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# THEATROEIDEIS

L'IMMAGINE DELLA CITTÀ, LA CITTÀ DELLE IMMAGINI



IV. L'IMMAGINE DELLA CITTÀ DAL'900 AD OGGI

a cura di Monica Livadiotti,  
Roberta Belli Pasqua, Luigi Maria Calì, Giacomo Martines

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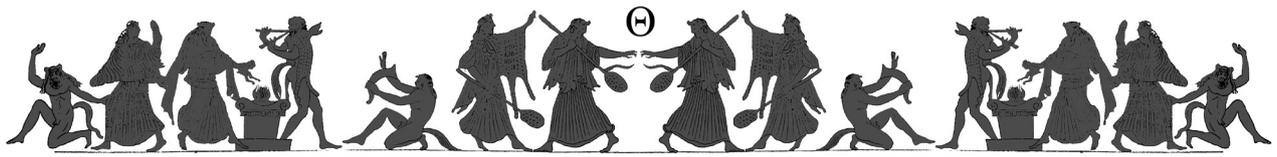
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ATTI DEL CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE, BARI, 15-19 GIUGNO 2016

a cura di Monica Livadiotti, Roberta Belli Pasqua, Luigi Maria Calì, Giacomo Martines

## IV. L'IMMAGINE DELLA CITTÀ DAL '900 AD OGGI

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## INTRODUZIONE

Il Convegno, svoltosi a Bari tra il 15 e il 19 giugno 2016, presso l'aula magna *Domus Sapientiae* del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Ingegneria Civile e dell'Architettura e presso la chiesa della Vallisa, è stato organizzato nell'ambito delle attività seminariali della Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Architettonici e del Paesaggio del Politecnico di Bari, con la collaborazione del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Ingegneria e dell'Architettura dello stesso Politecnico e dello CSSAR – Centro di Studi per la Storia dell'Architettura.

La call for paper, intitolata *Theatroeideis. L'immagine della città. La città delle immagini*, ha subito riscosso notevole interesse e i cinque giorni in cui si è svolto il Convegno sono stati davvero molto densi. Per la pubblicazione degli *Atti*, che escono in quattro tomi che insieme compongono il volume XI della collana delle Monografie di *Thiasos* edita per i tipi dell'editore Quasar di Roma, sono pervenute proposte da 135 autori, provenienti da diversi paesi (Italia, Grecia, Danimarca, Spagna, Turchia) e diverse sedi universitarie ed Enti di ricerca. Come è regola di *Thiasos*, tutti gli articoli sono stati sottoposti al vaglio di referee esterni e vogliamo cogliere l'occasione per ringraziare tutti del lavoro svolto, che ha incrementato senz'altro la qualità dell'opera. L'elenco dei referee sarà pubblicato nell'apposita rubrica del sito web della Rivista.

Il convegno si era proposto di indagare il senso dell'architettura e della pianificazione scenografica nella città occidentale dall'antichità al mondo contemporaneo, sia in relazione alle scelte architettoniche e progettuali, sia alle funzioni e ai significati sociali e culturali che di volta in volta la città e la sua società assumono.

Il tema si snoda a partire dalla città ellenistica (vol. I), la quale sviluppa una nuova forma marcatamente scenografica dell'impianto urbano, che fa dell'impatto visuale il suo punto qualificante; questo si esplica attraverso modi nuovi dell'architettura, più attenta al complesso monumentale che non al singolo edificio, in funzione di una rinnovata visibilità sociale e politica. Tale città, attraverso prospettive, vedute privilegiate, quinte e fondali, allestisce un'architettura che si fa scenografia della vita urbana. La progettazione architettonica e urbana diventano così sempre più il luogo del confronto politico, sociale e culturale, filtrato attraverso le esigenze della propaganda del potere e dell'affermazione sociale. Alla città romana, tardoantica e medievale è dedicato il vol. II, che comprende l'illustrazione di diversi casi studio che mostrano quanto la lezione della città ellenistica sia stata fatta propria anche dal mondo romano.

Alla fine dell'antichità, il Mediterraneo e l'Europa vivono una cultura urbana complessa, accolta ed elaborata dai periodi successivi. Anche nella città moderna, a cui è dedicato il vol. III, le forme e i modi del comportamento urbano continuano a confrontarsi con architetture e città scenografiche in un dialogo sempre più stratificato nel tempo e nello spazio, che arriva fino alle esperienze delle città contemporanea, alla quale è dedicato il vol. IV.

I diversi filoni che è stato possibile individuare nei contributi presentati hanno riguardato il tema dell'architettura e il suo rinnovamento nelle forme e negli spazi; il cambiamento delle tecniche costruttive e delle attività di cantiere, la ricerca di forme architettoniche, l'adozione di nuove spazialità che si distribuiscono tra piazze e percorsi urbani. In tutte le epoche, l'architettura è stata indagata all'interno del rinnovamento urbano, non tanto come momento episodico o puntuale, quanto come riqualificazione urbana che interessa complessi privati e pubblici. Per la città contemporanea è per altro emersa una linea di ricerca che riflette sulla progettazione della città, con proposte che traggono dalle forme della terra il suggerimento per il suo disegno.

Un'interessante sezione è dedicata, nei diversi periodi, alla città cerimoniale e al rapporto tra spazio e vita sociale: ritualità, feste e percorsi processionali. L'architettura vissuta si forgia di nuove accezioni e instaura un rapporto dinamico con il sostrato sociale della città. Le cerimonie

a loro volta ricevono importanti significati dai luoghi, dalle architetture e dalle loro immagini. Durante le feste e gli altri eventi pubblici, la città è percepita per sinestesia anche attraverso odori e suoni.

Sono inoltre emersi alcuni temi 'trasversali', che hanno sviluppato, nelle diverse epoche, aspetti particolari dell'immagine che la città vuole offrire di se stessa. Tra questi, particolare risalto ha naturalmente avuto il tema della città teatroide, sviluppato per diverse realtà di epoca ellenistica, tra cui in particolare Alicarnasso, il cui Mausoleo è stato per altro tema di una specifica sezione che ne indaga la fortuna fino al Rinascimento. Diversi contributi hanno invece affrontato il tema delle città portuali e della veduta privilegiata che esse offrivano all'approdo, sviluppando la narrazione sia in relazione alla città antica sia a quella moderna e contemporanea. Il caso di Pompei è stato poi oggetto di ricerche che vanno dall'analisi di complessi monumentali antichi, analizzati dal punto di vista della loro visibilità, alla restituzione dell'immagine che il restauro può fornire, fino alla fortuna di cui la città antica poté godere nel XIX secolo come fonte di ispirazione di un ricco filone di 'ricostruzioni ideali'. L'architettura per la messa in scena di spettacoli teatrali è stata poi un'altra delle linee di ricerca che si possono rintracciare in modo diacronico nei quattro volumi che compongono l'opera.

Infine, un ulteriore importante filone di indagine è stato quello della restituzione dell'immagine della città e dei suoi monumenti attraverso attività di recupero o restituzione virtuale, volte entrambe non solo alla salvaguardia dei beni architettonici, ma anche alla restituzione dell'immagine originaria degli spazi e dei monumenti che li compongono; inoltre, in diversi contributi, l'immagine della città viene ricostruita filologicamente attraverso l'analisi delle vedute e della cartografia storiche. Nel caso degli interventi di restauro, si tratta di scelte progettuali non ridotte alle sole valutazioni dell'analisi storica, ma volte anche alla definizione di metodi di rappresentazione idonei alla comprensione e divulgazione delle indagini effettuate.

Nostra intenzione era di trattare il tema dell'immagine della città in modo diacronico e interdisciplinare, come si evince per altro dalla stessa composizione del Comitato Scientifico, e riteniamo che, con la partecipazione di storici dell'architettura, archeologi, storici dell'arte, storici della musica, architetti progettisti, architetti restauratori, l'obiettivo sia stato sostanzialmente raggiunto.

