

NEW MAPS FOR THE DESIRES OF AN EMERGING WORLD

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1. Foreword

“The drama that Vermeer sets up on his stage [...]. It’s about something very different, it’s about the desire to understand the world: not the one regarding the domestic interiors, or from Delft, but the endless expenses in which merchants and travelers will venture, bringing home beautiful objects and amazing stories. Some of them are attracted from the view, to others the imagination has been kidnapped, and the most acute minds of the Vermeer generation, reflecting on them, learned to see the world in a new way, redefining its dimensions by proposing new theories and new scientific models extended at a macroscopic level, to the whole terrestrial globe and, to the microscopic one, depths that began to reveal themselves in a drop of water or in a speck of dust. The geographer refers on this”¹.

“In that Empire the Art of Cartography became such a perfection that the map of a single province occupied a whole city, and the Map of the Empire a whole Province. Over the time these bound-

1 Brook (2015) p. 91.

less maps were no longer enough. The Cartographer Colleges made a Map of the Empire that coincided perfectly with it"².

The epochal changes speeded up by the globalization of new things, technologies and knowledge, pose new questions and new paradigms about the sense of places and the desire for their collective and individual sharing. Millions of people move in time and space, approached and constricted by the technological progress, with outstanding speed. In this context, especially the cultural heritage, art and culture, in their tangible and intangible forms, become the protagonists of new social and economic dynamics, assigning to the experience of the journey a method of identification through the discovery of the world.

This involves all of the social classes, different generations, various professional profiles and specific geographical areas. It is well known that on national and international level there is an exponential and unstoppable increase regarding the demand of tourism, placing cultural heritage on a significant position.

Obviously, this does not guarantee the qualification of the demand and therefore the offer of quality in search for knowledge in its multiple meanings. Indeed, very often, the division between financial and economic powers and the cultural systems as a characteristic of the contemporaneity is the origin for the idea of a merchandized and fragmented tourism. Very often this means a reduction of the *knowledge* to a simple *information*, places of fleeting glances described as 'hit and go', where the local identities vanish because of the process of globalization.

The same sophisticated technological advances that characterize the era that we live in, bringing the knowledge into a strongly virtual dimension, end up being misleading and causing evident misunderstandings. *Google Earth* creates the illusion of traveling in places and landscapes, thinking of simultaneously sharing time and space. Basically, in reality it immerses in a non-space, immobile, silent, out of depth and any particular character: "Modernity has transformed the

2 Borges (1958) p. 84.

world into one huge space, into a single enormous map that comes in crisis with the end of modernity”³.

This wide and totalized vision, facilitated by the invention of the web, comes into crisis when it clashes with the need for a new relation between global and local, between an overall vision and the perception of places in their most identitary characters. The ‘knowledge of the world’ today passes from the ability to get out of a touristic system that is projected towards exclusive economic interests, creating stereotypes and advertising iconographies that substitute real places. This becomes a fertile context for experimenting with more interactive instruments that do not conceal information, but bring out visions and stories, visible or invisible. Places are the result of overlapping, thanks to information and knowledge, hiding semantic topographies, relationships between physical and metaphysical, readings of different literary, scientific and historical texts.

2. Map crafting

What kind of maps correspond to this? Which is the figurative language that is more appropriate to describe them? Are the conventional geographic tools sufficient to perceive them? Which are the relationships that the map should communicate, in a knowledge that is not limited only to the visible, but recounts what you can’t see at first glance? Answering these questions can contribute to the design skills of the architect regarding the transformation of the places as well as to the traveler observation, intent on satisfying the desire for knowledge. Quoting Franco Farinelli, it is necessary to “search for a genealogy of visions into the projects. Innovation is necessary for finding a system of relations between the map (that is the expression of geography) and the mind”⁴.

3 Farinelli (2015).

4 *ibid.*

It is clear that cultural heritage in its material and immaterial dimensions needs not only information but also the formation of the cognitive experience, where space and time, memory and evocative sense of vision, are fundamental elements for new possible maps. More often the idea of traveling is linked to the desire to see – it can be said in a Corbusian sense – that cannot be separated from knowledge, real or imaginary, as in the nature of places, bringing the idea of knowledge back to the observer. Taking this in consideration, conventional cartography risks to create real concealments, hiding the real “places of the mind”, the presence of the human traces with the real and imaginary entity inherent in every place.

