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*Smartness. The face of the integration in the new “performing” society*

**Abstract**

Economia, potere, così come case, persone e lavoro, ma prima di ogni altra cosa città: tutto negli ultimi anni è chiamato a diventare “smart”. È questa l’era della smart economy, della smart governance, della smart home, delle smart people, dello smart work e della sempre più imperante smart city. Con il sostegno della scienza, o meglio delle diverse scienze (ingegneria, politologia, urbanistica, architettura, sociologia, etc.) che ne spieghino i fondamenti a monte e della politica che, ai vari livelli (nazionali e internazionali), ne orienti i processi a valle, la smartness diventa il nuovo orizzonte della società contemporanea a cui conformare senso e prassi su scala planetaria. Ma cosa significa, per un luogo come per una attività, per una persona come per una collettività, essere “smart”? Qual è il denominatore comune che lega tra loro le diverse declinazioni del termine, come gli ambiti di applicazione? Quanto questa ricerca di intelligenza è ricerca di efficienza? E quanto l’efficienza è di per sé garanzia di intelligenza?

Dopo un breve excursus sul concetto in oggetto e suoi ambiti esplicativi, l’analisi si concentra sul postulato dell’integrazione quale principale condizione di realizzazione della smartness, anche per fini efficientisti. È l’integrazione la vera sfida contenuta nella smartness e la vera promessa, al momento non mantenuta, della società performante.

**Introduction**

“Smart”, an adjective which monopolizes the scientific literature in each field, from engineering to economy and political science, sociology urban planning. It bounces among the pages of the newspapers and dominates as actor on the stages of the congresses. Scientists and journalists, the rulers and the citizens, users and producers, all around the world and at all levels are called to deal with it. It is an adjective that opens doors; the legend that explains; the compass that guides. But what does “smart” mean? And why is this word suddenly so important? What is its specific meaning and which is the most general sense to which it refers?

Though hermeneutical methods are no longer fashionable and linguistics in some cases loses ground, studying the history of the word can help us understand. On the one hand we have, in fact, the meanings of the term, which are numerous and vary from context to context, whether they are geographical, disciplinary or simply applicational, simply by constituting a definitory framework which is weak and therefore problematic, as Hollands<sup>1</sup> has pointed out in his work. On the other hand, we have a term that persists beyond the change in time and space, contents that remain while the declinations of the word change, residues of the sense that no further meaning seems to scratch. Leaving the specific lexical domain to enter the one of sense, that sense that transcends the specific meanings without however to denying them, is then what the

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<sup>1</sup> R.G. HOLLANDS, *Will the real smart city please stand up?*, in «City», vol. 12, Issue 3, 2008, pp. 303-320.

term obliges us to do, if we do not want to get lost between many meanings determined without bringing them to the synthesis.

Just like many others, this word is taken from English language, and for this reason even more susceptible of lexical interpretation, generally in Italian the adjective smart is translated with sharp, brilliant, but also rapid, awake, quick and clever. “Intelligent” seems to be the most convincing translation, but in a broader sense than a narrow sense may mean. It currently does not refer to a person’s intelligence quotient, but rather to their ability to be ready and reactive, to cultivate “good thinking” and “problem solving”, to be able to adapt and to react quickly. This latter aspect, is increasingly decisive in a society of uncertainty and which makes resilience its inevitable diktat.

Net of different semantic meanings, we can say that in contemporary societies something is smart when it expresses *a better quality of life and a lower environmental impact through the intelligent use of technology*.

### **An adjective, many contents**

Among all the areas where the adjective is declined, the city seems to be the most natural habitat for smart world. The so-called “smart city”<sup>2</sup> dominates the reference literature on smartness, to the point that it is difficult to find insights on the adjective that do not point to that noun<sup>3</sup>, albeit without unambiguous definitions. There are different models of smart cities that vary depending on the priority given to forms of communication and participation, as in the case of the city of nets (or net city), the open city, the sentient city, the participatory city (or wiki city), the neo-bohème city (or creative city) and again the resilient city, the city 2.0, and finally the city as the platform (or cloud city)<sup>4</sup>.