*I curatori*

## IV. L'immagine della città dal '900 ad oggi





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La città restituita



# FROM RUIN TO RESOURCE. WHAT FUTURE IS THERE FOR ABANDONED TOWNS AND VILLAGES?

Rossella de Cadilhac, Lucia Serafini\*



**Keywords:** minor centers, recovery, restoration, landscape, museum.

**Parole chiave:** centri minori, recupero, restauro, paesaggio, museo.

## **Abstract:**

*During the past few decades, the topic of abandonment has become a central point in the debate on recovering towns and villages that have lost residents and undergone repairs that have profoundly marked their destiny, especially since the Second World War. Even in cases where the abandonment appears permanent, one can almost never speak of “ghost towns”, except to create a sense of mystery for tourism reasons. Besides problems related to security, most of the abandoned towns attract media attention that makes them problematic places, though they are still alive, and so there is still the possibility of recovering and restoring them. This contribution seeks to explore the possibility of reconstruction projects for abandoned towns that are just as legitimate as the programs aiming to design abandonment, that is to create museums in the regions about the regions able to transform them from rubble to ruins, in places where the dialogue with the landscape is often highly impactful, and is an essential resource for granting the individual villages a strategic dimension that ties their destiny to programmes with broad horizons, and not just geographic ones.*

*Da qualche decennio il tema dell'abbandono è divenuto centrale nel dibattito sul recupero dei centri minori, sottoposti, soprattutto a partire dal secondo dopoguerra, ad una diaspora di abitanti e di cure che ne ha segnato profondamente il destino. Anche nei casi dove l'abbandono sembra definitivo, quasi mai però si può parlare di “città morte”, se non per questioni legate alla suggestione del mistero e a richiami frettolosamente turistici. A meno di problemi legati alla sicurezza, la maggior parte dei centri abbandonati suscita infatti attenzioni mediatiche che ne fanno realtà problematiche ma ancora vive, quindi suscettibili di ripresa e valorizzazione. Il presente contributo vuole esplorare la possibilità, parlando di centri minori abbandonati, di azioni ricostruttive che abbiano la stessa legittimità di programmi diretti alla progettazione dell'abbandono, della creazione cioè di musei del territorio e sul territorio capaci di realizzare il passaggio da maceria a rovina, in contesti dove il dialogo col paesaggio è spesso di grande impatto, e risorsa indispensabile per guadagnare ai singoli centri una dimensione strategica che ne legghi il destino a programmi di largo orizzonte, non solo geografico.*

## *Towns and villages: abandonment or recovery?*

A few years ago, an article in a local newspaper caused hilarity and incredulity when it reported that the village of Valle Piola in Abruzzo had been posted for sale on eBay with an asking price of € 550 000. Valle Piola is one of the over 25 abandoned villages of the Castellana valley in the province of Teramo. Like other villages in neighbouring valleys, it has long suffered from a region-wide metamorphosis, with entire settlements being reduced to ruins and areas with a high renaturation rate (fig. 1).

This is just one of many cases in Abruzzo and elsewhere, and is emblematic of the desperate state of many Italian towns and villages, especially ones off the beaten path, generally because of their unfavourable geomorphological conditions<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> We are referring in particular to the Piedmont Alpine villages of Calsazio, Lunella and Gilli, currently for sale on eBay for less than four hundred thousand euros.



Fig. 1. Valle Piola (Te). Abandoned village of Valle Castellana in the province of Teramo (drawings C. Di Sante and S. Margiovanni).

When we speak of “towns and villages”, we’re referring to those with fewer than 5 000 inhabitants. They are called “minor centres” because of their small size but also because of their minor economic, social and cultural role that is peripheral and subordinate with respect to larger cities, at least the ones nearby<sup>2</sup>. Yet, despite being small and marginal, these centres bear precious witness to life in places with their own resources and potential, so they are “historic” in every respect, and can be considered for conservation and recovery just like any other historical testimony.

According to studies by Fabio Andreassi, Italy has 14 000 towns and villages. Of these, over 1 500 have already been abandoned, and many others are heading in the same direction, given the current depopulation trend<sup>3</sup>. It is important to underscore that when we speak of abandoned centres, we mean ones that are permanently deserted, for a more or less long period. This earns them the label of “ghost towns”, according to the vast literature on the topic in recent decades in Europe and around the world.

One fine example of a “ghost town” in Italy is Craco, in the province of Matera, in the heart of the Basilicata region. It deserves discussion because it is emblematic of abandonment due to a lack of services and geographic remoteness, but also serious hydrogeological problems. This situation has a cause-and-effect relationship that’s difficult to establish, including with regard to its almost impossible recovery<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Draft law no. 1942 from 2003 refers expressly to dimensional parameters, with its aim to establish “measures to support and reuse towns and villages with fewer than 5 000 residents”. Many regional laws lowered the 5 000 resident limit by a few thousand, referring not only to towns but also hamlets and quarters.

<sup>3</sup> ANDREASSI 2016; BARATTA 2015. These fourteen thousand include about six thousand of the eight thousand towns. The six thousand abandoned towns and villages, ISTAT confirmed, also include farms and small conurbations built in impervious zones. An initial catalogue of Italian “ghost towns” is available at [www.paesifantasma.it](http://www.paesifantasma.it).

<sup>4</sup> On all the other examples mentioned in the present paper, reference is to be made to a forthcoming monograph, currently being drafted at the Department of Architecture of Pescara, dedicated to the issue of abandonment, in particular in southern central regions of Italy.

We should also note that in Italy, we can only speak of estimated numbers, since we cannot know how many of the towns struck by the earthquakes in recent months whose residents have been displaced will ever be rebuilt, and because of the extremely long reconstruction times that are generally incompatible with preserving a community's social fabric and identity<sup>5</sup>.

Another question is that of partial abandonment, which, at least in Italy, can be considered a true on-going anthropological catastrophe, with many of the towns and villages scattered throughout most of the country at risk.

Only in a few regions, like Sicily, Tuscany, Emilia Romagna, Veneto and Puglia, do towns and villages represent less than 60% of all centres. Abruzzo, Molise, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Sardinia, Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta and Basilicata, on the other hand, have very high percentages of small centres and just as many deserted ones.

According to a study by the University of Cagliari, in Sardinia, 35 of the region's 377 towns will disappear within ten years. Then in the following 30 years, when the island will have just over one million inhabitants, 160 centres will be deserted as inland towns and villages slowly and inexorably empty in favour of coastal towns<sup>6</sup>.

In Abruzzo and Molise, towns and villages represent a full 90% of centres: most are abandoned or in the process of abandonment, and are difficult to catalogue due to the fragmentation of inhabited areas and the myriad districts and rural hamlets scattered throughout the region<sup>7</sup>. So, not only is there a high number of villages with poor road links and lacking services and infrastructures, but their population, where still present, is often elderly, and too few to even fill a single apartment complex. These residents live in homes that were often poorly rebuilt following wars and earthquakes, often among ruins left where they collapsed, and their fate appears unavoidable<sup>8</sup> (fig. 2). The summer population boom isn't sufficient to halt the road to ruin. As the most recent earthquakes have shown, repopulation is almost always based on the presence of summer residences that are occupied only occasionally, that seem to constitute one of the few economic bastions in these areas, and create complex situations for politicians deciding on whether to finance rebuilding<sup>9</sup> (fig. 3).

There is a vast literature on the topic of towns and villages, especially of a regional nature, inspired by destruction from World War II and by numerous earthquakes over the past century<sup>10</sup>.

The reasons for the abandonment are also extensively discussed, confirming their remoteness and their limited structural and residential suitability<sup>11</sup>. The crucial problem is whether it is worthwhile restoring and recovering the towns and villages through regional and provincial policies that might draw them into the network and protect their remaining identities without hampering their development and revitalisation.

Italy falls far behind other European countries in this regard<sup>12</sup>; in part because it seeks to avoid the cynicism of operations like those in Fukushima or Chernobyl; these cities have become or are becoming tourist villages pandering to so-called "dark" or "disaster" tourism associated with death and the macabre.

<sup>5</sup> The latest earthquake destroyed an area of about 600 square kilometres in Marche, Umbria, Lazio and Abruzzo. There are currently 130 towns and villages in the crater.

<sup>6</sup> A few years ago, the region launched substantial programmes to make village life in the region more attractive. A concrete example is the concession of uncultivated land to people under the age of 40 to create farms, establish ties with the land and strengthen the sense of community. Other attempts have been made in the service sector, with broadband first of all, essential to close the technology gap with large centres". Cf. *La nuova Sardegna*, 27 April 2106.

<sup>7</sup> In Abruzzo, 250 out of 305 towns lost residents between 1951 and 2011, with percentages even exceeding 80% in some cases. BONAMICO, TAMBURINI, 1996, pp. 267-280; VARAGNOLI 2004, pp. 151-168; ROLLI, ANDREASSI 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Research begun after the 2009 Abruzzo earthquake revealed the existence of urban areas with fewer than 50 residents, at least in the historic areas. Cf. CLEMENTI, DI VENOSA 2012; PELLEGRINO 2015.