The structure of tourist guides, for example, often tends to impose things to see into the places and cities – buildings, artworks, environmental and landscape presences – forgetting about many others. There is a comeback of the original guides, like the *Peutinger* paper or the equipment supplied by the first pilgrims, where the main need was to indicate the long roads of the Roman Empire or to point out the places of worship, considering the rest unnecessary, therefore negligible or invisible.

“Representing the territory is already seize. Now, this representation is not a cast, but a construction. The first role of the map is to understand, then to act. With the territory, it divides its nature to process, product, project: and since it is also form and sense, there is a risk to be taken as a subject. Established as a model, endowed with the charm of a microcosm, it tends to replace the real. The map is more pure than the territory, because it obeys to the principle. It lends itself to every design that led to anticipation and which it seems to prove the lawfulness. This sort of *trompe-l'oeil* does not display only the actual territory to which it refers, but it may also give a shape that it is not. It therefore manifests the nonexistent territory with the same seriousness as the other, and this is enough to prove how it is good to distrust “.⁵

5 Corboz (1998) pp 185-186.

The history of the representation of the world is based on this dichotomy. Art and science have characterized it in a dualistic development, on one hand assigning it the role of constructing the vision of the world, on the other hand seeing it as a geographical instrument to orientate and identify things and places. This in a constant need to explore, to understand, to recount and to show the world, to be able to look at it “with the eyes of the gods” or, better, with the “point of view of the gods”.

The dream of Icarus was that one to be able to observe the reality from bird's eye view. From the literary description of the cartographers, of the fantastic geographers⁶, as witness in history to the parallel and dialectic evolution of the practice and thought of the representation of the territory and, therefore, of *geographien*, or “writing the earth”, together with the philosophical one – conceptual, through technical and technological evolution. It is necessary to overcome the human limit of the partial, fragmentary and therefore selective vision of the eye and thus of the body. From the *Peutinger's* map through the imaginary cartography up to contemporary scientific topography, there is the need of a totalizing and all-encompassing gaze, capable to unite the knowledge with the sense of the existence, in its form and its relationship with the cosmos. Having this as a background it can be said that the representations in history indifferently float between *real* and *dreamed* representation, above all when the map is given the task of investigating scenarios that are part of an organic collective imagination in the history of thought and of humanity, in their character of exploring physical and human territories.

“The territory of fantasy is no less real than the real one, and the fantastic map is no less true than the real one, and yet there is a difference, and perhaps lies in the opposition between the use function and the production of function”⁷. The Eighth Century Mundi maps, the Thirteenth Century Ebstorf map, the Renaissance maps that can be

6 See Calabrese O./Giovandoli R./Pezzini I. (1983).

7 Ibidem, p. 9.

placed between art and the science of survey, the utopian descriptions of Thomas More, the physical representations of the Earthly Paradise or the reconstruction of Atlantis of Athanasius Kircher, the Treasure Island of Stevenson or the Lilliput of Swift, the cosmological visions of Yambo in 1906, the description of the city and the territory of Perla in the short story *The other part* of Alfred Kubin, the geographies of Giorgio De Chirico, Carlo Carrà, Paul Klee, can be read horizontally as a history of the representation of the territory, as a history of thought underlying the research for *geographien*, as a representation of the world and the cosmos that surrounds us.

“Governed by chance and caprice, the geography of fantasy, woodworm of the international cartographic order, digs its orifices in the maps of each Country. Those who rush along the deviant and intriguing paths, runs unsuspected risks, enjoys unheard delights and luxuries.⁸ The “Manual of Places of Fantasy” is presented as a practical guide of the described places, complete with recommendations and advice for the travelers, through maps and localized territories, ready for use “as for any real journey”.

3. Science, knowledge, and representation

Although starting from different points of view and assumptions, each representation can be understood as a fundamental element in the construction of the more general mosaic, constituted by the need for discovering and knowledge. It is no coincidence that in the *Cartography* of the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Architecture and Urban Planning* the maps of “fantasy of places” are mentioned as an evolutionary reality of cartography itself. The current scientific achievements in the field of mapping do not move, but rather simplify and facilitate the representation of the unknown and unexplored territories, far from concrete and material reality, leaving the need to expand the world in

⁸ Ibidem, p. 32.

imagination and fantasy unchanged. On the other hand we are witnessing the evolution of cartographic representation as a science of survey and knowledge of the world accenting their value in practical use in the system of social, economic and political relations.

