



ILARIA DELPONTE (edited by)

HISTORICAL CITY MARKETS: A SET OF GUIDELINES



FRANCOANGELI

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In una visione integrata ed aggiornata delle concezioni culturali e delle conseguenti politiche e linee programmatiche, che sono di riferimento nei processi di gestione e pianificazione della città e del territorio, la collana intende fornire contributi scientifici su argomenti di particolare rilievo ed attualità che chiamano in causa la disciplina urbanistica.

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FOREWARD

by *Ilaria Delponte*

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Mediterranean has a **rich history** of city markets which have for many centuries acting as focal points for both social and commercial activity. Their legacy of ancient streets and buildings as well as their traditional function as meeting point for different cultures with mixture of goods, traditions and knowledge is a fundamental part of the Mediterranean heritage. Mediterranean historic city markets have been of great significance for the political, economical and social rising and development of cities and their surroundings. Still today, they are places of modernisation, innovation and catalyst for the social and economic development as they represent economic centres of trade and craft of a unique character together with an enormous historic heritage and rich cultural life. **Today**, the historic city markets are posed by major challenges threatening the historic heritage and resulting in economic stagnancy as result of rapidly changing social, economic and ecologic conditions. Markets face changes to their traditional role, most notably concerning the decline of agriculture and the value of the artisans' creations, the declining level of the handicraft skills and extension of the food quality productive chain that can be traumatic for local communities. Furthermore, the inadequacy of urban regulations in matter of distribution and sanity quality places the partner cities at a disadvantage. The imbalance of progress and preservation of the historic urban fabric often results in either economic stagnancy or the loss of the unique cultural heritage and with it the loss of identity.

The **overall objective** of the Marakanda Project is, briefly, to foster the social and economic development of the partner cities by creating a cluster

of historic city markets through strengthening relationships among them, improving governance and synergies among public institutions, market operators and experts and valorising high quality agro food and artistic handicraft productions. In other words, the objectives of the initiatives are to upgrade the competencies and the capacities of the public officers and the small entrepreneurs operating in the city markets through the exchange of good practices, to achieve, share and enhance common quality standards for the efficient management of the historic city markets and, as a result in a long-period perspective, to cluster micro and small enterprises of high quality agro food and artistic handicraft sectors operating in the city markets in order to foster their internationalisation.

Fig. 1 – Ancient chocolate workshop in Genoa



In order to increase the competitiveness and the awareness of the decision makers, stakeholders and wider public about the concept of Mediterranean market, the **approach of the project** purposes the following means:

- exchange of good practices to upgrade competencies and capacities of market managers and operators;

- improvement of the governance of the markets through the definition of common quality standards, design of action plans identifying pilot actions to be implemented in each market, following guidelines which help them in building basis criteria and an agenda of interventions;
- definition of a common and shared clustering strategy, putting together producers, sellers and consumers through a web platform and consolidating a Mediterranean circuit of fairs promoting high quality agro food and artistic handicraft products;
- establishment of permanent relationships among Mediterranean markets through the creation of an association of Mediterranean markets as an instrument assuring long term effects to the project results.

The present publication was finalized for disseminating the scientific results of the work was done about the **definition and selection of the above-cited guidelines**.

What is the main relevance of this activity for the academic community?

What is the major interest in fronting such a challenge? And could it (the enhancement of urban markets) be an interesting research topic?

Wealthy food and societal challenges are associated in the **new program Horizon 2020**, which is the framework of the communitarian research till that target year: so, this means that every effort of the public entities, academy and enterprises community will be addressed to cope with the threat of anonymity in choosing and eating food. The improvement of the market appeal is also a warrantee for good repasts and cooking culture. The presence of local producers and a strong relationship between sellers and buyers is a key-factor for the general focus that is going to be centred into nutrition and health, as well as into trusty agriculture.

So, Marakanda was in the middle of a current priority of investment by EU and anticipated what will be delivered for everybody in terms of communitarian objectives. But this is also a way to embrace other culture and discover again the similarities among Countries and societies. This was pretty evident in the project, where cooking and products were the *traits d'union* of the partners' initiatives: fairs, communications events, exhibitions... were organized in order to let traditions known and re-launch the attitude of visiting and benefit from markets, in each Country of the partnership. This is a Mediterranean topic, not only an European one: controlled agriculture, typicality of products, markets as social public spaces,

are all themes that reflect our Southern and Northern Basin' culture and the modern attention to protect these traits.