<sup>9</sup> FRONTERA 2016.

<sup>10</sup> On the towns and villages cf. MANCINI 1981; FRANCINI 2012; AA.VV. 1990, pp. 59-73; MANIERI ELIA 1978; SANFILIPPO 1983. For a review of the question of historic centres, both large and small, cf. MIARELLI MARIANI 1992.

<sup>11</sup> NUCIFORA 2001, p. 78 et seq.; COLETTA 2010, p. 138 et seq.; TETI 2004.

<sup>12</sup> DEZZI BARDESCHI 1998, p. 49 et seq.. Cf. AVETA 1988, p. 159.

Fig. 2. Castelnuovo (Is). Village in the Molise in a serious state of neglect (drawings A. Mormile).

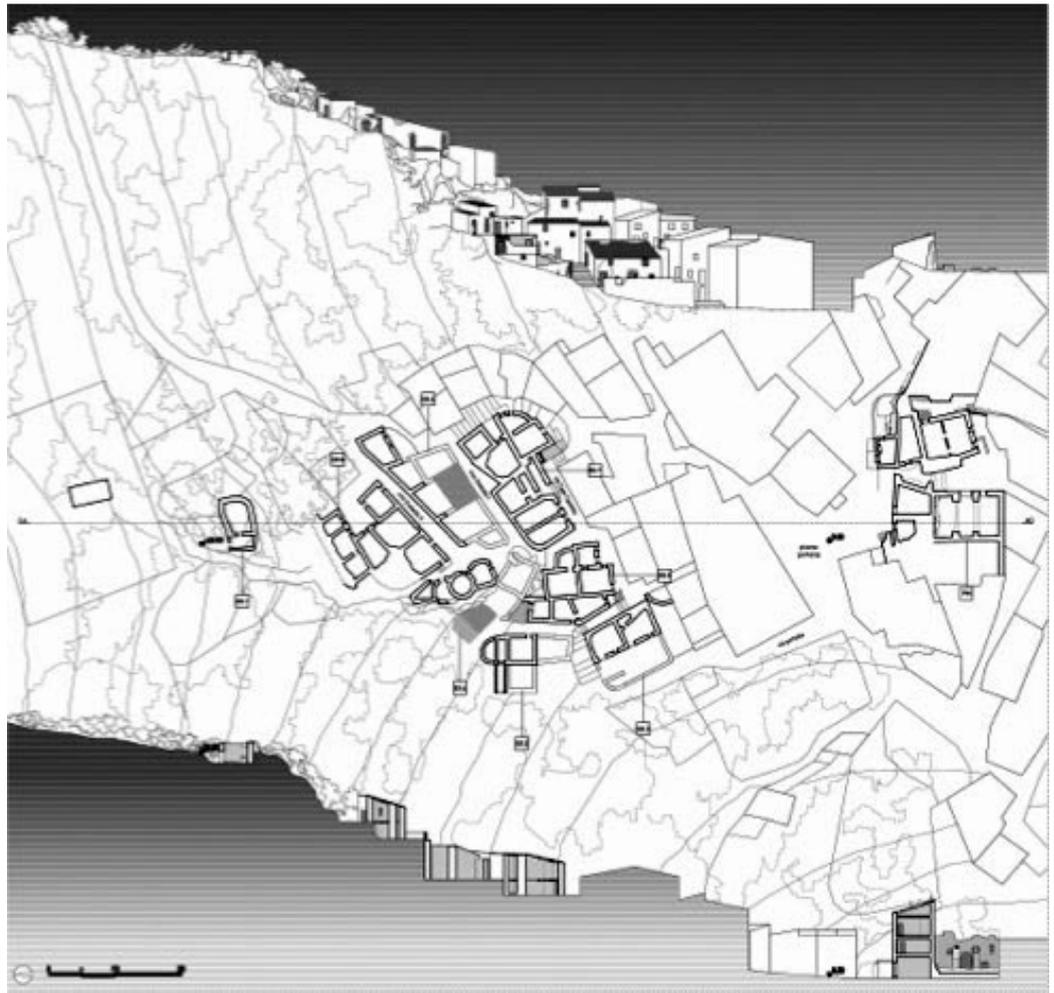


Fig. 3. Limosano (Is). The houses destroyed by the 1805 earthquake and never rebuilt (drawings A. Gallo and M. Reale).

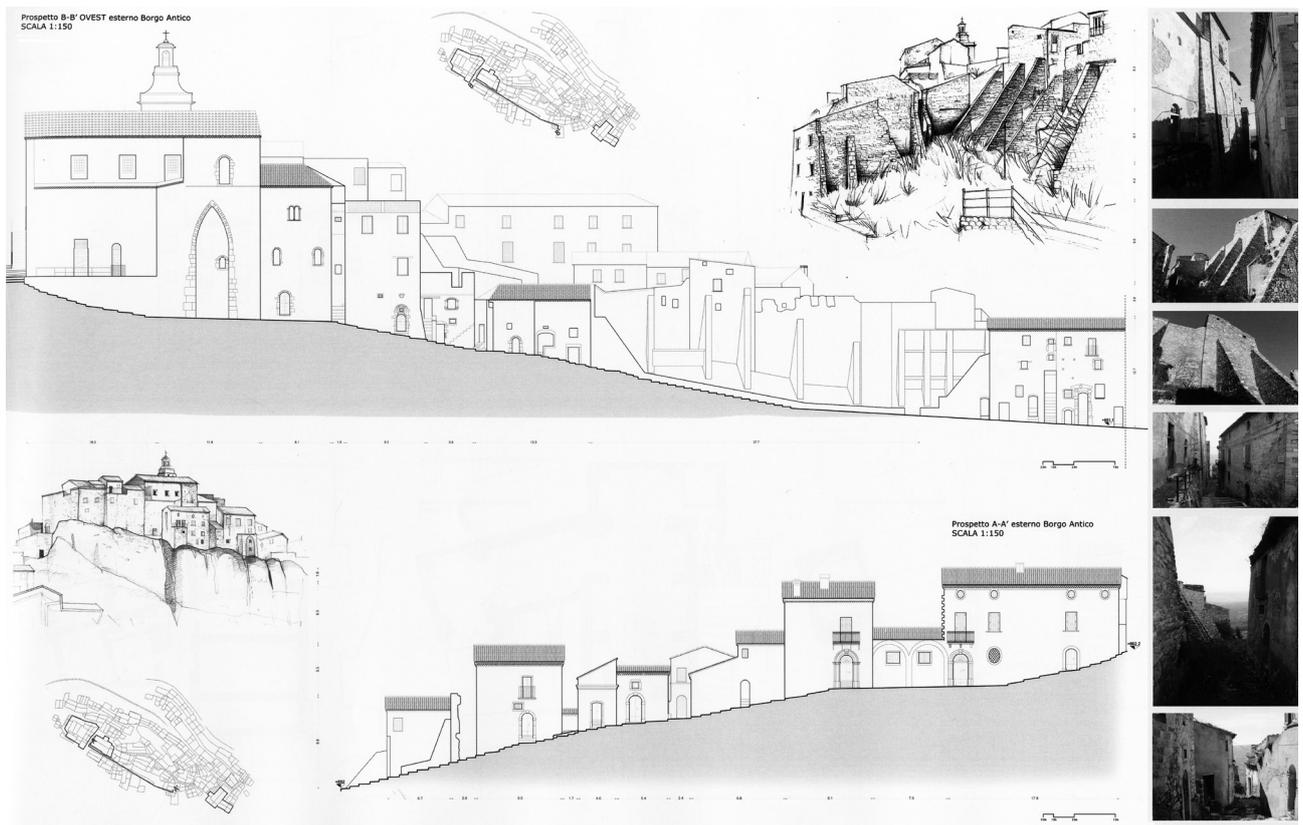




Fig. 4. Consonno (Lc). Detail.

Fortunately, initiatives like that of Consonno, a hamlet in the Olginate municipality in the province of Lecco, are also few. In the 1960s, Count Mario Bagno, an eccentric and unscrupulous real estate entrepreneur purchased the village's uninhabited homes, demolished them and built an entertainment city, a sort of Italian "Las Vegas" with minarets, souk-style shopping centres, Egyptian sphynxes and Chinese pagodas. His was a veritable Toyland that was partially destroyed in 1976 - work still incomplete - by a landslide caused by all that cement. Paradoxically, the new Consonno is now a ghost town itself, with crumbling buildings and construction equipment left to rust, under some (perhaps respectable) pretext of conservation, not only as a film location for Italian and foreign cinema, but also as a significant break with an environmental culture respectful of historic values that at its time was too fragile to resist the siren song of speculation (fig. 4).