In the Renaissance there are remarkable achievements in the field of cartography: the Leon Battista Alberti treaties, the famous Letter of Raphael to Leo X, as well as the zenith survey of Leonardo da Vinci for the city of Imola, represent important moments in the history of cartography. It is since the Eighteenth century that radical changes take place, in the field of detection and the way of seeing and conceiving the territory. In fact, the particulate topographic representation appears, that is a new way of seeing the territory, the cities and their value. There is a strive towards a process of an abstraction, where the maps surpass particularistic needs, often linked to the identity of the territory, to submit everything to the homogenizing and indifferent logic of the maps. Everything becomes subordinated to the measure and evaluated in terms of super structural values: economic, legal, political.⁹

These changes are dialectically linked to the double change on the cartography: the passage to a reading through abstract interpretative models, and the changes of the “points of view”, the actors-authors of the map. From the interpretation perspective, cartography starts to privilege the theoretical-abstract model where the territory is subtracted from ocular observation; the naturalistic vision of the places is overcome, focused on analogical models, of similarity and correspondence between the represented and the representation. The contents are transmitted with words, symbols and graphics, thus with a development of a universal symbolic-conventional language. The value of the map is linked to the political, legal, and administrative use of the contents, making direct point of view of the places that becomes completely superfluous. This is also related to the dissemination of changes in the disciplines such as descriptive geometry. The development of two-dimensional scientific-mathematical views, which in opposition

9 See D'Alfonso (1987).

to the monocular perspective view, tries to infinity and enhance the abstraction and conceptualization of representation.

The second aspect concerns the points of view and therefore the actors-authors: the cartography is no longer the prerogative of geographers, architects and technicians; new roles emerge that analyze society through maps such as sociologists, economists, jurists and politicians. The contents of the cartographies are beyond the direct, personal and/or artistic-cognitive: they acquire a “state value”, therefore architects or thinkers are not the ones that produce maps, but the “scientists” statesmen who have the task of accurately rewriting the vision of the terrestrial space with roads, bridges, rivers, mountains, buildings, etc. In other words, a process has been started with the central point in abstraction and detachment from the “real”; a process that finds its exaltation in the contemporaneity with the digital papers that have become a set of numerical relationships.

The construction of new contemporary maps, above all finalized on the divulgative value of use on the touristic plan highlighting the cultural heritage, moves within this evolution of thought, as well as the idea of communication and representation. This has been posed as one of the problems of the research¹⁰ on “Tourism as an art of places”¹¹ for the Calabria Region. The whole methodological and content apparatus tends to construct a paradigmatic experience approaching a place and projecting it primarily in a vision, in a way to feel it and think it, therefore in a seductive imaginary that needs to get out of stereotypes

10 See the research, Smart City Progetto ACI. *SmartT per la costruzione della piattaforma di servizi e strumenti - INMOTO – Information and MObility for Tourism* - MIUR, P.O.N. Research and Competitiveness 2007-2013, Smart Cities and Communities and Social Innovation Asse II – Sostegno all’Innovazione Azioni Integrate per la Società dell’Informazione Azioni Integrate per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile – UNICAL, UNICZ, consultancy UNIRC

11 *Il turismo come arte dei luoghi* it is also the title of a research started in 2005 with a design workshop on the topic *Il progetto dell'esistente e il restauro del paesaggio* held in Pizzo (VV) within the department DASTEC from Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria.

and generalizing images dictated more by the news than by their own historical/geographical identity.

In the last decades, Calabria has experienced a condition of overturning its image, related to descriptive factors of reports on economic and social degradation. A real disintegration of its identity and self-awareness therefore occurred, with the consequent loss of its narrative and figurative capacity, of the possibility of representing itself through an authentic iconographic culture. Deficit of representation as iconographic deficit is seen therefore as a limitation in the ability to affirm the project as an organic moment of valorization of all its territory in the more general context of the South and the Mediterranean.

A partial vision has been privileged, that has essentially omitted the internal areas, focusing on the edge of the coastline, without perspective depth, compared to its profound nature, still authentic in its historical and landscape conformation. The structural changes are added to this, since the 1960s, have distraught the connotations and the social, economic, cultural, as well as the territorial references.¹² These have made a real concealment of the identity of the places, overlapping history and nature in an indifferent way, constructing in the collective imagination the diffused and negative sense of an aesthetics of degradation.