This comes back to another key-point: techniques, methods and relationships for a more incisive **transferability between the two shores**. Sharing experiences is an indispensable step in that: in Marakanda we experienced a very strong activity around telling each other best-practices. About that phase, we try to abstract a set of guidelines, too, in order to make them easier and more explicit for following them. Staff exchanges and study visits complete the framework of the sharing activities. Some partners took advises by others and capabilities (in analysing the markets' situation, in individuating concrete actions for supporting a transition phase, in customizing measures, and so on) were put in common. But, the transferability and its ways are still a matter of debate: how to improve them? How to monitor and evaluate them? Probably, is this the more crucial issue for the upcoming calls for the Mediterranean Basin and those from which all others depend.

The overall aim of the book is to contribute to the dissemination of a very important topic for the Mediterranean culture as the urban markets and their history is within the scientific world, but in a divulgative way. Therefore, the book is divided into *two connected parts*: the *first one* is devoted to the scientific survey and preparation of the guidelines, carried on by the University of Genoa. Then, the *second part* is composed by different contributions by other experts in markets matters. In addition to an overview on the Genoa markets, also the Institute of Markets in Barcelona, the University of Florence and the Souk el Tayeb Organisation from Beirut are represented. Their papers deal with diverse topics and show different points of view in approaching markets: analytics on studies, models of remodeling and public-private partnerships.

The success of the project invites us to reflect about the opportunities represented by the Mediterranean cooperation, starting from what we experienced during these years with Marakanda.

This is a synthesis of the research activity made by the group of the University of Genoa, but also a stimulus and an invitation of taking into account these themes (and those related to) for **further research findings**.

Fig. 2 – Sarzano Market in Genoa: preliminary project and studies



PART ONE

HISTORICAL CITY MARKET: GUIDELINES AS A PRACTICAL TOOL

1. GUIDELINES ON MARKETS: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

by *Ilaria Delponte*

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1.1. Guidelines: what are they?

In this book, we front the theme of the improvement and enhancing of the Mediterranean urban markets: the partnership has been discussing about it since the beginning of the project and now, for approaching that in a structured way, it serves of a written practical tool -the guidelines- in order to definitely share and disseminate its resultants.

But, the question mark in the title of the paragraph shows how much the interrogative is open.

We cannot face such a delicate topic as the historical markets in urban contexts is, without, at first, interrogating ourselves around what GUIDELINES really are.

Some general definitions could help us to intercept the most suitable meaning of the term, which must take into account the general sense of the process of drawing up them, but also includes the specificity of the matter.

Here we have some of the general sentences found in the net.

For Wikipedia:

*“A **guideline** is a statement by which to determine a course of action. A guideline aims to streamline particular processes according to a set routine or sound practice. By definition, following a guideline is never mandatory. Guidelines are not binding and are not enforced”.*

And for the Wikipedia Community, in itself, internal guidelines for its own functioning, are:

“Guidelines are sets of best practices that are supported by consensus. Editors should attempt to follow guidelines, though they are best treated with common sense, and occasional exceptions may apply”.

If we look at medical or clinical production, guidelines are considered:
“a document with the aim of guiding decisions and criteria regarding diagnosis, management, and treatment”.

Useful are also the attempts of the synonyms in the search of defining the properties and the futures of a thing:

- *clue, code, ground rule, guidance, guide, instruction, key, mark, marker, precept, protocol, rule, signal, standard procedure (<http://thesaurus.com/browse/guideline>);*
- *advisory limitation, aspect, bench mark, borderline indication, boundary, confinement, dimension, direction, formula, gauge, general guideline, guide, idea, instruction, key, limitation, margin, marker, measure, outer limits, parameter, perimeter, restriction, rule, specific, standard, yardstick (<http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Guidelines>).*

What are their main objectives or ways of employ?

Often, they are used for providing information on how submit an application or for the endorsement of a methodological proposal under some rules to be stuck to. In other occasions, they contains indications for the assessment of standards or contain standards in themselves. Sometimes, they are used as a glossary for sharing a way of working or preparing, or to build up a baseline scenario as a starting point.

Mostly, guidelines are required to cover a quite wide range of situations and conditions and to be the most possible objective: they must regard all the project contents or the concerned thematic fields and sometimes they give rules and requirements also for the monitoring, the record keeping and the reporting phases of the projects they care of.