Spain's central government launched its recovery policy for its 4 000 abandoned villages with long-term projects. Many of them now represent great sources of income, especially in the north where the economic crisis and exodus from the countryside have emptied entire medieval villages that are now favoured by foreigners due to the great publicity efforts<sup>13</sup>.

There are some similar experiences in Italy. One involves so-called "ritornanti" (returning residents) in some areas of the Alps, where the number of inhabitants has risen significantly in recent years. At the other end of the peninsula, a well-known case is Riace, in the Locride area of Reggio Calabria, where local citizens have been living for years with hundreds of migrants who were given the abandoned homes of Italians who have moved to the north.

Another topic is that of the *albergo diffuso* created in Friuli after the 1976 earthquake with the aim of reusing abandoned homes and bringing new life to the destroyed town centres. One fine initiative of this type was in the 1990s in S. Stefano di Sessanio, in the province of L'Aquila in Abruzzo. A shrewd entrepreneur from the north purchased old houses in order to turn them into tourist residences. Unfortunately, the 2009 earthquake dealt the final blow to a local economy already suffering from the economic crisis, exposing the seismic and hydrogeological vulnerability of a large part of the region and the inexorability of desertion.

<sup>13</sup> The sale in most cases is handled directly by the owners of the houses, gathered in companies set up for the purpose, to which the revenue derived for these goes, remaining the common parts of public ownership. Cfr. [www.pueblosabandonados.com](http://www.pueblosabandonados.com); see also ROJAS 2004.



Figs. 5-6. Bussana Vecchia (Im). The ruins scattered in the village.

An interesting case is the fine initiative of Brunello Cucinelli, who turned the centre of the village of Solomeo in the province of Perugia into the headquarters of his profitable company that produces and sells cashmere clothing, thereby guaranteeing the village renewal and new life.

Better known, including for the designer's name and the resources used, is Colletta di Castel Bianco, in Liguria. It was destroyed by an earthquake in the late 1800s and restored by Gian Carlo De Carlo in the late 1980s. In this case, the goal was to turn the ancient medieval village into a *cyber village*, the first in Italy to bring broadband into apartments built in the old houses. Most of them are now inhabited by foreigners, attracted not only by the extraordinary surroundings but also by the high technology.

Although important, examples like these are few with respect to the number of centres that have already been abandoned or are in the process of abandonment, and that cannot be saved for a variety of reasons. Recovery efforts are often hampered by their location in earthquake- and landslide-prone areas, or by a clear lack of both government and private resources. Little or nothing has come of the frequent initiatives of courageous mayors who, from one end of the country to the other have tried to sell empty homes for the symbolic price of one euro, provided the new owners promise to restore them and move in. Besides the bureaucratic hassles, the frequent impossibility of tracking down the owners and out-of-date land registries, who can afford such an undertaking?

And so, the crucial question remains: are there viable options to recover these homes?

One might choose to restore the homes based on documentary evidence, opt for modern buildings, or create faux-antique villages with high-tech homes built of new or used materials in response to the current country living fad. But frankly, who would live in them? There is a real risk that the lack of people, and the resulting absence of care and maintenance, would waste all the resources used, leaving the buildings to fall once more into disrepair and cause further desertion in the more or less near future.

So, is it worthwhile rebuilding or recovering centres where no one wants to live? For example, in the villages and hamlets in central Italy hit by the latest earthquake, besides the secondary residences that might be occupied at least sometimes, is it worthwhile rebuilding homes that were already long deserted and that despite ownership claims will likely remain so?

Of course, if people are still present, it is important to understand the possibility of re-population, in places where there is no current seismic instability. In these cases, total or partial reconstruction of the residences and services appears necessary and fundamental if one hopes for a future of sustainable development. Certainly this requires a multidisciplinary approach to the problem, including urban planning, and economic, geographic and demographic aspects, paired with the need for preservation and aiming for concrete and substantial results. The goal is integrated planning, the only form able to guarantee a proper balance between meeting needs and preserving buildings<sup>14</sup>.

An intermediate form between reuse and preserving ruins was recently experimented in Pentedattilo, Calabria. Until just a few years ago, this lovely village on the slopes of a rocky mountain (drawn by Escher) was completely deserted. Today, in addition to being a museum about itself, it is also the site of summer festivals and artistic events, and home to boutiques, shops and restaurants established discretely in some of the homes.

An example to be followed by Pentedattilo and other villages in the same conditions, has to be Bussana Vecchia, near San Remo. In the early 1960s, a group of Italian and foreign artists launched a long-range project for the existing heritage, recovering and making habitable only those buildings that were damaged least by the earthquake in the late 1800s (which had led to its abandonment)<sup>15</sup> (figs. 5-6).

But if there is no demand for housing, the people have all gone and only nature remains, might one opt for solutions that scrap residential use in favour of options where the space can be enjoyed in a disenchanted manner and without preconceptions. In other words, we need to try to understand if there is room for designing abandonment. That is, if the deserted towns and villages can be included in programmes that actually focus on abandonment.

Italy is far behind in this area as well. Little has been tried except in the town of Gibellina, which was destroyed by the Belice earthquake and transformed in part into a “fissure”/ artwork/open-air museum based on a design by Alberto Burri<sup>16</sup>.

Other countries, however, have made a business of ghost towns. In California, the town of Bodie that was abandoned during the period of the “Wild West”, is now one of the most popular tourist destinations in the USA. In France, some villages destroyed in World War II have been stored in memory as a warning for the future, profitably using on an urban scale measures that are used for monuments elsewhere in Europe. Another example is Oradour-sur-Glane, a city destroyed in retaliation by the Nazis in 1944. It was intentionally not rebuilt to serve as a symbol of a martyr town. The ruins have been consolidated and opened to visitors with interesting staging solutions, becoming an important tourist attraction and contributing to the economy of the new town nearby<sup>17</sup>. A similar experience is Belchite, in Spain. Destroyed in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War, the ruins have been put under the spotlight in order to support the nearby town’s economy through tourism<sup>18</sup>.

As a general rule, a place’s identity, especially when it is in a more or less advanced state of decay, depends on its landscape. Nature is often the greatest heritage of beauty we possess in Italy<sup>19</sup>. So, recovery efforts can only have a museum focus, since the buildings’ long-term abandonment and return to nature - often no longer even recognisable in their original layout - have created a natural capital that has totally conquered human capital. These places seem to lend themselves to archaeological parks and places of contemplation and memory, museums in the

<sup>14</sup> BEGUINOT 1999, pp. 48-49; SERAFINI 2013, pp. 268-275.

<sup>15</sup> AA.VV. 1987. The town is currently home to an international community of artists. In Pizzone, Molise, the idea launched in 2015 to turn the abandoned village into a home for writers went nowhere. In Abruzzo, the Castellarte ’88 project was somewhat successful, with the Castellbasso cultural project added in 2000, including initiatives - especially during the summer months - aiming to repopulate and revitalise the centre of Castellbasso, in the province of Teramo, transforming it not only into a village-hotel, but also giving it a strong artistic appeal. D’ANSELMO 2013, pp. 595-612.

<sup>16</sup> On Gibellina, see MAIORANA 2016.

<sup>17</sup> LARRIAGA 2014.

<sup>18</sup> On the ideology inspiring Spain’s relationship with its heritage in recent decades, see GARCIA CUETOS 2015, pp. 75-106.

<sup>19</sup> SAVARESE, VALENTINO 1994; RUGGERO, SCROFANI 2001.



Fig. 7. Craco (MT), the medieval village (graphic revision carried out by S. Belmondo, C. Bisceglia, C. Calitro, M.A. Catella, P. Colonna, A. D'Ercole, M. Intini, M. Madio, G.S. Orofino, M. Pepe, A. Santarcangelo, P. Vitucci, 2015).

region and about the region that combine the preservation of ruins with the cultural enjoyment of the sites, the recovery of road systems, and the creation of panoramic viewing sites.

Would this reduce settlements to a romantic attraction to ruins? Perhaps. But that's anything but a limitation, especially when the landscape's impact aesthetically complements the historic memory of the past. A memory that becomes a resource out of ruins that existed or would soon have existed, that produces not just economic but also genuine and full cultural value.

