Keeling, 2009](#); [Vanolo, 2013](#); [Shearmur, 2012](#)) as well as offers many other works that scientifically deal with the theme of the relationship between city and folklore (e.g. see [Cominelli & Greffe, 2012](#); [del Barrio, Devesa, & Herrero, 2012](#); [Currid-Halkett & Scott, 2013](#), [Kim-Maloney et al. 2014](#); [Cauchi-Santoro, 2016](#)).

The original aim that this work seeks to achieve is to try to combine the two aspects proposing a general question regarding the study of

urban geography, that is if, when the cultural and folkloristic factors of a city are very relevant, they hinder other perspectives of evaluation of the city, for example the scientific perspective.

This question of general validity in this work is first stated in the specific case of the city of Naples, Italy, which, in this particular moment, represents a perfect laboratory to analyze the phenomenon that the question asked requires and then that used to induce a general reflection on this theme.

In fact, on the one hand, the recent establishment of the Apple Academy in the east area of Naples together with other multinationals such as Deloitte and perhaps General Electric and Cisco (recent news of

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which is resonating in all the major newspapers of the world, as in the east area of Naples January 2018 there was a meeting between the Italian Premier Paolo Gentiloni, the CEO of CISCO, Chuck Robbins and the Rector of university Federico II of Naples on the occasion of the inauguration of new Cisco's settlement in the university campus area), and the high research activities of the five universities of the city, foreshadowing a profile of the city itself with a very marked scientific DNA. On the other hand, the city's folkloristic elements have always characterized it and have made it known in the world; Vesuvius, pizza, and coffee, which are assuming even greater value, as evidenced by the growing number of tourists in Naples and the recent inclusion of the art of pizza making in Unesco's list of "intangible heritage".

Particularly the aim of the paper is to explore whether common culture (Vesuvius, pizza, coffee) in the region of Naples supports or hinders proper scientific innovation and the development of the local innovation and creativity ecosystem according to the Richard Florida's 3T theory and its recent revision. The approach followed is based on the identification of the characteristics of the creative and innovative city, and then their gauging against the Naples area.

This aim would be reached as a proposal supported by objective elements to be "delivered" to the reader rather than a scientific theorem, through the following statement complex:

- I) it is true that in the Vesuvius valley people live in a creative climate;
- II) the creative climate of the Vesuvius valley is not generated "by necessity" caused by the absence of industries because Naples, in the past, was a Fordist city;
- III) Vesuvius valley is a post-Fordist urban area where a major effort is being made to enhance the knowledge economy and where the third T of Florida, Technology, is very present within Universities, research centers and the most technological companies in the world (Apple's and Cisco's settlements are significant examples).

The argument is structured as follows: in the next section the role of knowledge in the urban fabric is emphasized starting from the codified dimensions of the knowledge itself, and the difference between knowledge and information that underlies every innovative urban system has been highlighted. Then a scientifically controversial subject is considered, based on the city-attributes of the relationship/dispute between creativity and innovation, which according to some, most prominently by Richard Florida, coincide and according to others collide. After, the laboratory-city of Naples is analyzed in detail through a description of its well-known characteristic folk elements, through an excursus on its history as a Fordist city, ending with the focus on the east area of Naples that represents, also geographically, the emblem of the transition from an industrial city to a city of knowledge.

Finally conclusions assure the reader that the specific case is dealt with as a paradigm of general validity.

2. Knowledge and the city: a new urbanism

Knowledge is by its nature a complex and multi-parametric concept, that beginning in ancient Greece has fascinated the minds of philosophers and eminent scholars, who addressed this theme looking at knowledge from different points of view, thus producing multiple approaches that drive the focus on different aspects of development and knowledge management (De Falco & Germano, 2011).

The enhancement of knowledge, on the urban scale, not only translates into the ability of an area to be able to generate new ideas and new knowledge, but also requires the ability to spread this new knowledge through coded processes capable of generating innovative services for citizens in a city, and, more generally, for many people in a community.

An approach to the relationship between the city and knowledge can be supplied from the hierarchical view data-information-

knowledge, under which the shared knowledge within a city is the result of an elementary data encoding process generated by people present in the city itself. To understand how the city creates knowledge, it is necessary to clarify the difference between data, information and knowledge. Data are the set of distinct, objective, facts referring to a specific event, which, by themselves, have limited utility as they are confined to describing only a part of the event, without giving judgments or interpretations, or a sustainable basis for the action (Davenport, 1997). They are symbols (numbers, letters, codes, images), facts or events devoid of meaning and utility, such as demographics, income, and competitive as well as other statistics relating to the market. If the data are interpreted, contextualized and related to each other, the information or data with attributes of relevance and purpose are obtained (Drucker, 1993), because, unlike the data, they shall contain a meaning and are organized for a specific purpose. The information, therefore, is the interpretation of the data, in a reference context (contextualization), organized in relation with other data (synthesis). Knowledge, therefore, is an abstract concept, consciously or unconsciously constructed through the interpretation of a set of information acquired through experience and meditation on the same (Polanyi, 1962).

Knowledge is represented by a set of information, performed by individuals in a particular context: the interpretation of the information, new and existing, which changes from individual to individual, determines knowledge's development. It derives from a combination of experiences, values, contextual information and specialist expertise that provides a framework for the assessment and assimilation of new experience and new information (Davenport and Prusak, 1998). It is essential not to consider information and knowledge as two synonyms: information can become knowledge when citizens add value to it, transforming the "raw" data into benefits for the economy and local development. Confusing information with knowledge is like confusing the grape, a simple and abundant raw material, with wine, a wise fruit distillate deriving from human work. Unfortunately, this error is frequent, with a mass of simple information, such as messages, reports, procedures, and lists considered as knowledge. Knowledge, however, must be understood as the result of a synthesis process between information, which is derived from data, and the experience of citizens belonging to a certain community. This type of knowledge, therefore, has a dynamic nature since it has the effect of making data and information, characterized by a static nature, into a rather useful and productive one. We can observe a certain intersection of knowledge and information: the question arises whether it is possible to establish a demarcation line between the two concepts. Actually it is impossible to identify a policy or a rule, or to be able to distinguish knowledge from information; in fact we do not have theoretical foundations in literature. The difference between the two concepts, therefore, does not reside in the respective objects, but rather in their guiding principles. In fact, information management aims to reduce uncertainty and limit the choice of the members of a city or a community, defining the information necessary and sufficient to perform the tasks and functions optimally, while knowledge management aims towards innovation, i.e. the growth of new and existing knowledge in order to enhance creativity and learning abilities.

So, what is the new knowledge based urbanism in Naples?

Vesuvius is known around the world, both as a subject of geophysical research that fascinates international scientists, and as a characteristic landscape element, with its images and suggestions that travel all over the globe. Pompeii, likewise, is the attraction magnet for millions of tourists every year, as are all the many cultural sites that characterize the territory: the Veiled Christ, the Royal Palace, the Pharmacy of the Incurables and so on. No less bulky in importance and notoriety are the human prestigious figures in every field that add luster to this territory, from Eduardo and Totò in the theatrical field, to the philosophic field with Giambattista Vico, Benedetto Croce, and many others, to the scientific field with Renato Caccioppoli, and many other

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