POLITECNICO DI TORINO

Honors thesis

COURSE OF

Degree in Sustainability Design

Abstract

TRATTURO

Discovery of a weak architecture

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When visiting the region of Molise, a feeling of "discovery" arise; starting from its territory marked by *Tratturi*, which represent the historical path of transhumance.

While discovering the ancient path and developing a new form of rural tourism, it is necessary to organize natural routes within the region of Molise. These routes ought to be close to the local culture and tradition that for centuries were uniquely associated with this land. A tourist that hikes along the armentizie streets has just enough time to observe and discover the landscape, just like if "his feet were able to observe the landscape".

A great example of local architecture can be found along the *Tratturi*, where the rural lifestyle is able to respect the environment, following the principle of sustainability. The region of Molise is considered the heart of transhumance, since it is still filled with these paths that for years allowed farmers to travel. Every winter, these farmers relocated from the Abruzzo Mountains to the milder weather of the Puglia plains, while in the summer they travelled the opposite way, heading back to the mountains.

Within the network of the Molise *Tratturi*, some labile traces from the transhumance population can be seen. Research has been done over the four most common routes, such as L'Aquila-Foggia, Celano-Foggia, Castel di Sangro-Lucera and Pescasseroli-Candela.
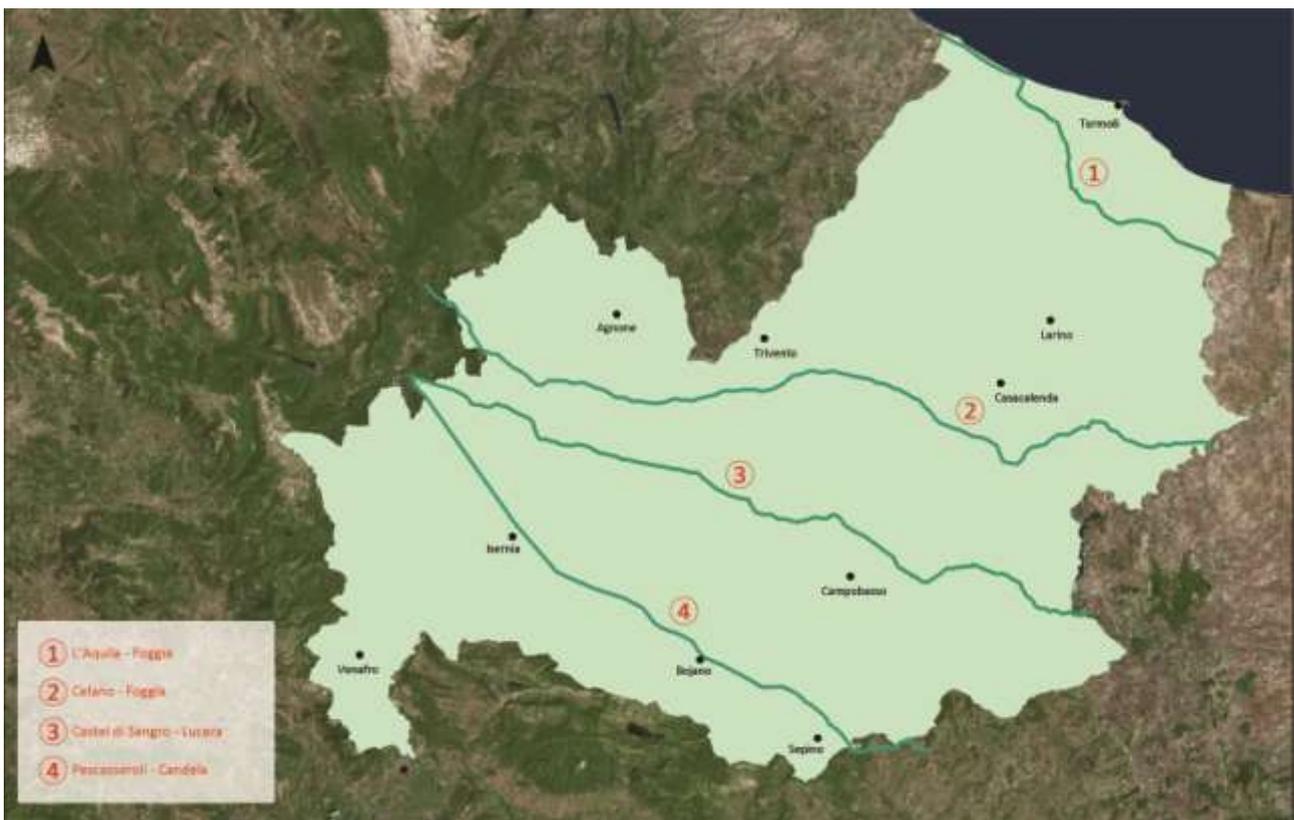
The *Tratturi Regis's* land measures 60 *Neapolitans steps*, about 111 m, the widest ones in the world. This width was necessary to store the grass for the travelling cattle. It was a route-pasture for the animals that had to make the transhumance of several days. Rest homes for the herd can also be found along these paths.