LS

### *Guidelines for Craco*

The fate of abandoned historic village centres was examined by two coordinated educational experiences developed around a case study of the abandoned town of Craco in the province of Matera<sup>20</sup>. Craco is one of many towns and villages in Italy abandoned because of the danger of landslides, towns that risk being physically wiped off the map due to advancing decay, accelerated by the lack of daily use and constant maintenance.

The medieval town was built on the summit of a ridge that extends northwest to southeast, bordered by the Bruscata stream on the southwest and by the Salandrella stream on the northeast (fig. 7). A Norman tower rises on the highest and most stable part of the hill, bearing tangible witness to the first settlement<sup>21</sup> that ran along the ridge, currently via Alfieri, all the way to Palazzo Carbone and Palazzo Rigrirone, then steeply downhill around the contours of the southwest slope.

<sup>20</sup> Recent research have analyzed the possibility of recovering the abandoned village of Craco. Cf. BISCEGLIA, CALITRO, COLONNA, D'ERCOLE, PEPE, SANTARCANGELO 2014a; BISCEGLIA, CALITRO, COLONNA, D'ERCOLE, PEPE, SANTARCANGELO 2014b; BELMONDO, CATELLA, INTINI, MADIO, OROFINO, VITUCCI 2015a; BELMONDO, CATELLA, INTINI, MADIO, OROFINO, VITUCCI 2015b. On the subject focuses DE CADILHAC 2016.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of the historical events of the village compares: CAPASSO 1870; PEDIO 1967; D'ANGELLA 1986.

Threatened by serious hydrogeological instability that was initiated by slow but progressive landslides<sup>22</sup>, the Craco settlement was evacuated in the 1970s when an mayoral order forced the transfer of most of the residents to Peschiera to the valley floor<sup>23</sup>. The ancient town is currently in an advanced state of decay, accelerated by a lack of upkeep, that is slowly but surely threatening the town's existence, even worse than the landslides.

Paradoxically however, this very decay constitutes Craco's added value that is inextricably linked to an enchanting natural landscape. And it was the charm of a town in a state of ruin suspended in a timeless dimension that led to its unexpected artistic vocation, to its becoming attractive to the art and auteur cinema worlds, and ultimately drawing cultivated tourists.

Craco challenges a dramatically current problem in Italy linked to hydrogeological instability and its related risks. It raises a question that we will seek to answer: is there a concrete possibility not only of safeguarding but also giving new life to settlements at risk of landslides, ravaged by disastrous events and currently in a state of neglect?

There are currently two opposing opinions: the possibilistic view that we share considering recovery possible, at least partially; and the much more cautious attitude that considers any effort to reuse the urban unit as impossible.

The fissures created by the landslides have worsened over the years as a result of neglect, and jeopardize any possibility of the settlement's survival. Added to this is the ancient town's isolation, suffering from geographic remoteness from the rest of the region that is accentuated by an insufficient infrastructure network throughout all of Basilicata.

In order to begin to lay down some Guidelines for the preservation and reuse of the ancient core, and to then draft a restoration project starting from buildings chosen as sample cases, we considered certain intrinsic critical elements: the land's highly heterogeneous geological nature due to the presence of both deep clay (especially multi-coloured clay), and more superficial loamy and sandy mixes; ascending tectonic movements perforate the most superficial layers and release the deeper layers of the rocky mix; rainwater then flows along the surface on the surfacing clay soil, creating deep ruts and causing erosion.

Of course the Priority catchment area plan for hydrogeological instability drawn up by the Basin Authority of Basilicata, approved on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2001, verified and updated on a regular basis in subsequent years, has been a fundamental reference point for the development of the Guidelines. The Plan set a perimeter around the areas with the greatest hydraulic and hydrogeological risk, establishes the priority actions to be carried out, lays down the rules in order to promote interventions aimed at improving the hydraulic and hydrogeological safety conditions and the environmental quality of the territory. Craco belongs to Cavone and Agri river basin, comes under the group of 88 municipalities regulated by Basin Authority of Basilicata and along with Albano di Lucania (PZ) Maratea (PZ), Potenza (PZ), Tito (PZ), Maratea (PZ) was included in the first 2017 update of hydrogeological system plan related to hillside areas<sup>24</sup>. In line with the indications of the Plan the Guidelines propose interventions for water treatment through drainage works and the restoration of areas with native vegetation on deforested slopes, with the aim of reestablishing, where possible, the environmental and hydrogeological balances, within the existing habitat. All these actions comply with the current Landscape Protection Act<sup>25</sup> which requires the full protection of the existing buildings - religious buildings, noble buildings and even the most modest houses - with all their historical and evocative significance in the indissoluble relationship with the natural environment of which they belong.

<sup>22</sup> Some studies have highlighted the many problems caused by landslides. For further details, consult: BRUGNER 1964; BENEÒ 1967; MORETTI 1968; CORRADO, DELMONACO, FALCONI, MARGOTTINI, MARTINI, PAOLINI, SPIZZICHINO 2001.

<sup>23</sup> News on the evacuation and transfer of Peschiera population are contained in BALBONI 1964.

<sup>24</sup> Decision n. 1 del 14/02/2017 adopted by the inter-institutional committee of the *ex-Autorità Interregionale di Bacino della Basilicata* (avviso di adozione pubblicato su G.U. n. 68 del 22/03/2017).

<sup>25</sup> Decree 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015, *Dichiarazione di notevole interesse pubblico dell'abitato vecchio di Craco, in provincia di Matera*, enacted by the *Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo* (G.U., Serie Generale, n. 66 del 20.03.2015).

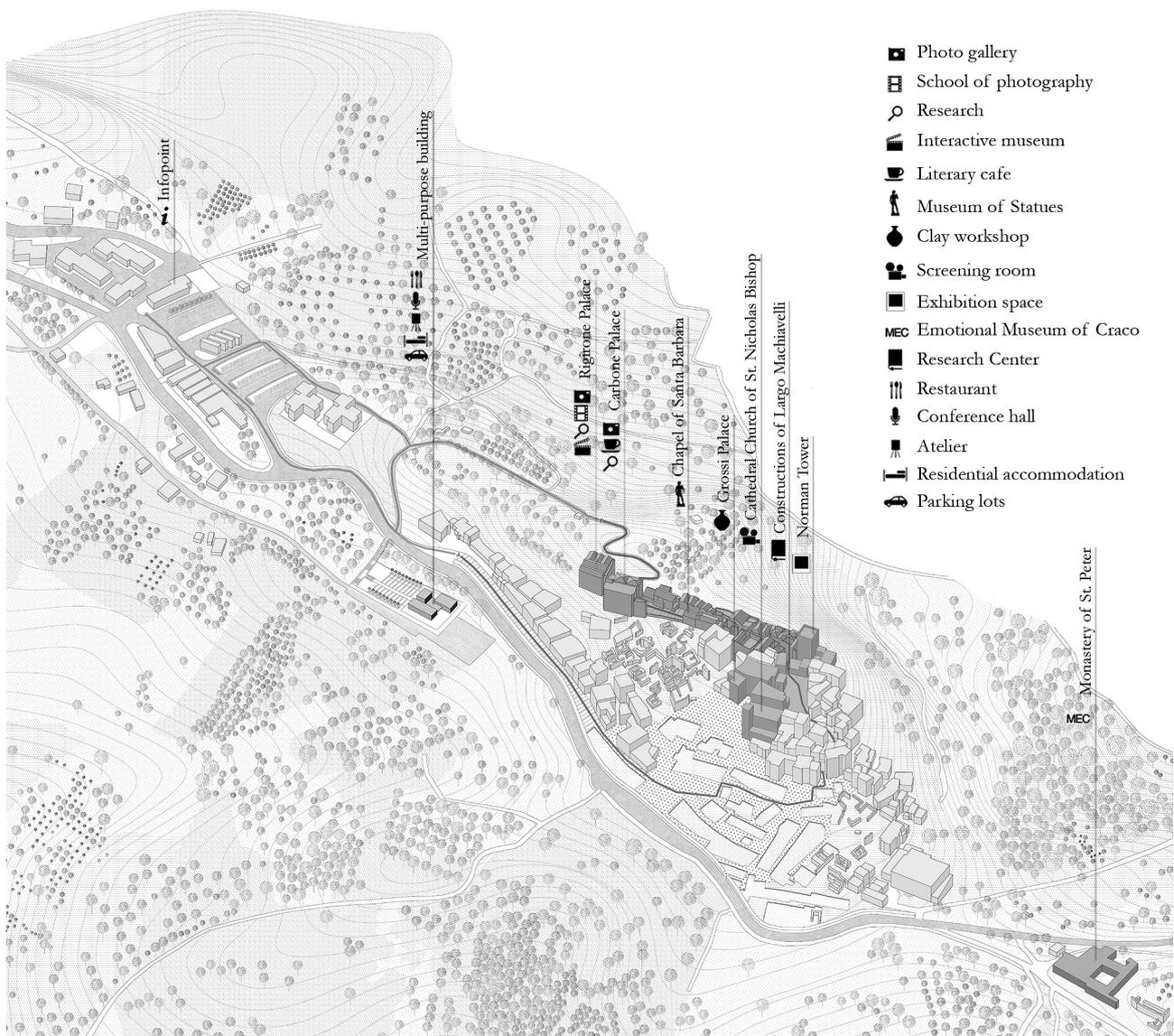


Fig. 8. Craco (MT), Guidelines for restoring the buildings along the proposed itinerary of the visit (graphic illustration carried out by S. Belmondo, C. Bisceglia, C. Calitro, M.A. Catella, P. Colonna, A. D'Ercole, M. Intini, M. Madio, G.S. Orofino, M. Pepe, A. Santarcangelo, P. Vitucci, 2015).