This connection between the words smart and city might also be explained with reference to the incidence that current urban planning, known as “smart growth”<sup>5</sup> has had on the word smart. Born in the USA at the end of the Eighties, this current has constituted one of the first manifestations of urban environmental sensitivity, before becoming the postmodern version of “new urbanism”<sup>6</sup>. If we delve into those urban content we notice that the adjective smart was used from the beginning to allude to a fruitful combination of principles, such as the demand of the market and environmental needs. As time went by, that pretty ancient approach of “smart growth”, then revisited according to the canons of the “new urbanism”, would have landed in the challenge of “sustainability”<sup>7</sup>, but with a common denominator of all these addresses and

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<sup>2</sup> On this topic see C. MARCIANO, *Smart City. Lo spazio sociale della convergenza*, Edizioni Nuova cultura, Roma 2015; AA.VV., *Smart City. Città, tecnologia, comunicazione*, in «Comunicazionepuntodoc», vol. 10, luglio-agosto 2014, pp. 1-284.

<sup>3</sup> On the different understandings of the concept of smartness and on ties with the “smart city” see A. DE LUCA, *Come (ri) pensare alla smart city*, in «EyesReg. Giornale di Scienze Regionali», vol. 2, n. 6, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> For more detail on these aspects, please refer to G. DOMINICI, *Smart cities e communities: l’innovazione nasce dal basso*, 2012, article available to link <http://archive.saperi.forumpa.it/>.

<sup>5</sup> On this topic see URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, *Smart Growth: economy, community, environment*, Washington DC 1998; I. SCHIFFMAN, *Alternative techniques for managing smart growth*, Berkeley public policy, Institute of governmental studies, University of California, Berkeley 2001; A. DUANY, M. LYDON, J. SPECK, *The smart growth manual*, McGraw-Hill, New York 2010; T.S. SZOLD, A. CARBONELL (eds.), *Smart Growth: form and consequences*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge (Mass.) 2002; R.H. FREILICH, *From sprawl to smart growth: successful legal, planning and environmental systems*, American Bar Association, Chicago 1999.

<sup>6</sup> F.D. MOCCIA, *Smart City: etimologia del termine. Un’analisi firmata INU*, 2012, document available to link [http://admin.edilio.it/smartcity-etimologia-del-termini-un-analisi-firmata-inu/p\\_19560.html](http://admin.edilio.it/smartcity-etimologia-del-termini-un-analisi-firmata-inu/p_19560.html).

<sup>7</sup> “Sustainability” refers to that condition of development “able to ensure the satisfaction of the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to realize theirs”: see TRECCANI, *Online*

emerging over time: *The central role of information technologies in order to obtain advantages in the energy sector of the urban environment.*

Though it found its most natural vocation in the city, the adjective smart has soon met other contexts of specification. According to the more consolidated literature on the theme<sup>8</sup>, it is possible to trace at least six declinations of “smartness”:

1. Smart economy
2. Smart People
3. Smart governance
4. Smart mobility
5. Smart environment
6. Smart living

Combined with the economy<sup>9</sup>, the word smart makes the latter more dynamic and competitive, highlights the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, the level of production as well as the flexibility of the labor market, the active presence in the international market, such as the capacity of the actor to support or change economic vocation.

Referring to the persons, groups and more generally to human beings<sup>10</sup>, the adjective smart indicates the existence of a social capital of people capable of creativity and flexibility but also professionally qualified and open to forms of participation and social integration.

The political participation of citizens in the decision-making process is instead the distinctive element of the “smart governance”<sup>11</sup>, where the sharing in the creation of public services helps to make the governance more transparent and democratic.

The transport system is, then, the fundamental nucleus of the so-called “smart mobility”<sup>12</sup>. It applies to accessibility national and international mobility and the ability to make it innovative and secure.

Finally the “smart environment”<sup>13</sup> is the more cross-sectional dimension to studies in different disciplines, and perhaps even more faithful to the original meaning of the concept of “smartness”,

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*encyclopedia*, heading ‘Sostenibilità’, <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sostenibilita/>. This category was introduced, as known, in 1972 within the framework of the first UN Conference on the environment, but it is from 1987, through the publication of the Brundtland report, that sustainability enshrined as an objective and declined through the concept of ‘sustainable development’. Although initially totally focused on aspects of ecological type, the concept of sustainability currently encompasses inside it issues and aspects of nature not only environmental but also economic and social, becoming a real model to pursue. *Ibidem*. Report available to link <http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> See in particular C.C. AMITRANO, F. BIFULCO, *Level of smartness in urban contexts: open issues in measurement*, 26th Annual RESER Conference, *What’s Ahead in Service Research? New perspectives for business and society*, Napoli 2016, pp. 590-603.

