

REGIONAL RECOGNITION AND ORDERING OF THE TERRITORY

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To fix one's attention on the physical structure of the territory is in itself a methodological hypothesis for the ordering of the territory. Territorial rules summarize, in one almost only synthesis, the conditions of life and the activities of the inhabitants and they also summarize the conflicting interests which their appropriation implies. The construction of that which is to be called "historical nature", the occupation and works of transformation of the existing historical material, and the varied use of the advantages to be found in the territory, the exploitation of the yield of the earth and the exchange value which the property acquires, show in the resulting shape of the territory not only its dimension but also in some way give quite close signs of their interdependence.

The Ordering of the Territory was one of the first steps as a specific discipline, an effort mainly to recognize in the territory an order specific to it. The method for ordering was mainly to recognize certain "vocations" for each territory. Knowledge of the geography, the ecology and the history of each place would be an important part of the method of this attitude, in which a certain natural determinism dominates which believes that the natural state of things is from where criteria for the future ordering of the territory can be deduced and for which conservation and defense are frequent and important attitudes.

The attention dedicated in these plans to the problems of territory in terms of place, measurement, scale and distance, lead one to a methodological vision of the ordering of the territory which is centered on the analysis of the relations between the territorial elements as a privileged field of study. This means that for the moment aggregated generic valuations which with the object of quantifying or comparing must reduce whole regions to a uniform spot without allowing the introduction in the analysis of the concrete valuation of partial processes through which the transformation of the territory actually comes about, are avoided. It means underlining that these processes are sufficiently different, interdependent and transcendent so that they condition each other and the relations at an aggregated level at which they are produced.

It is necessary to think of the territory not as a "factor of location", but to think of location as a factor of production.

It is necessary to talk not only of economy, but of sociology, of law and of history. Just as chemistry and biology are important for progress in medicine, so social sciences are basic for the Ordering of the Territory. Just as the human organism, of course, has a high degree of complexity and interrelation which is so specific in its internal processes that it would be absurd to treat illnesses as a problem of chemistry or of biology, without recognizing the methods and specific interests which give specifically medical phenomena their own field of study. Territory is not an organism, but it is a complex form where social, economic and political relations interfere specifically with each other. The understanding of this is what territorial ordering contributes to by making more intelligible the conflicts produced by the social utilization of the physical space.

The study of the territorial structure of the regions seeks to place guidelines along this path, and to point out at the same time that the shapes of the physical structure could be better understood with the help of studies

which have so often been carried out with such a degree of fertility in our country, of economic analysis and regional economy, studies of demography, history and local geography, and also of evaluation techniques, costs-profits, investment and financing programs, studies of local public finance or those of administrative and tax law.

No intervention regarding territory should be left out from the wide directives regarding social and economic policy which on a national scale orient the evolution of the country; likewise, these general policies never became sufficiently solid or justified unless they are based on the evaluation and optimization of the conditions which are proper and specific to each region as such. This means that, aside from criteria for assigning (money, activities, population), just as if it were a national total and distribution to the whole country had to be made from a central drawer, what territorial ordering has to set in motion are partial optimization criteria (local, territorial), which because of their mutual interdependence will gradually create national policies. Territory is not a budget to be shared out. Regions will, therefore, have to become the leaders *in* proposals mid decisions, and thus also of analysis, with which to start up a democratic ordering of the territory.

Manuel de SOLÀ-MORALES