Based on this and on the belief that the town's critical issues can become strengths and opportunities to liberate the settlement from its state of total neglect without altering the ancient centre's overall image, we decided that any strategies for rehabilitating an abandoned settlement in progressive decay like Craco required a synergic relationship between complementary disciplines. There were open discussions between the various disciplines, which contributed to the high quality of the entire project, from the preliminary studies to the design.

Restoration was responsible for establishing a critical analysis used to interpret the data produced by the various surveys in a constant flow of information without any one ultimately conditioning any other in the design synthesis phase. The Restoration discipline directed the design choices that respected the identities of the place, safeguarding the historic layers without sacrificing a contemporary expressive language when a difficult creative synthesis was required (such as filling in significant gaps).

In the detailed and complex methodological procedure, Architectural Surveying made a fundamental contribution in acquiring all of the data needed to understand individual structures and their general state of preservation, focussing on precisely recording of the geometric shape, unique construction details and defects that helped students formulate hypotheses on how to address the main construction phases, confirming or disproving theoretical suppositions as they went.

The contribution of Typologies was precious, studying every scale, from the territory in its historic and progressive evolution to the individual urban and building unit that was also

analysed through a comparison with farming and building systems in the same geographic and cultural area.

The active involvement of Geology and Construction Techniques, acknowledging the methodological and conceptual unity of restoration, allowed us to combine preservation with structural safety, respecting *firmitas*, *utilitas* and *venustas*, i.e. inextricably linked qualities that contribute to defining individual architectural units without favouring any one of the structure's inherent values, whether material, constructive, historic or aesthetic.

Our decision to juxtapose the new with the old, adding temporary volume inserts in major gaps was the result of critical re-elaborations supported and guided by Design, in consideration of historic data and the structure's expressive originality recognised as having significant symbolic value.

The various disciplines considered the results of a SWOT analysis to determine the actual resources and opportunities offered by the territory, without ignoring its fragile and vulnerable nature, as well as the needs and expectations of its residents. The data generated by the on-site survey were collected to focus attention on possible solutions to recover certain buildings whose design had to respect their functional vocations and, at the same time, meet the community's many requests.

The medieval town's state of decay was the starting point for a complete, single and coherent project that, in restoring use to the urban unit in line with municipal strategies aiming to recover its ancient housing stock, respected its character and promoted its functional use. The idea is based on the conviction that Craco's weaknesses can be transformed into strengths, and that local resources can be promoted. We had two objectives: to promote Craco as a research site for topics related to protecting the land and restoring buildings in landslide-prone areas; combining landscape and environmental values with the art and culture world, assigning Craco the role of a setting for cinema (played many times in the past), and as workshops and shops for young artists and artisans.

The data generated by the SWOT turned out to be a perfect match for Craco's municipal authorities' objective of combining the landscape and environmental values that have already been broadly appreciated by the cinema d'auteur, with the art, artisanal and culture worlds.

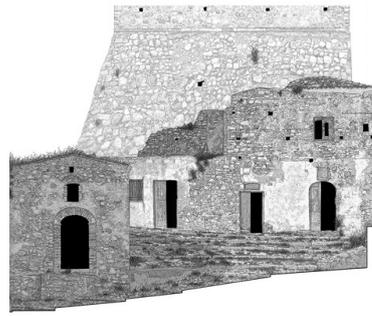
We shared that goal and agreed that it could be met: promoting scientific research in Craco on topics related to the defence of the land and on the recovery of buildings in landslide-prone areas; establishing Craco as a place of artistic and cultural production, and offering stays for tourists.

A monitoring system was planned to provide data on the landslide phenomenon. Then we laid out orientations in a set of Guidelines (fig. 8) for the building safety and recovery work in the entire town: hydrogeological and landscaping work on the slopes with experimental and demonstration interventions; creating rainwater regulation systems; securing visit itineraries in the town centre; consolidating and preserving ruins for cinema purposes; following targeted consolidation works, restoring a small number of buildings offering sufficient guarantees of safety and stability for reuse in cultural activities (such as the Church of San Nicola Vescovo, the Norman tower, the Chapel of Santa Barbara, Palazzo Carbone and Palazzo Rigrone), scientific and educational activities (Palazzo Grossi used in part as a centre of excellence for the study of landslide phenomena and in part for educational and recreational activities, some involving clay) and artistic and artisanal activities on the ground floor of some of the buildings along via Alfieri.

Once we had established the guidelines, we identified two adjacent areas to use as case studies. The first is located on the initial stretch of the visitor route that starts in the extreme southwestern part of the town, passes along Largo Machiavelli and Largo Grossi, then Corso Umberto, Via Mauro Pagano, Via Onorati, and ending at the highest point marked by the Norman Tower. The second is on the second part of the route, called Via Alfieri, that follows the ridge and runs alongside the Chapel of Santa Barbara to Palazzo Carbone and Palazzo Rigrone, near which an exit is planned that is marked by an opening to the northwest near the site of an ancient town gate.

An initial plan considered the possibility of assigning temporary residential activities to the homes along these routes. However, the ground's instability forced us to exclude this

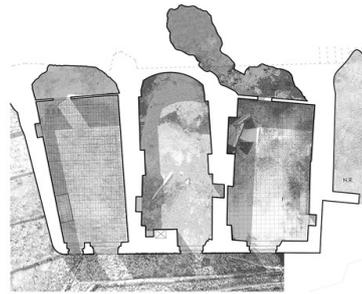
Fig. 9. Craco (MT), the residential units located at the base of the Norman tower (survey, design and graphic illustration carried out by C. Bisceglia, C. Calitro, P. Colonna, A. D'Ercole, M.A. Pepe, A. Santarcangelo, 2014).