4. Mapping Calabria

The project for new maps for Calabria¹³ starts from the necessity to resume the sense of an interrupted story, able to bring out, almost like an archaeological unveiling, values and evocative visions of a region that regains its status as a historical-artistic *tòpos* to strengthen its

12 It refers to the failed industrialization that has created new ruins on the entire coast, the abandonment of agricultural culture, therefore of the internal areas, the emptying of urban centers through emigration, which has disintegrated the social and cultural fabric of the region.

13 The Thematic Maps are result of the research THE TOURISM AS ART OF PLACE, coordinated by Ottavio Amaro and Marina Tornatora within the research Laboratory

own identity in the more general context of the global 'journey'. In this framework the map, together with its use value, aims to create not only the figurative representation of the reality, but above all a "place of the mind"¹⁴, the revival of an idea of territory that goes beyond the real/imaginary relationship, confronting the desire, the discovery, the evocative story, a property of the region. To it we can assign not only the descriptive value aimed at revealing itineraries, but mainly the ability to arouse and induce travel, to recreate the seduction of the traveler's own errand.

Starting from this, the construction of the new maps has favored a diagrammatic story, where the analogic representation disappears giving space to the abstraction that is more evident as a theoretical and mental conception of the territory than as a practical use-descriptive value. The map goes beyond the physical and illustrative narrative, opening up to the immaterial and the possibility of a multiple vision where the unpredictable, the seduction of discovery but also of losing oneself, become elements of attraction and multiform reading for the traveler. It is an approach that, starting from the contemporary technological development in the cartographic field, traces the ancient sense of the itinerary. As in the medieval maps of the first pilgrims, able to immerse in a journey characterized by the religious sense and the transcendent, and therefore from the evocative and above all purifying value, the meaning of the new maps is to recount a story made of episodes, steps, objects, descriptions, imaginary extensions of places.

Even in this case the first maps possessed an abstraction, privileging points and nodes beyond their connecting spaces. These maps are not intended to reproduce the world but to interpret it, giving more tools to those who use them; As J.-L. Rivière (1983) claims, "more abstract the image is, more the journey is concrete"¹⁵. The elaborations

LANDSCAPE_inPROGRESS of the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. The Research Team was formed by F. Arco, A. De Luca, G. Falzone, M. R. Caniglia, P. Mina

14 De Seta (2014).

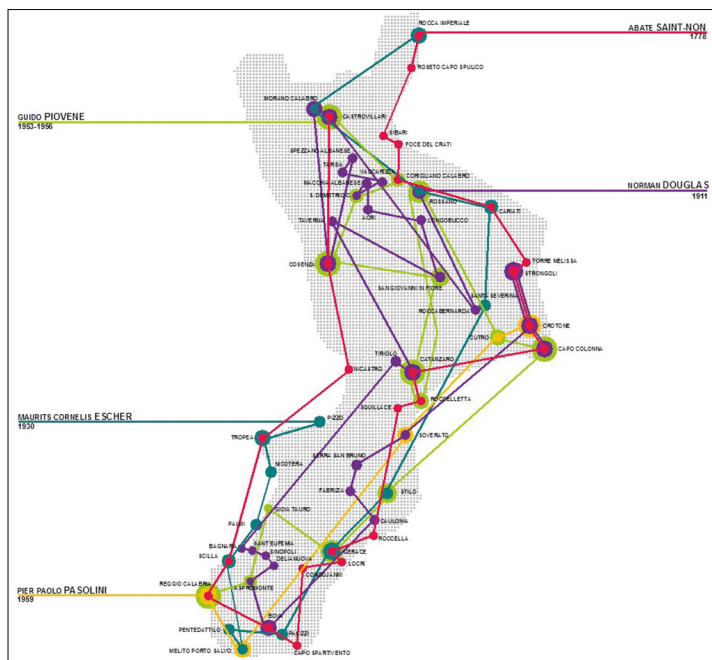
15 Rivière (1983). p.20.

proposed in this text refer to thematic maps reviewed in their rigorous setting of partial and quantitative contents, to act as a hybrid condition of more information, 'visible' and 'invisible'. They escape from a codified apparatus of a conventional notational system, as the necessity for a reading on different scale, to search for its own language. The diagrammatic drawing represents the most effective form for contents that are not only iconic but also literary and conceptual. The eight thematic sections identify as many maps where the abstraction of the representation correspond narrations, possibility of deeper gaze on the treated places. We can discuss about maps of invention, of narrative devices, of attempts to search alternative maps:

