



**POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO**

# Honors thesis

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Master of Science program in Architecture heritage  
preservation and enhancement

*Abstract*

**Re-connecting the divided city:  
conservation and enhancement of Locri Epizefiri and Gerace**

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The thesis in question concerns the archaeological and landscape restoration and his case study is Locri Epizefiri and Gerace, located in the Locride, area of the Ionian coast of Reggio Calabria. The choice of that subject is borned from the strong potential of the two sites, wich are now unknow and not enhanced, despite their cultural and architectural value.

*«La natura ha fatto di tutto per rendere questa regione felice e ricca, ma l'indifferenza dei governi impedisce da molti secoli il suo sviluppo.[...] Quando si pensa che la Magna Grecia è stata una delle contrade più popolate, più civili e meglio coltivate del mondo, è impossibile non deplorare le sorti di questo bel paese condannato dopo tanti secoli a deperire sempre più[...].»<sup>1</sup>*

It is unthinkable that a land full of history such as Calabria living in oblivion and negligence of the population and local administration. In particular the Locride, Magna Grecia's cradle, it has got a very rich archeological and architectural heritage, with an urbanistic character considered as an *unicum*. The Ionian coast is characterized by cities that move in the space and in the time. In the two millenia of history, man has used this territory *in toto*, for this reason, if in the classic period was the coast the area chosen for the urban settlement, during the moyen age Locri's citizens decided to emigrate to the mountains, for differents reasons. In the first, the most important cause was the bradyseisms, that causing the rise in sea level, followed others social and economic causes: from the spread of malaria, inability to cultivate coastal land, to the arab invasions wich plagued the area from the IX-X century a.C.

During the 1840 there is an other territorial changes: the construction of the railroad Reggio Calabria-Metaponto. This new train road made attractive again the coast, that caused a reverse migration, the citizens returned from the mountain on the coast, they built a new coastal city, distant 2 km from the greek-roman *polis*. The study of the *Grand Tour's* voyageurs diaries, was the most important part of the cognitive analysis and the focal input of project ideas. The European intelligence involved the Bruzia land in his itineraries for studing the classical vestiges, for this reason *Lokroi* became one of the most important calabrian destination. When the voyageurs visited Locri Epizefiri, to analyze his

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<sup>1</sup> Duret De Tavel, *Lettere dalla Calabria*, Lettera XIV, Rubbettino Editore, Catanzaro, 1985, p. 107.

classical monuments, they came up to Gerace, heir of ancient *Lokroi*, including the relation between the two sites and considering their a single city.

From these considerations, comes the need to prepare the project ideas that aim not only to the conservation of matter of individual monuments, but also to making use of them; becomes, therefore, necessary intervention to re-unite the two cities, through the study of pathways that may follow in the pedestrians itineraries on the *Grand Tour*, and that, thanks to new technologies and a lighting design, is able to make clear, to the widest number of users possible, the strong relation between the two and understand the value that every single monument has in making this unique landscape.

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Fig. 3: Drawing 9\_Project Ideas *On the Grand Tour's* step