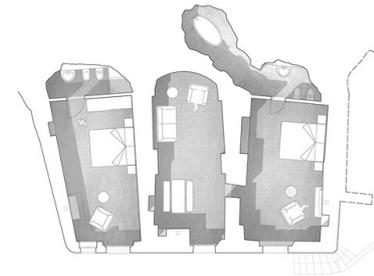
South elevation: Architectural survey



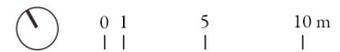
South elevation: Restoration project



Plan to share + 1.50 m: Architectural survey



Plan to share + 1.50 m: restoration project



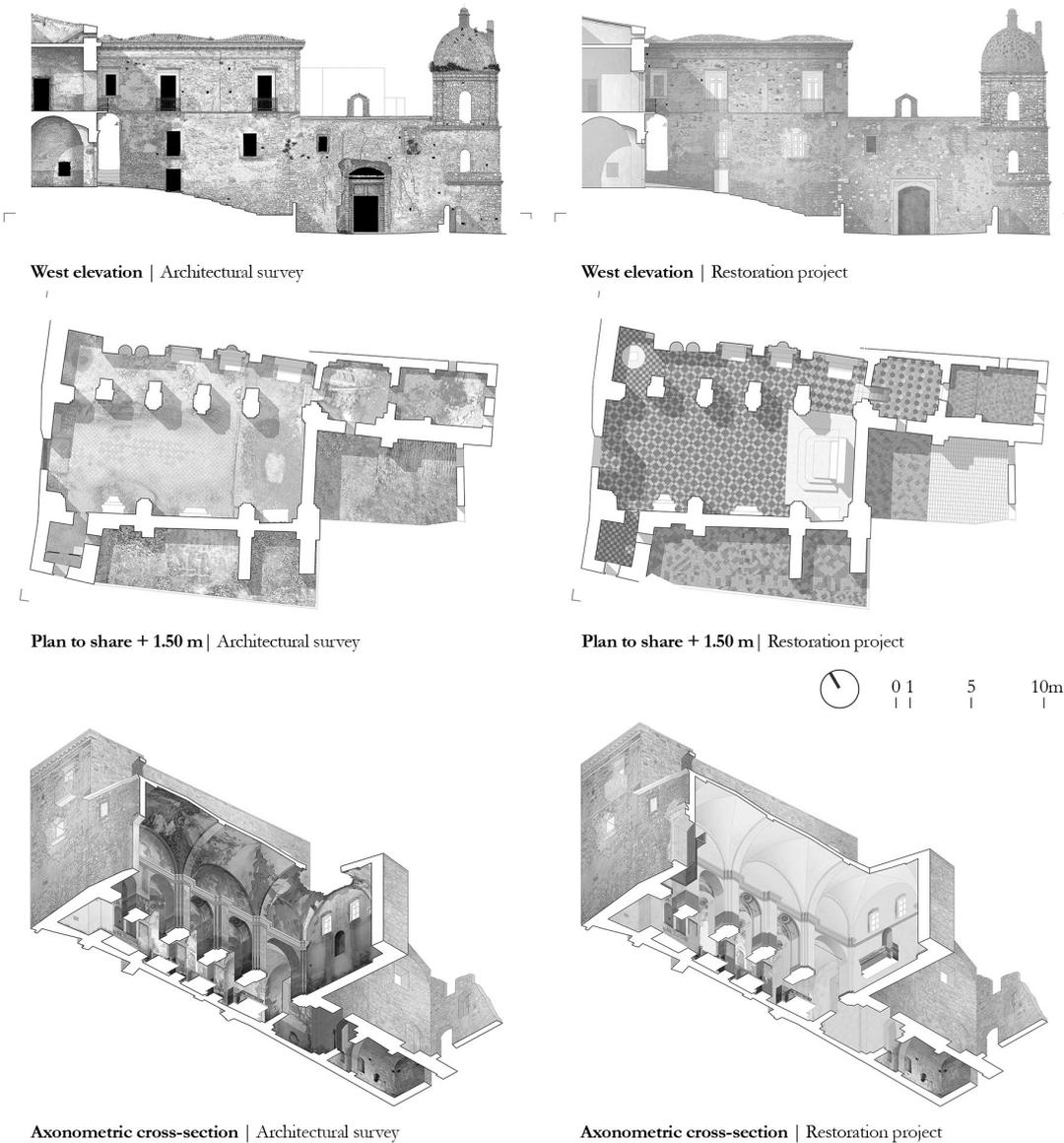
option, and refocus the project instead on a more realistic preservation and reuse of the ruins, except for the three housing units at the base of the Norman Tower, whose physical form, state of preservation and ground stability made it possible to recreate a traditional Craco home (fig. 9). While the restoration respects the ancient layout, outlines, openings, materials and traditional construction techniques where strictly necessary, it does not seek to be a slavish imitation, rather a clearly contemporary intervention for the sense of sobriety obtained by simplifying its shapes and decorations. Thus, the residential function of the town's overall design was reduced and we focussed instead on the visitor itinerary.

The route's role is to accompany visitors, resolve accessibility problems, and physically and visually connect areas of formal completeness, fragments of the past that are no longer recognisable and missing architectural features. This visitor itinerary is the fruit of a design that is the antithesis of transience as expressed by the ruins on Via Alfieri, which we plan to preserve, and the substantial integrity of buildings like the Church of San Nicola Vescovo, Palazzo Grossi, the Norman Tower, the housing units at the base of the tower, the Chapel of Santa Barbara, Palazzo Carbone and Palazzo Rigirone, which we plan to restore and reuse.

In the first case, we planned to consolidate, secure, maintain and enhance the ruins in a museum setting. In the second, the restoration is based on the criteria of minimal intervention, distinctiveness, compatibility and reversibility in order to make these architectural emergencies available once more, assigning compatible uses to them that were chosen based on a multi-criteria analysis.

In any case, every planned operation was based on a careful analysis that started from a meticulous survey (understood as one of the tools of historical awareness and therefore of restoration), and provided us with tools to understand the geometry, materials, instruments and construction techniques, identifying faults and irregularities that are useful to an overall understanding of the structure. The studies included surveys as an effective means of analysing and assessing the growing fissures through monitoring, i.e. constant observation of the damage

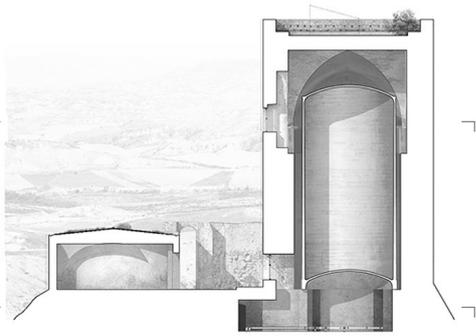
Fig. 10. Craco (MT), the church of St. Nicola Vescovo (survey, design and graphic illustration carried out by C. Bisceglia, C. Calitro, P. Colonna, A. D'Ercole, M. A. Pepe, A. Santarcangelo, 2014).



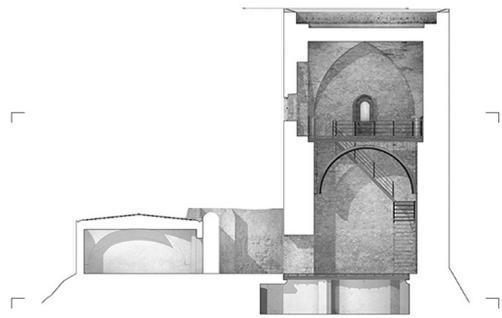
in order to facilitate our understanding and interpretation of the instability. So, knowledge was a fundamental prerequisite, both to obtain a reliable assessment of the current safety status, and to make effective and respective restoration choices. Acquiring information on the materials and building techniques was certainly useful in identifying weak points in the structures so that insertions could be made that were compatible with pre-existing features and in appropriately consolidating them both when they were already rundown or badly tampered with. The aim of the consolidation hypothesis was to restore the structural requirements some of the buildings had lost over time, as in the case of Church of San Nicola Vescovo (fig. 10). Moreover, it took into consideration the ethical limitations imposed by historical and aesthetic implications that, in restoring the building's technical efficiency, guarantee the protection of an undisputed symbol of our collective memory.

The issue of architectural gaps that can be seen clearly in a few buildings along Via Alfieri whose outer walls are almost intact, was resolved with a hypothesis of restoring the image through volumetric inserts, that while not surrendering the expressiveness of contemporary language, uses clearly noticeable materials, dry-mounted lightweight elements that are easily removed. Their purpose is to suggest the ancient spaces, while respecting the building's physical nature and authenticity after consolidation. Recreating the image provided an opportunity to consider whether these building units should be made usable inside for temporary functions, consistent with the temporary nature dictated by the town's unstable hydrogeological conditions. And so, the idea developed to insert a workshop in these buildings for young

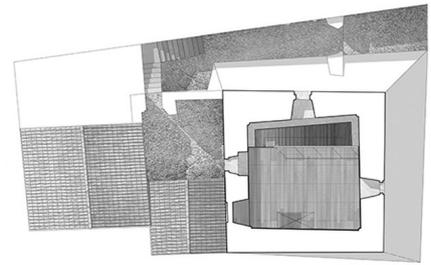
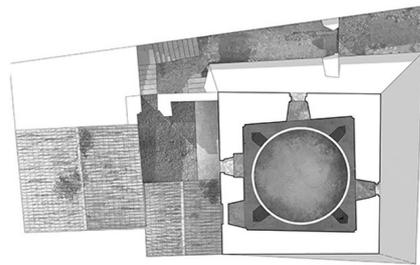
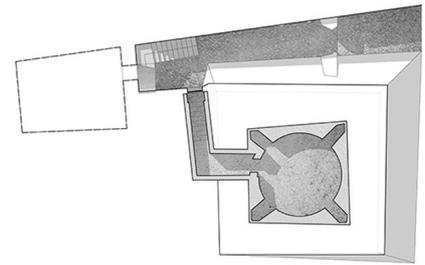
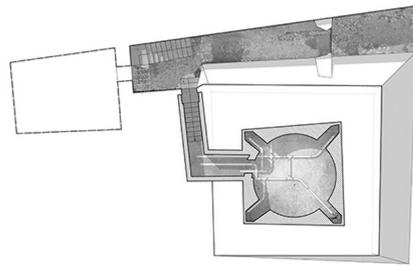
Fig. 11. Craco (MT), the Norman tower (survey, design and graphic illustration carried out by C. Bisceglia, C. Calitro, P. Colonna, A. D'Ercole, M.A. Pepe, A. Santarcangelo, 2014).