<sup>9</sup> C. BALACEANU, D.M. TILEA, D. PENU, *Perspectives on Eco Economics. Circular Economy and Smart Economy*, in «Academic Journal of Economic Studies», vol. 3, issue 4, 2017, pp. 105-109.

<sup>10</sup> K. KAR, M.P. GUPTA, P.V. ILAVARASAN, Y.K. DWIVEDI, *Advances in Smart Cities: Smarter People, governance, and Solutions*, CRC Press, Boca Raton 2017; T.C. BATES, S. GUPTA, *Smart Groups of smart people: Evidence for IQ as the origin of collective intelligence in the performance of human groups*, in «Intelligence», vol. 60, 2017, pp. 46-56; C. BARRETT, *Smart People, smart ideas and the right environment drive innovation*, in «Research Technology Management», vol. 53, n. 1, 2017, pp. 40-43. On these issues see the essay of R. GURASHI, *The era of the smart people. How technocapitalism is changing the lifestyles of the individuals of the smart society*, present within this issue of the magazine.

<sup>11</sup> H. WILLKE, *Smart governance: governing the global knowledge society*, Campus, Frankfurt, New York 2007; T.M. VINOD KUMAR (ed.), *E-governance for smart cities*, Springer, Singapore 2015.

<sup>12</sup> EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, *Toward clean and smart mobility: transportation and environment in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg 2016; R. PAPA, R. FISTULA, C. GARGIULO (eds.), *Smart planning: sustainability and mobility in the age of change*, Springer, Cham 2018.

<sup>13</sup> EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, *Shaping the future of energy in Europe: clean, smart and renewable*, Publications

postponing almost by definition to a sustainable management of natural resources, the preservation and protection of the green areas of a city, as the conditions that make it more attractive and compliant with the technologically advanced times.

If we review the specific literature<sup>14</sup> with greater capacity for discernment, other declinations of smartness arise. This is the case, for example, of “smart community”<sup>15</sup>, the “smart land”<sup>16</sup> or even “smart home”<sup>17</sup> and “smart working”<sup>18</sup>.

It is therefore questionable whether, in the face of such semantics and conceptual variety, a denominator that unites these labels and that is able to recreate the overall direction of the concept beyond its undoubted and precious specifications exists or could exist.

## Finding a common denominator

A first observation that can be done about it is that in none of these cases the city borders can be “left”. The metropolis is the spatial context of reference also when the accent falls on other things such as the economy, people, governance and mobility, home, work, lifestyle<sup>19</sup> and the natural environment. To be smart, an economy needs a city hosting it, at least as much as the people of an intelligent living context and with them the institutions, the transport system, the work, as well as life itself and nature. This explains the centrality of the city in the reference literature about smartness, but also helps us toward the fundamental content of it, namely the concept of “integrated system”.

*Thinking smart means thinking in a “built-in” way and the main integration is that which occurs between people, environment and technology.* We could spend a lot of time discussing on the centrality of information technologies with respect to smartness because without technologies none of these forms of intelligence would be possible. And yet the smart city, and with it all its smartness shades, is not a mere

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Office of the European Union, Luxembourg 2017; URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, *quote*.

<sup>14</sup> R. PAPA, C. GARGIULO, S. FRANCO, L. RUSSO, *Urban smartness vs urban competitiveness. A comparison of Italian cities rankings*, in «TeMA. Journal of Land Use, Mobility and environment», n. 7, special issue INPUT 2014, pp. 771-782; D. MEZZAPELLE, *Smartness come “stile di vita”*. *Approcci alla discussione*, in «Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana», Roma - Serie XIII, vol. IX, 2016, pp. 489-501; J.R. GIL-GARCIA, J. ZHANG, G. PURON-CID, *Conceptualizing smartness in government: an integrative and multi-dimensional view*, in «Government Information Quarterly», vol. 33, n. 3, 2016, pp. 524-534; S. BOLOGNINI, *Dalla smart city alla human smart city e oltre: profili epistemologici e giuspolitici nello sviluppo del paradigma smartness oriented*, Giuffrè, Milano 2017.