Summing up acceptable scopes of the use of guidelines, we can consider them as a sort of recommendations, written “for” and “on” the appropriate treatment of a topic, aiming to improve the quality of it. Guidelines are often utilized in a certain phase of a process for facilitating a change or the application of a new procedure and they can, additionally, be used in the concerned education and training, in order to boost capacities and build up skills and, consequently, activate new activities. Sometimes, they help service-users to make informed decisions (translated into the guidelines’ format) and so, be used as a kind of communication tool among partners, tender’s parties and so on.

Going on trying to define our work, it can be meaningful also to clarify the relationship between guidelines, on one hand, and, on the other, alternative methodological instruments, employed very often in projects management activities.

Guidelines are especially confused – or considered synonyms – of **methodology** and, in a general view, they are defined as a document related to a methodological aspect. In other cases, we find that they (methodology and guidelines) are put into antithesis because the former was taken as “abstract” and the latter as a “concrete”, practical declination of a method. Someway it is suitable and convenient to a managerial attitude, but it could result a reduction of the “cultural weight” of the guidelines. At the same time, in other situations, we find a set of guidelines given in order to draw up a methodology. For many, guidelines are a standardization and a simplification of methodology or a way to “adjust” a methodology into guidelines, for others, guidelines might be designed to enhance the effectiveness of a methodology or be drawn up to evaluate it (and sometimes happens the opposite dynamic).

In our activities, we count on a interpretation of the drawing up of them as “methodological guidelines”, referring to a vision of the tool more inclusive, assuming theoretically that content and method are, ultimately, the same.

About other “ambiguous” vocabularies linked with “guidelines”, the relation between them and the term “best practices” should be interesting to be discussed , too.

Speaking on **best practices**, we agree that we are dealing with a good implementation practice (method or technique) that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means and that is used, then, as a benchmark. The best practices might be used as a kind of check-list against which one can directly evaluate a system, a technology, a procedure. Lack of adherence to any given best practice, however, does not necessarily imply a lack of quality; they are recommendations that are said to be ‘best’ in most cases and in most contexts, but not all. A best practice is always subject to improvement, as we learn and evolve together. Best practices are used to maintain quality as an alternative to mandatory legislated standards and can be based on self-assessment or benchmarking. On the other hand, guidelines, underlining analogies and dissimilarities in order to make a comparison with the previous term, can advance your knowledge and understanding and help you achieving a result, but that may not be directly applicable to your implementation or recognized by consensus as the ‘best’ method or technique. In this logic, a set of guidelines is a type of tip,

Indicators are explicitly defined and measurable items. They are a statement about the structure, process or outcomes of a dynamic. Indicators show, in a quantitative way, review criteria and standards and sometimes guidelines are utilized for constructing indexes based on them. At the same time, indicators could be built up in support of the guidelines or in adherence to them. In some fields, guidelines typically include lists of indicators that are intended to help testing activities and recommended guidelines and quality indicators are often associated. For further refinements, guidelines and indicators, together, are required for practical application at different scales, and provides support to the processes of implementation, monitoring, and review. In some cases, guidelines and indicators are put in antithesis: somehow, the failure to identify precise indicators has led to abuse of guidelines, criteria and standards. In several conditions, we find that best practises, guidelines and indicators are utilized “in place” or as a FAQ Frequently Asked Question. But this is another way of reducing the methodological relevance of the contents that is transmitted by or by means of the guidelines.

A big concern regarding guidelines, and, in general, around criteria and methods required to address actions and behaviours, is the “theoretical” foundation they are grounded on. Searching in **literature**, we can find several ways to put in value the results coming up, on the one hand, from experiences and observations, and, on the other, from theories and processes.

Some methodological approaches, which arrive until to reflect themselves on the declination of a set of guidelines or criteria, are declaratively “**evidence-based**”: in other words, they put on the survey of collecting cases their evidence, thanks to an objective observation of registered parameters. That planning out takes its legitimacy from the ability of seeing results that are self-evident and prevent from going on with theoretical interpretations. These methods are very frequently used in medicine because of the need of observing symptoms, reasoning on the diagnosis. Many others are based on a “**cause-effect based**” approach, which means that the focus is centred, in this case, not only on the effects we can see, but also on the relationship between the causes and the consequences we directly observe. In this “etiologic” process, some of the links have the opportunities not to be missed and some “nexus” can be purposed. Another version of this approach is the “**outcomes-based**” logic, that tries to extrapolate information through the analysis of the indirect feedbacks, resulting after the process. It is a sort of evaluation mechanism, made at a certain distance of the facts, trying to sum up the relevant outcomes in order to put them in a reasoned framework propaedeutic to standards criteria or guidelines. Another way to approach a concrete way of understanding dynamics is basing guidelines’