1) The iconography and the journey

Richard Keppel Craven, Françoise Lenormant, Edvard Lear, Chatelet, Dominique Vivant-Denon, Henry Wisburne, Georg Gissing, Horace Rilliet as well as Norman Douglas, Escher, Guido Piovene, Pier Paolo Pasolini, starting from the Grand Tour, represent itineraries and points of view of the regional territory, still not 'contaminated' or 'polluted' by the publications of commercial tourism. They should be seen in double value: on the one hand as the narrative of a journey carried out in the morphological and landscape folds of a still wild and raw territory with a strong sense of individual discovery and with the anxiety of the unpredictable; on the other hand as the possibility to observe, through the iconographic and literary heritage left by travelers, a mirrored vision, where the symbology or the conventional and silent system of the map don't select the observation, but the eye and the gaze strongly connected to time, to the feeling and cultural relations of the observer.

Map 1. The iconography and the journey

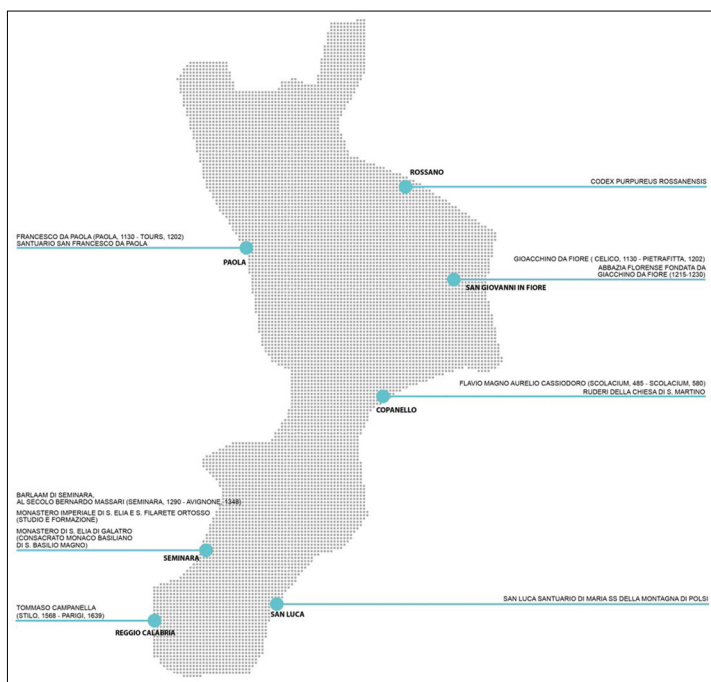


2) The literary narrative

It is a map that identifies the places lived by writers and poets, impregnated with their physical (dwelling, foundations, museums) and immaterial presence, steeped in a literary and poetic narrative, that is often the mirror, more authentic than reality, capable of penetrating in the *genius loci*, in the culture, in the anthropological depth of the places and people. Corrado Alvaro, Fortunato Seminara, Mario La Cava, Leonida Répaci, Saverio Strati, Adele Cambria, Enzo Siciliano, poets as Franco Costabile, Lorenzo Calogero, distinguished Calabrians, as well as Cesare Pavese, Giuseppe Berto, Norman Douglas, Umberto Zanotti Bianco, Giuseppe Isnardi, have observed places, cities, landscapes, cultures and common people and then described them in a literary transposition, that outlines an ideal plot bringing out the re-

Paola, the Certosa of Serra San Bruno, the Sanctuary of the Madonna di Polsi in San Luca, the places of Cassiodoro in Copanello, those of Tommaso Campanella in Stilo, of Barlaam in Seminara, identify the place of Calabria far from the noise of the coast and dedicated to mysticism and spiritual recollection of strong symbiosis with the landscape and the nature.

