



POLITECNICO
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Honors thesis

MASTER DEGREE COURSE IN ARCHITECTURE

Abstract

Images from the territory. The imaginary as a form of territorial structuring in Canavese and other areas of Piedmont.

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This thesis is part of a wider research framework entitled: “Images from the territory: the imagination as form of structuring of the territory”, resulting from the idea of Professor Alberto Borghini, teaching Cultural Anthropology at the *Politecnico di Torino*.

The areas matter of study have been the Canavese and other spots of Piedmont.

The Canavese spreads over the Ivrea Serra, the Po river, the Lanzo Stura and the Graie Alps, which means the area including Turin and the Aosta Valley and, eastward, the territory of Biella and Vercelli.

The study is based on the direct survey on the field with the aid of a recorder. First-rate source folkloric material has been collected and especially: stories, legends, traditions, superstition, popular medicine anecdotes and, more in general, all those oral testimony related to the popular imagination, apparently meaningless or extravagant, but that are part of our cultural heritage.

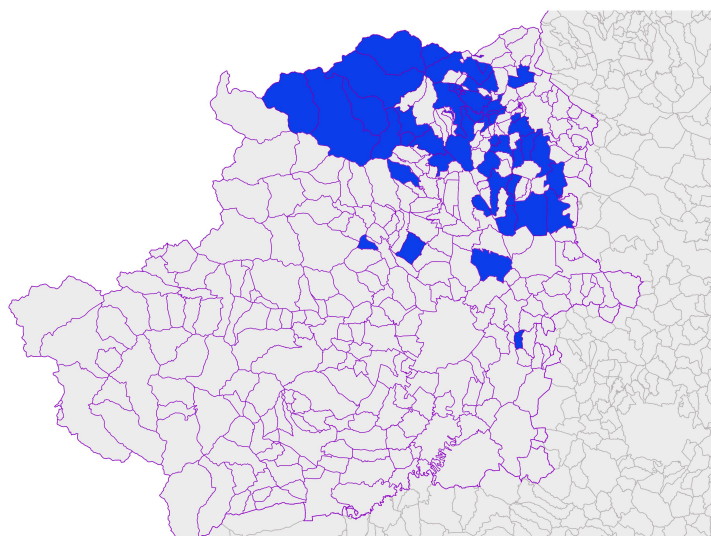
The witnesses given have been reported just like the spoken, transcribed with no alteration of the form, maintaining eventual, significant dialectal words, in order to preserve the worth and popular style of the narration, and , above all, the authentic worth of the original source.

The study consists in collecting any narrative variants: it does not exist a better approach in the field of imagination.

Attempts have been made in order to retrieve as much of material as possible to develop a code of the symbolic and of the imagination, not leaving aside a single “piece of memory”.

While carrying out the interviews it has been possible to collect, randomly, reports coming from other areas of Piedmont and from the rest of Italy, useful to compare different geographic areas; these reports can be found listed in the Appendix.

Through a combination of 70 interviewees, 341 tales, 74 locations, it has been possible to realize a tabulation leading to a map by the Arch. Francesco Fiermonte of the laboratory S3+LAB of the DIST (Interatheneum Department of Science, Project and Politics of the Territory). In blue the municipalities matter of the survey (the Canavese area), in grey the others and in violet the extent of the Metropolitan city (ex Province of Turin).



Popular imagination provides an interpretative code able to lead people reading cultural material acts, artistic culture, architectural culture, etc...; this “ geography of the imagination” reveals landscaping elements which lead to narration, for their part, can be considered results of the own narrative.

Looking into their narration related to imagination, we can notice different past architectures, lifestyles and way of thinking of collectivities.

Is therefore possible to identify territorial organization constants that can be combined using isogloss, revealing similarities between areas.

From an other point of view it can be argued that these folkloric testimonies rebuild, in terms of community and people, lifetime and story of architectural artifacts , at least imagined, of which often there's no documented sources.

How to frame the imagination system analyzing territories?

The landscape is meaningful, and in some way, it is always in debt with imagination, meaning as folk imagination.

Imagination influences enjoyment of landscape.

Maybe it's just the relation between the place and its symbolism that helps to determine the way in which the place is benefit from local community.

A project planned by an architect is more than a design, is a symbol..., a process..., an idea...

It is possible to examine which are, in the imagination of people that are in it, symbols, processes and ideas that create the region, according to close web of legends, tales and belief inspired to local nature.

In this context it behoves mention the Documentation Centre of Oral Tradition on Piazza al Serchio in Lucca, as repository of imagination source to tap into, not only in territorial representation but also in territorial design.

On top of these considerations one might think also to a territory valorization through tourist themed trade, in order to reevaluate areas no one knew but interesting in terms of landscape, architecture and considering the recovery of attractiveness.