A collection of preliminary information on bibliographic and oral sources, including a campaign of interviews with qualified witnesses was first carried out. The survey was based on IGM cartography, orthophotomaps and on historical maps of *Tratturi*. The use of a geocoding program such as GIS, allowed to capture, view, record, analyze and return the geographic data for the study of the territory, making the profiling of historically relevant architectural elements identified along *Tratturi*, 210 samples.

The tratturale route is marked by relevant architectural presence. Forms of rural housing, such as the *pastoral villages*, the *farms*, the *dry stone huts*, *taverns*, the *chapels*, the *pens*, and *signs of fences*, *cairns of stones*, *caves*, *troughs*, *crosses* and *shrines* have typical rural characteristics. These can be seen in common technological elements in all signs identified on *Tratturi*, which characterize the architecture of transhumance.

The use of stone in the transhumance architecture becomes predominant, because home finds its identity within the environment for farmers. The phases of stone processing, from extraction to implementation for the construction of structures, like arches and masonry, strongly characterize the typical rural region.

From the analysis of the tratturale route, it is evident that the *Tratturi* roadways run in a north – south direction, while today's road network has a west-east orientation.

From these two orientations, it is possible to read the territory as a diagram.
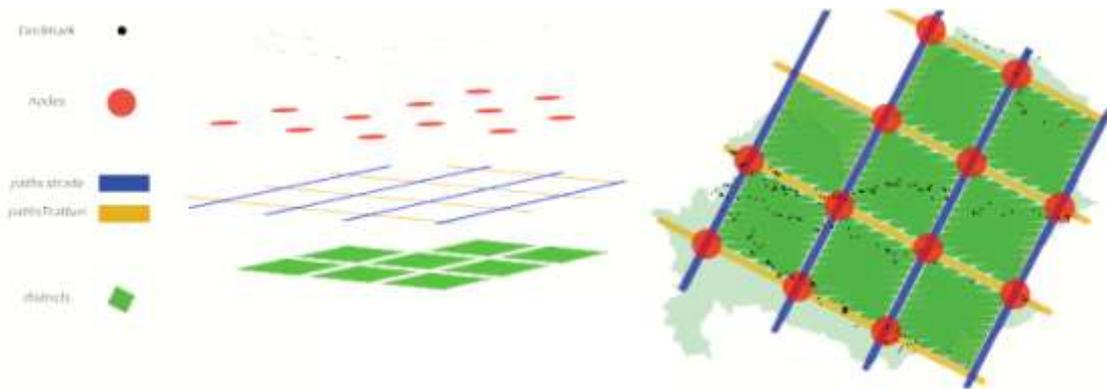
The *districts* are related to the cultural and craft traditions of the region and of the touristic attractions.

The *paths* that create the network are identified in the *Tratturi* north-south, with slow viability, serving as location for the touristic travel, while in the state roads running west-east, allow quick viability useful for rerouting.

Within the intersections, *nodes* can be identified. These can be the reference locations, with information centers and tourist facilities.

The *landmarks*, which can be found throughout the region of Molise, are composed of relevant elements, like the 210 architectural elements found along the *Tratturi*.

Thinking about an efficient project proposal for the development of the *Tratturi*, four basic principles are essential:

Continuity
Maintaining the size of a unity of *Tratturi* in different scales

Usability
Allow slow fruition of *Tratturi* in respect of each type of mobility

Visibility and readability
Ensure the formal recognition of the *Tratturi* in its size and significance of space object

The organization of *Tratturo* can then be differentiated in urban and suburban areas.
Weather a route is hilly or plain, it is possible to organize the section of *Tratturo* with hiking paths, for wagons, bikes and horses. The ground is walkable as it maintains itself overtime without wearing out. The armetizio route is divided in three paths, all at the same level and without changes of altitude.
In the case of mountainous terrain, the armetizio route is composed of paths with relevant slopes. For this reason, the section is limited to two paths for pedestrians, horses or bikes.
For the area of the urban *Tratturi*, the project includes gardens and linear parks to truncate the sign of the armentizie streets, while still maintaining the natural character of the suburban routes. The system of the *linear park* is formed by two streets; one for the slow speed of pedestrians, bikes, wheelchairs, and mothers and the other one for neutral speeds of horses.
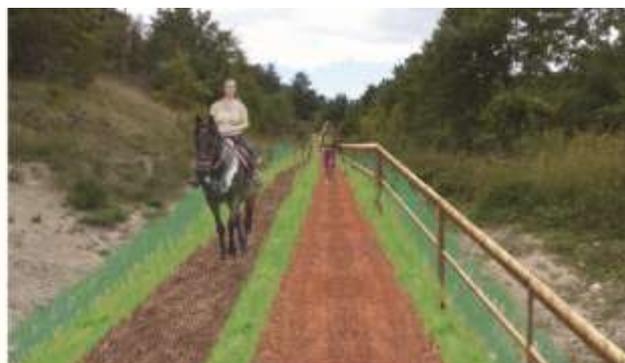
The *Tratturi* have become a great collective historical heritage, made of flora, fauna, landscapes and architecture, which must be recognized and enhanced, maintaining alive the traditions and the knowledge of the elders. The goal of this work is to provide a base from which to develop a plan for retraining, with emphasis on *low cost*, *slow* paste and available *for all*.

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