Map 3. *The places of mysticism*



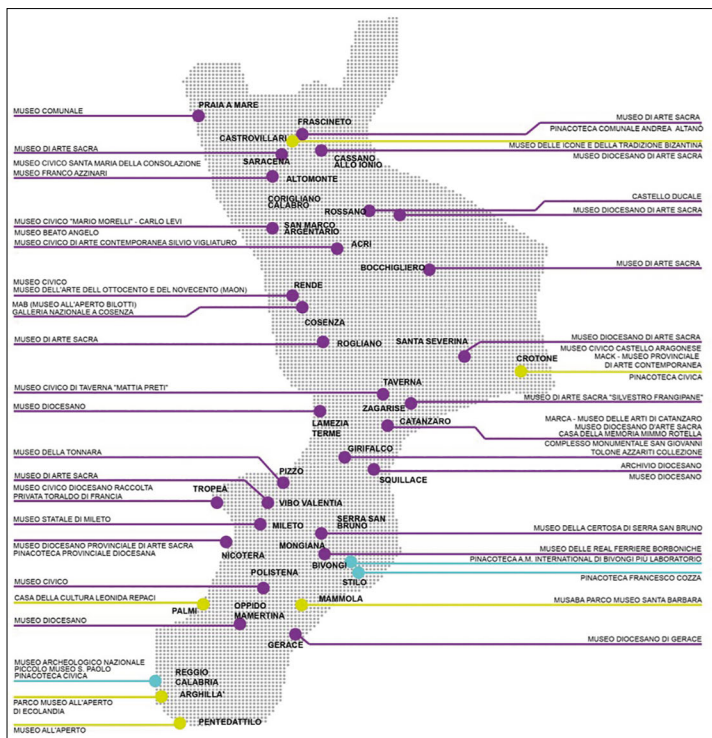
4) The places of art

This map unfolds along a twofold trail: the preserved art in museums, as well as the art disseminated in the landscapes: a new palimpsest in dialectic with the natural *icon* of the Region, a new interpretation of the original landscapes. Over fifty museums surveyed all over the Re-

gion, hosting ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary art, create a cultural network of artistic heritage accessible to travelers. If on one hand the art is an immense and universal form of knowledge, on the other it is a discovery of the places in symbiosis with the landscape and the ground on which it insists. The MuSaBa Foundation in Mammola, the Bilotti open-air museum in Cosenza, the contemporary installations in the Archaeological Park of Scolacium, the contemporary signs traced in the walkways of the abandoned city of Pentedattilo from VI-ARTIS¹⁶, these can provide travelers with new and rich interpretative keys of Calabria.

16 Reference is made to the research work on VIArtis – *sulle rotte del Mediterraneo*, conducted under the POR CALABRIA FESR 2007/2013, ASSE V – Natural Resources, Cultural and Sustainable Tourism. It intervenes in the field of contemporary art through an interdisciplinary relationship between art, architecture and music with experiments and project interventions on some places in Calabria. The results are reported in Amaro O. (ed., 2013), *ViArtis. Sulle Rotte Mediterranee*. Catalogue of Creative Sites, vol. I, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli.

Map 4. The places of art



5) The places of cinema

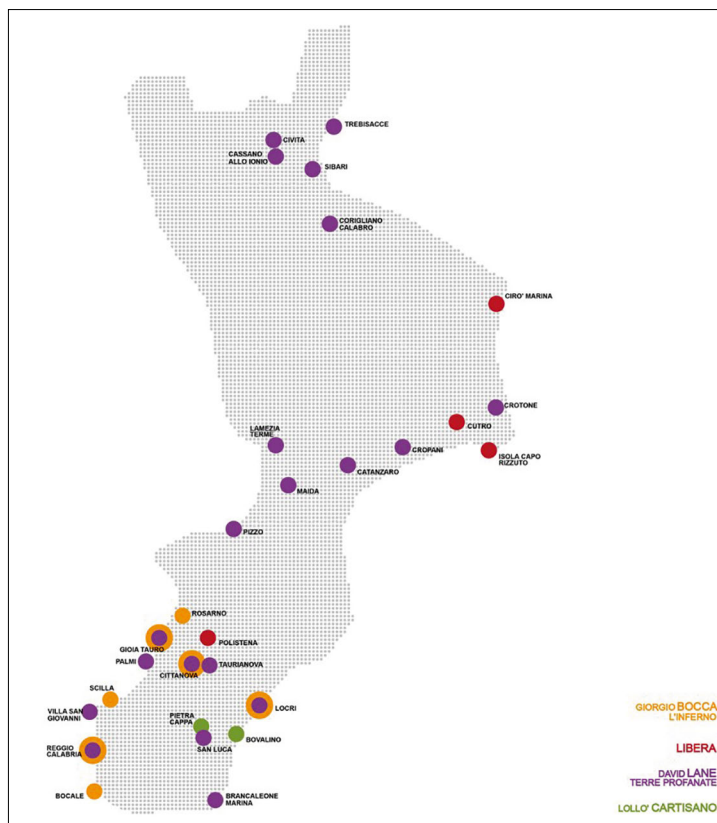
The map traces locations of many movies and documentaries from important Italian directors produced in the territory of Calabria from the 1930s until today. The cinema, as an acquired language of the modern and contemporary vision, has become a powerful tool for knowledge and representation of places. It often builds and invents the imagery of places. Its evocative power, poetic and descriptive, is certainly a very effective reading key also regarding the tourist attraction. Therefore, retracing the places of the cinema means pointing at possible unpublished itineraries, where lived memories are mixed (of actors, directors, etc.) with the scenes and the specialized captures of the camera.