<sup>15</sup> F. RIZZI, *Smart City, smart community, smart specialization per il management della sostenibilità*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2014; D. D'ALOISI, S. PERSIA, B. SAPIO, *Smart Community: l'evoluzione sociale della Smart City*, in «I Quaderni di Telèma», document available at the link [Http://www.fub.it/sites/default/files/attachments/2013/09/n295.pdf](http://www.fub.it/sites/default/files/attachments/2013/09/n295.pdf); URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, *quote*; F. MANFREDI, *Smart community: sustainable communities and resilient*, Cacucci, Bari 2015.

<sup>16</sup> A. BONOMI, R. MASIERO, *Dalla smart city alla smart land*, Marsilio, Venezia 2014.

<sup>17</sup> N. BALTA-OZKAN, R. DAVIDSON, M. BICKET, L. WHITMARSH, *Social barriers to the adoption of smart homes*, in «Energy Policy», vol. 63, pp. 363-374; D.D. BRIERE, *Smart home for dummies*, Frommer's, New York 2003; M. CAPOLLA, *Progettare la domotica. Criteri e tecniche per la progettazione della casa intelligente*, Maggioli Editore, Santarcangelo di Romagna 2011; R. HARPER, *Inside the Smart Home: Ideas, possibilities and methods*, Springer-Verlag, London Ltd 2003; K. SAUL-RINALDI, R. LEBARON, J. CARACINO, *Making sense of the Smart Home. Applications of Smart Grid and Smart Home Technologies for the Home Performance Industry*, National Home Performance Council, USA 2014. On these issues see the essay of M. SESSA, *The social dimension of the smart home. How sustainability became part of the domestic environment*, present within this issue of the magazine.

<sup>18</sup> M. CORSO, F. CRESPI, B.C. SACK, *Smart working: modelli organizzativi e tecnologie, spazi e normativa*, Gruppo 24 ore, Milano 2016; A. LAKE, *Smart flexibility: moving smart and flexible working from theory to practice*, Gower, Farnham, Burlington 2013.

<sup>19</sup> L. RYDEN, *Technological Development and lifestyle changes*, in W. LEAL FILHO ET AL. (Eds.), *Sustainable Development, Knowledge Society and Smart Future Manufacturing Technologies*, World Sustainability Series, Springer International Publishing, Switzerland 2015, pp. 113-124.

digital city. “Smart” and “digital” are not synonyms but allude to diversified plans as far as intersected and smart city is something more than a mere digital city<sup>20</sup> or information city<sup>21</sup>.

If so, the “smart society”<sup>22</sup> is not the great absent, as futile attempts to search for the concept in the reference literature seem to establish definitively. The smart society is the true protagonist and is only within a systemic logic that it is possible to think and act “smart”. Therefore, society is not a mere background, a faded context, a ground to be chased, a territory to conquer. Society is the social system which makes all SMART initiative, either economic, political, working or housing possible. So, while the city is the spatial context of reference in which the practices occurs or can more easily occur for the concentration of people and capital and technological tools and systems, society is the system that integrates them, making them “smart”. Society is that the amalgam, that cohesion, that set of bonds and relationships, that intersection of planes and social formations that alone makes it possible to size the smart, beyond any possible declination.

*Before being synonymous of “intelligence”, smartness seems therefore to be synonymous of “integration”, a new systemic integration based on digital technologies and aiming at energy saving.* The smartness is the ability of a company to become a system and of a social system to remain such, taking advantage of the potential offered by new technologies to improve at the same time people’s lives and environment<sup>23</sup>.

### **Integration: prospects and criticality**

Among all the possible forms through which it is possible to “make integration”, smartness seems to favor two roads complementary between them: on the one hand that the “rational consensus”, freely matured for effect of a sort of calculation of utility, around certain fundamental needs of peaceful coexistence<sup>24</sup>. This is the “contracts” version of conception of integration dating back at least to the thought of Locke. On the other hand, and perhaps in terms that have become still more marked, there is the concept of integration as “interdependence” and that has found its most complete formulation in the study by Durkheim<sup>25</sup>.

Making system, or simply order, without denying the change has always been the biggest challenge of modernity. The social problem for excellence, the sociological issue for antonomasia. Today this challenge has to decline in front of the technology and the environment, if we want dangers to be avoided to become opportunities to be preserved. The task of sociology and its systemic readings of synthesis, therefore to deal with these issues, so that they leave from the sectoral specialism they are currently confined into and so that each field can benefit from precisely that systemic logic.

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<sup>20</sup> A. AURUGI, *Making the digital city: the early shaping of urban internet space*, Ashgate, Burlington 2005; R.P. DAMERI, L. GIOVANNACCI, *Smart City e digital city: strategie urbane a confronto*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2015.