Vertical section | Architectural survey



Vertical section | Restoration project



Tower plans | Architectural survey

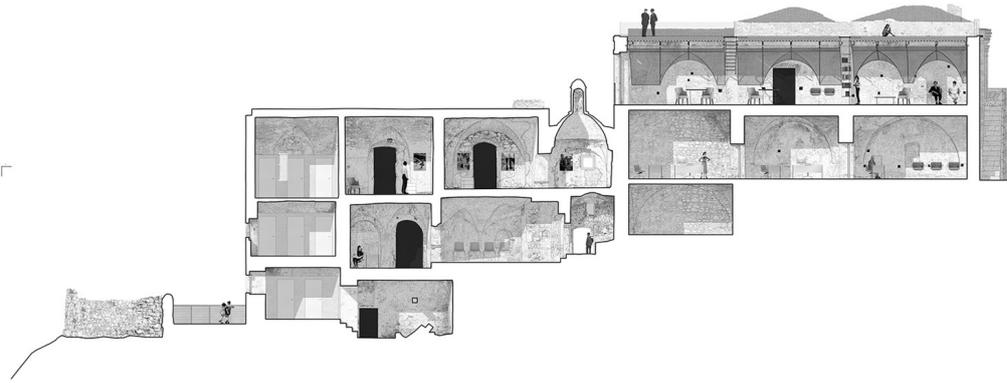
Tower plans | Restoration project



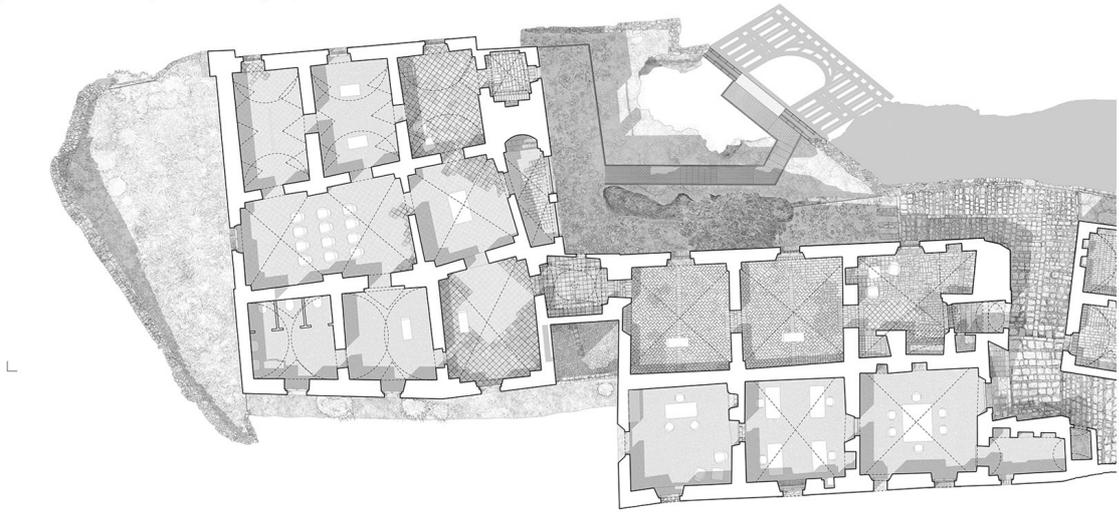
Re-enactment of the ancient space, along with construction hypotheses and exhibition of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Mario Cresci and Josef Koudelka's works.

artists, and/or artisanal boutiques in order to reinforce the town's cultural vocation that we sought to promote by saving its identifying, material and immaterial characteristics.

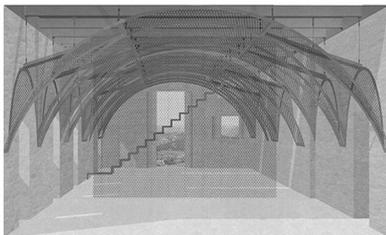
The criteria mentioned above were extended to restoring the image inside the Norman Tower which had been subjected relatively recently to works that threatened its general state of



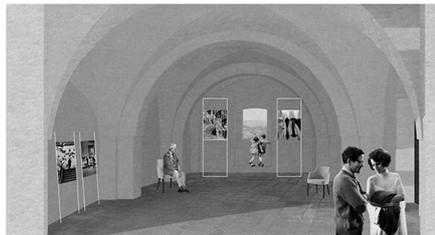
Longitudinal section | Restoration project



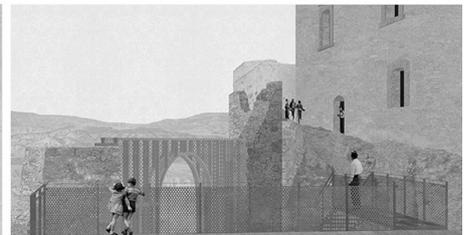
Plan to share + 1.30 m | Restoration project



Rigirone Palace, Literary cafe. Re-enactment of the ancient space.



Carbone Palace, Photography museum. Construction hypothesis.



North-West entry to the village. Re-enactment of the ancient urban door.

preservation. In 1949, the barrel vault and internal staircase were demolished to make room for a cylindrical municipal water tank constructed on site using reinforced concrete that compromised the tower's statics, building type, and therefore its functionality, damaging the identity of the most representative monument of Craco<sup>26</sup>. This disrespectful intrusion demanded immediate removal and a rightful return to its original condition using reversible materials and building techniques (fig. 11).

Similar criteria were considered in the proposed restoration of Palazzo Carbone, in order to restore its original tripartite and vaulted space on the first floor with a southern exposure. The project includes the demolition of the concrete roof (and the reinforced concrete stairway leading to the roof) built in place of the ancient vaults, traces of which can be seen along the entire length of the space. The idea is based on a desire to recreate the ancient space by rebuilding the

Fig. 12. Craco (MT), Carbone palace and the city gate to the northwest (survey, design and graphic illustration carried out by S. Belmondo, M.A. Catella, M. Intini, M. Maddio, G.S. Orofino, P. Vitucci, 2015).

<sup>26</sup>The work, performed by the company Salvatore D'Elia, is directed by Luigi Lepore and tested by Vincenzo Solimena. Cf. AAPB 1949. On this subject cf. DE CADILHAC 2014.

entire roof system using a steel load-bearing structure and a lightweight supported structure following the vault's outline (fig. 12).

Similar principles underlie the hypothesis for restoring outdoor spaces, like the proposal mentioned above to evoke the long-gone town gate at the end of the ridge route near Palazzo Rigrone. Documentary sources mention the presence of an arched gate to the northwest, of which no physical trace remains due to the subsidence of the ground in that area. The project remembers the ancient gate using various materials and dry-mounted elements that fill the urban gap with a ramp connecting the ends of an interrupted itinerary. The new insert reflects the shape of the ancient gate and its spatial relationship with its surroundings: leaving aside any slavish imitation, it evokes without restoring, and alludes without determining. However, in no way does all this contradict the aforementioned idea to restore the almost-whole buildings that could be used, nor does it avoid maintenance work aiming to protect remaining structures that, because of their obvious state of ruin, cannot be traced to a figurative unit. Ruins are the remains of ancient memories loaded with highly symbolic values that demand action to protect and reuse them as an integral part of a context that is to be revitalised in part, and from which they cannot be excluded.

RdC

### *Conclusions*

The theme of abandonment is clearly refers to an absolutely problematic issue that not only involves almost all of the Italian regions, but calls in the question, for its management, all disciplines in various ways committed to the difficult management of the territory.

Housing recovery, very popular in some European countries such as Spain, is not always the most immediate solution in Italy. The areas where abandoned countries are concentrated are often disestate from a hydrogeological point of view, and difficult to restore in their form and structure, especially in times of economic crisis and overall demographic decline.

In the range of possibilities, housing recovery must be accompanied by the design of the abandonment and the choice of large-scale musealization of the territory, networked with the landscape of belonging and valorized in its residual identity.

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