6) Desecrated lands

It is the map where events of crime, episodes of illegality and organized crime are intertwined with the history of many municipalities and geographical areas. Spaces of violence, itineraries extrapolated from texts such as the David's *Desecrated Lands*, or *The Hell* by Giorgio Bocca, trace the paths of knowledge and awareness of one part of the history of places. "In one of the most beautiful places of creation where the sky is clear and the sacred plant of the olive tree covers the soft earth with a silver roof, associations of thieves and murderers have sown death and destruction"¹⁷. If these are the places of tragedy, next to them are those of redemption and civil reaction, as the itineraries of the confiscated lands and labor camps of the Association *Libera*, destination for travelers who follow the maps of ethical and civil redemption with the activities of the community and voluntary service.

17 Bocca (1992) p.91.

Map 6. Desecrated lands



7) The places of classical archeology

It is the map that presents the cultural richness of a Region that has seen the interweaving and the contamination of different, distant and autochthonous identities. The condition of backwardness and isolation that has characterized Calabria for a long time, has paradoxically kept the whole cultural and archaeological heritage especially in the relationship with the ground and the landscape. The map identifies the archaeological parks, the network of museums, the historical landscapes, where

8) The great ruin

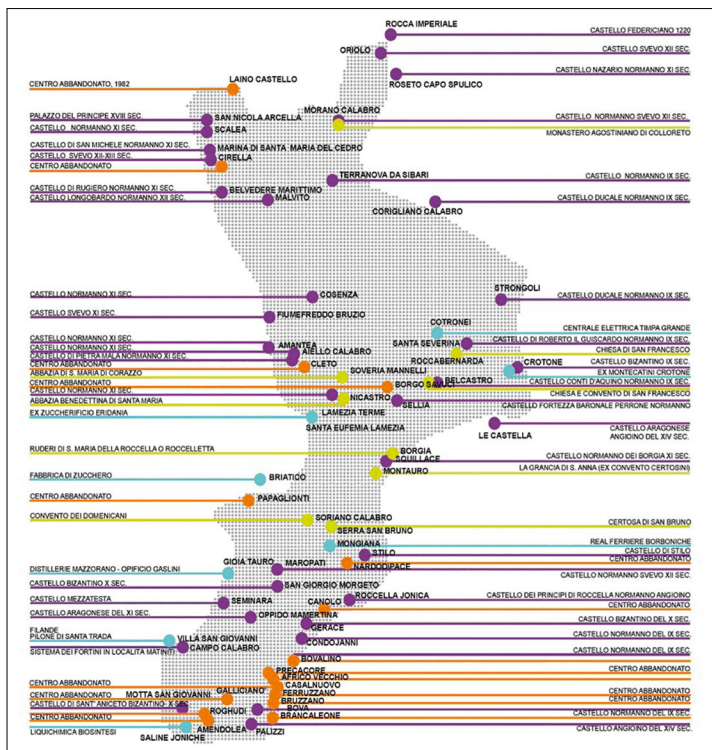
It is the map of a region rich in history and culture, related to continuous catastrophic events that have destroyed cities and monuments, cyclically bringing it back to the initial stage of its existence. Calabria, together with the topics of myth and history, becomes part of the European imagination through the image of the catastrophe. The urban imprints of the Greek cities, the temples of Marasà and Caulonia, the Cyclopean walls of Vibo Valentia, hundreds of single-aisle Byzantine churches, the Certosa of Serra San Bruno, the great dome of the convent of San Domenico in Soriano, The Ferriere and the Mongiana weapon factory, dozens of abandoned urban centers, the medieval castles and convents, construct the landscape elements of the “great ruin”.

In the contemporary collective imagination, the ruin has a double meaning: an interpretative discovery of artefacts and monuments of the past, an evocative and poetic fragment in itself, capable of transferring and suspending history and memory on a more metaphysical and timeless meaning.

In such a respect the ruin acquires a specific value, establishing a relationship between the landscape and the context, as all the historical iconography has done starting from romantic time, where “the balance between nature and the spirit represented by the building in that sense gave place to nature”¹⁸. Moreover, the map contaminates the idea of the historical ruin with the existence of contemporary ruins, without any evocative memory: the unfinished coastal housing system, the abandoned factories, visions of unfinished infrastructure, construct a new imaginary where perhaps there is predominance of the fascination and the seduction of the irrational.