<sup>21</sup> L. MOLA, F. PENNAROLA, S. ZA, *From Information to Smart Society. Environment, Politics and Economics*, Springer International Publishing, Berlin 2015, pp. 1-331.

<sup>22</sup> R. HAYMAN, *The smart cultures: society, intelligence, and Law*, New York University Press, New York 1998; V. VORONKOVA, O. KYVLIUK, *Philosophical Reflection Smart-Society as a new model of the Information Society and its impact on the education of the 21st Century*, in «Future Human Image», vol. 7, 2017, pp. 154-162; R. RAMACHANDER, *Smart technology, smart society*, in «Power Engineering International», vol. 26, Issue 5, 2018; S. MALLAPATY, *Pillars of a smart society*, in «Nature», vol. 555, issue 7697, 2018; B.C. VALKENBURG, P.H. DEN OUDEN, M.A. SCHREURS, *Designing a smart society: from smart cities to smart societies*, European Commission, Netherlands 2016.

<sup>23</sup> See G. GABRIELLI, A. GRANELLI (curated by), *Territori, città, imprese: smart o accoglienti?*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2014.

<sup>24</sup> See L. GALLINO, *Dizionario di sociologia*, UTET, Torino 1978.

<sup>25</sup> É. DURKHEIM, *De la division du travail social*, Felix Alcan Editeur, Paris 1893; Italian translation *The Division of Social Work*, Community, Milano 1999.

About the idea of integration as interdependence, it seems appropriate to recall that the division of social work is not in itself a guarantee of order and no division of labor can generate “solidarity” if it becomes anomic or coercive. If it lacks what carries everything synthesis (as only the regulatory plan may do as much as informal or projectual as it cannot be legal), and if the substance is not rewarded and made a winner in terms of fairness<sup>26</sup>.

In the performative society that the smartness brings with it, the unifying criterion which should ensure that the synthesis and the correspondence between people and place in society is productive efficiency. The awareness that there can be no efficiency without integration<sup>27</sup> does not actually seem to be equally strong. If we want to materialize the ideal of efficiency, we must focus on integration. Nor is the willingness of this systemic intelligence to go beyond the efficient objective, so that integration does not remain at a level organic, but will also become community, evident. The smartness is therefore the track of systemic integration to higher levels of development - it is up to science and politics to understand on which floor we want to certify this integration and in view of what idea and reality of society.

On the other hand, it is known that the threat to the systemic integration is not only the risks of iperspecialism and consequent social fragmentation, solipsism or individual atomization. The systemic integration is threatened today also from a connection that is not true and proper integration, by a hyperlink just a company perpetually “linked” and hypertextual, but in which everything that connects does not integrate and mix, to remain confined in the space of the multitude that nobody knows more lead to synthesis, of the variety which does not bear the unit. The integration is what can lead to extreme synthesis many concepts and phenomena between their extremely connected, almost tangled and for this hardly comprehensible in themselves and in their interdependencies.

The concept of “integration” cannot therefore be left in the background but must be recovered and returned to the literature on smartness throughout his undoubted centrality. With this concept also the question that contemporary societies are facing is clear: i.e. if can the organicistic logic, which divides and combines, which makes parts specialized but also interdependent, that binds through the complementary interest, be sufficient to ensure units, or if necessary also the other because the interdependence and the mutual interest alone are not enough. Especially if it is an interest-free shared identity and limited to only efficient content.

In other words, it is only by giving the concept of integration the eight and the centrality it deserves, in addition to a full sense and not reduced to mere connection, that it is possible to prevent the smartness from becoming a mere synonym of *performing society in the era of the records* and smart people from assuming the role of children who found in “material grandeur”, in the “rapidity of movement”, in the “perennial movement” and in the “sense of power”<sup>28</sup> all their identity<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> See C. VITARI, *Social Equity and ecological sustainability: New Framework and directions for the IS Community*, in L. MOLA, F. PENNAROLA, S. ZA, *quote*, pp. 197-205.

<sup>27</sup> See the words of Bruni: “The economy of a country depends above all on its capital. In the second half of the twentieth century, Italy was capable of a real economic and civil miracle as it had social, moral, spiritual, community capital that the system as a whole was able to put to the income. We would not have transformed a widespread poverty country in one of economic powers in the world without those assets (the gift of the fathers: patres munus) made up of civil virtues, of the value of the sacrifices, of faith, of ideals; we would not have tripled in the Seventies the number of firms (from 300 thousand to one million) without work by peasant and artisan. Without forgetting that immense capital made of care for women: an enormous patrimony not recognized and unpaid”. L. BRUNI, *Investire su humanities e coesione sociale*, in «Il Sole 24 Ore», 2 Marzo 2016. On these issues, see the essay of I. IANNUZZI, *The smart city. Critical reading of a multiform phenomenon*, in this issue of the magazine.

<sup>28</sup> W. SOMBART, *Der Bourgeois. Zur Geistesgeschichte des modernen Wirtschaftsmenschen*, Duncker & Humblot, München & Leipzig 1913; Italian translation *Il borghese. Contributo alla storia intellettuale e morale dell'uomo economico moderno*, Longanesi, Milano 1978, p. 136.

<sup>29</sup> “I do not believe unlikely”, Sombart warned already at the beginning of '900, “that in a few hundred years the historian who will describe the time in which we live today, put at the head of that part of his book the title: the age

A restrictive sense of smartness would not only be short-sighted, but also harmful with respect to the inevitable side effects that an efficient hyperbola brings with it. To make only one known example, new technologies can help to reduce problems of social exclusion but can also be a source of social exclusion by creating new forms of digital divide and lack of access to services. In this case, would we still face a “smart” reality? The ultimate technology applied to the experience, either economic, social or political is not in itself a guarantee of improvement or development, if it is not accompanied by measures that make that found accessible and usable. In the same way, a technology that facilitates certain operations, but with high social and economic costs, cannot be said to be a smart technology, but simply an efficient technology.

It is perhaps in light of these reasons that, at a certain point of reflection and practice in certain areas, the digitization is no longer enough and there is the need to coin a new term such as that of smart. But this concept cannot be used if it is indeterminate and confused. Without necessarily having to support the reading of Hollands, according to which the vagueness of terminology and conceptual structure that surrounds the issue would not have random, but the result of a deliberate choice, time to include any postmodern transformation, certainly leave confused the concept of smartness does not help to seize the constitutive determinants that collective intelligence social and that you would like to materialize.

The risk of making the smartness a synonymous with technological advancement and/or digital remains always in ambush and this should push the science questioning simultaneously on all fronts, without which the economic or technological have the better for definition but advocating a contextual advancement of both the material culture because of the non-material<sup>30</sup>. Only in this way it is possible that the issues of concern and urgent, or simply critical aspects do not remain in the background but become a reason of real and complete “intelligence”. This is the case invoked by Hollands<sup>31</sup> implications of entrepreneurial city described by Harvey<sup>32</sup>, of the domain of neoliberal spaces denounced by Peck and Tickell<sup>33</sup>, discrimination between citizens more ordinary and citizens more “performance” described by Amin, Massey and Thrift<sup>34</sup>, or issues related to urban marketing by Short<sup>35</sup>.

There can be no talk of integration in the broadest sense if there is no coordination of actions, as well as the practices and processes at different levels of the social structure while maintaining a low level of conflict and harmonious relationship between the economic, political, social, cultural and natural heritage.

The concept of “joint optimization” of technical features and social ones of a system stands out. It reminds us that not always the optimization of one corresponds to the improvement of other: indeed, it is often precisely the extreme enhancement of certain functions, most of those techniques which, especially in the first abutment and until you may recover the disproportion, leads to an underestimation of the other. Optimizing the technical-economic efficiency can thus easily lead to poor results on other fronts with undoubted repercussions on what it intended to strengthen. What is ignored or underestimated is in fact intended to re-emerge, often in the rooted and extreme form, interfering on what you wanted to optimize. The joint optimization of the functions is this then toward which a full smartness and promising should aim, even at the cost of steps more lenses or goals (at least in the immediate) more exiguous. In the context of natural resources this systemic lesson is now acquired and if

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of records”. *Ivi*, p. 138.

<sup>30</sup> DR W.F. OGBURN, *Social Change with respect to culture and Original Nature*, Viking Press, New York 1922.

<sup>31</sup> See R.G. HOLLANDS, *quote* and the relative description by A. DE LUCA, *quote*, p. 145.

<sup>32</sup> D. HARVEY, *From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism*, in «Geografiska Annaler», vol. 71b, n. 1, 1989, pp. 3-17.