18 Simmel (1992) p.103-107.

Map 8. The great ruin



5. Concluding remarks

Next to the maps conceived as chapters of the same narration that moves in time and space on an eminently conceptual basis where forms and measures of the territory are lost, we crafted maps of the Region illustrating the parts that compose it more in detail: a mosaic/abacus that, as for any organism, describes the structural system that composes it. A long and narrow region like Calabria is characterized by a significant heterogeneity of the parts that compose it, which means a rich landscape, overcoming a simplified vision of the territorial

uniqueness. Already in the past Calabria was distinguished in *Citerior* and *Uterior*. In this context, the discussion is about landscapes in Calabria as dismembered parts belonging to a single body.

The new map is aimed to communicate this articulation, either on the nominal level or on the territorial level. It decomposes the landscapes of Calabria in relation to the morphological and territorial identities, identifying some *landscape rooms*¹⁹: areas in which cultural and environmental resources and assets are placed, in relation to their natural and historical context. Think about the tourist itineraries: their location within the *landscape rooms* connotes their historical specificity, the distances, the key for understanding a region that for years has lived in isolation from one *room* to another. Thus, a new identity map recounts the elements of the geography, but also the system of relations and interconnections that the region has experienced in its historical-cultural journey.

The map identifies fourteen rooms, tracked by many visions and points of view. As Guido Piovene noted in 1956: "Traveling in Calabria means to accomplish a significant number of roundtrips, as following the whimsical path of a labyrinth. Broken by those steep slopes, it is not only different from area to area, but it changes with abrupt passages, in the landscape, in the climate, in the ethnic diversity of the inhabitants. It is certainly the strangest among our regions"²⁰. This applicative part of Calabria ended with the proposal of maps for rooms and then for itineraries regarding their interiors. The 'relativity' remains a problem of the map and of the risk that carries itself or in any case hides other truths and knowledge to the traveler.

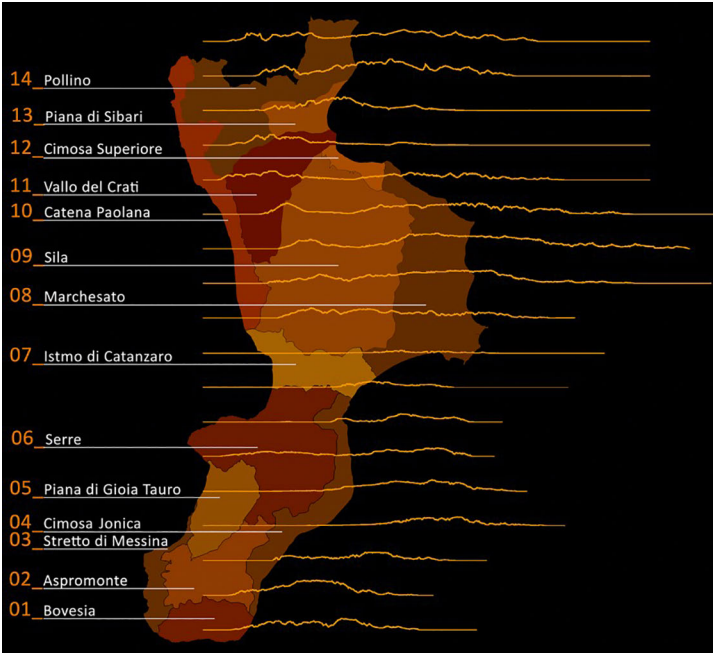
It is the desire of making mistakes that characterizes those who travel, in the awareness of following often constructed 'labyrinths': "The most thoughtful and most significant cartographic 'text' remains the labyrinth: on one hand an 'author', a space, a limit, an itinerary, an end that can be death or liberation, on the other hand a 'sacrificed' who

19 See Purini (1991), and – with specific relationship to Calabria – Gambi (1978).

20 Piovene (1957) p.509.

must reinvent that space, that limit, that route, that end. Between the author and the sacrificed the challenge is supported by mutual solidarity, and mutual respect. Each of them does not know the other but perceives him; life is at stake, the itinerary is complete only if the sacrificed knows how to succeed from the labyrinth, as it has been prepared from the author”²¹.

Map 9. *The landscape rooms*



21 Macchi (1983) p.16

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