<sup>33</sup> J. PECK, A. TICKEL, *Neoliberalising space*, in «Antipode», vol. 34, n. 3, 2002, pp. 380-404.

<sup>34</sup> A. AMIN, D. MASSEY, N. THRIFT, *Cities for the many not for the few*, Policy Press, Bristol 2000.

<sup>35</sup> J.R. SHORT ET AL., *From World cities to Gateway Cities: Extending the boundaries of Globalization Theory*, in «City», vol. 4, n. 3, 2000, pp. 317-340.

the smart environment exists is precisely because these assumptions emerged with clarity and there is growing with decision, both in the scientific speculation as in practice. But what happens, or could (hopefully) happen, to the natural environment will not automatic clicks on other fronts. If this does not happen the idea of systemic integration that you would like to materialize and that mainly, if not exclusively, we must refer to grasp the essence of smartness would be compromised. It is perhaps in this sense that the concept of economic and social and not only natural sustainability should be read and implemented.

The smart society is a sustainable society as integrated in all its levels in its structures and areas of expertise. If it is true that smart “stands for efficient, capable, inclusive, modern, sustainable, thus starting from the original impression of ICT infrastructures, a city [as well as a smart company] must also include activities coordinated and integrated in the social, environmental and economic aimed at the enhancement of human capital, at the reduction of the environmental impact and at the resolution of environmental emergencies priority (for example the consumption of soil, urban renewal and energy, mobility, waste management) with the related economic benefits”<sup>36</sup>.

In short, the smart society does not clear but remembers the timeless problem, perhaps never solved in the theory of social systems concerning the objects that the system itself aims and to which, as known, the theory functional - structural theory has not been able to adequately respond to. While admitting that the objects, and with them the values which are upstream and norms that derive from them downstream, are shared, the problem of the relationship between standards and interests, favorites in some cases and damaged in others remains unsolved. Therefore remains even in this case the central question that perhaps only “the general theory of systems” has faced, at least in its problematic nature and in addition to the replies of merit gradually changing, i.e. the assumed according to which no analysis of system - and analysis of system in case of smartness it is - can proceed if you do not specify to whom and how it is constituted of a governing unit, what are the goals toward which it tends toward which they directs the control and social adjustment<sup>37</sup>. If, therefore the ideal of the “transparent society”<sup>38</sup> does not become real, we are not able to understand the hyper technological role of postmodern society, in which the media play a determinant role, making the experience more chaotic, but also with new hopes of emancipation. “Today humanity must rise to the level of its technological possibilities”<sup>39</sup>, says Vattimo, but also “imagine an ideal of man”<sup>40</sup> - and at this point we could also add “relationships” – “that takes into account and uses up at the bottom of these possibilities”. For this we need a “governance” equally intelligent and that it is up to the task, “smart, transparent, inclusive, capable of developing a clear and shared vision of prosperity and quality of life and sustainability, the purposes for which, as happens to acquire and develop the media materials of the urban intelligence, must have the capacity to stay in network with other territories and with the other countries that develop similar projects”<sup>41</sup>. No smartness is therefore possible without a smart governance, understood as the adoption of models of government based on the centrality of relational goods and common and on civic participation in the creation of value, and without a smart community, in which connection and sharing, i.e. links active relational exalted by the use of new technologies, and a dynamic and adaptive

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<sup>36</sup> T. FEDERICO, *Smart City: innovazione e sostenibilità*, in «EAI. Energia, Ambiente e Innovazione», n. 5, 2013, pp. 35-40.

<sup>37</sup> N. LUHMANN, *Soziale Systeme: Grundriss einer allgemeinen Theorie*, Suhrkamp Frankfurt 1984; Italian translation *Sistemi sociali: fondamenti di una teoria generale*, il Mulino, Bologna 1990.

<sup>38</sup> G. VATTIMO, *La società trasparente*, Garzanti, Milano 2000.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>41</sup> T. FEDERICO, *quote*, p. 39.

production of common sense oriented to participation constitute innovative forms of connective empowerment<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> G. PAINI, *Cosa sono le smart communities*, 2012, document available at the link [http://www.thinktag.it/system/files/11778/Smart\\_Communi.pdf](http://www.thinktag.it/system/files/11778/Smart_Communi.pdf). On the concept of “connective empowerment”, see G. BOCCIA ARTIERI, *Stati di connessione: pubblici, cittadini e consumatori nella (social) network society*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2012.

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