

**Waters, Farmhouses and Plain's castles in the Baraggia Vercellese: a suggestion for improvement**

by Paola Boati

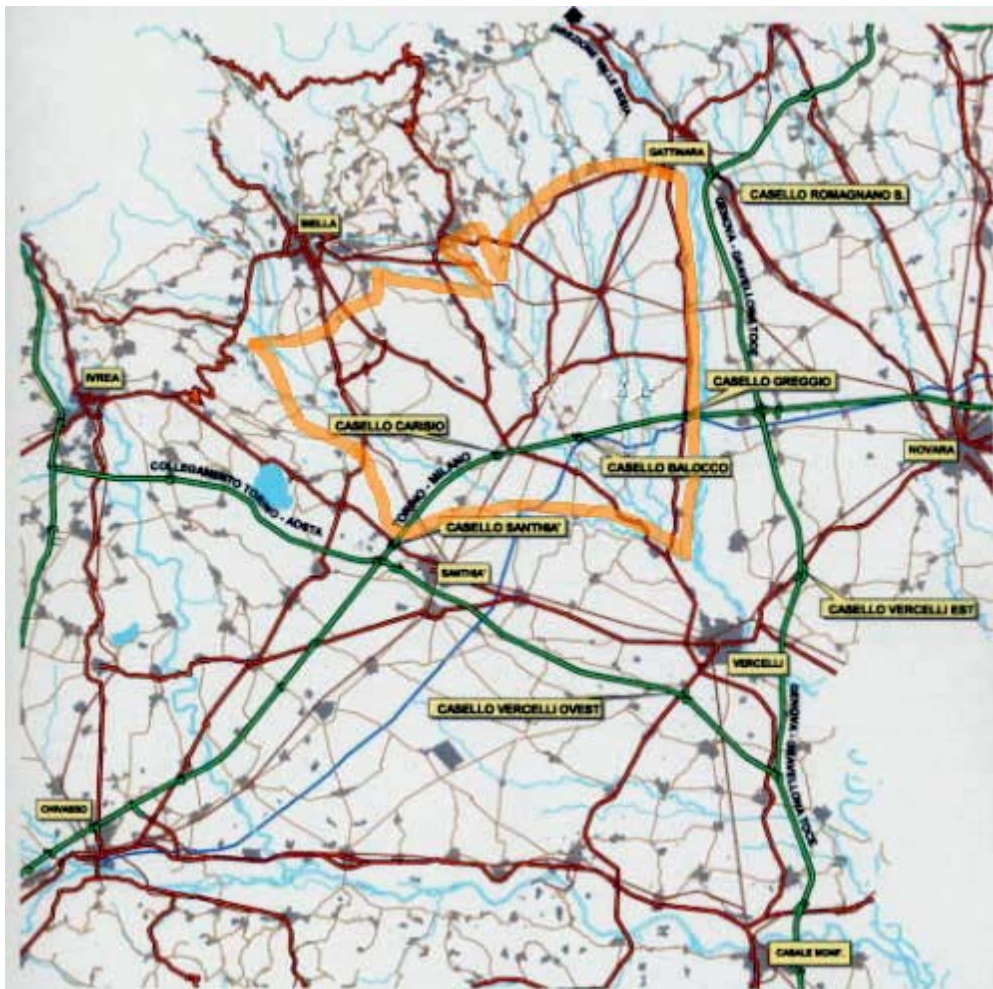
Tutor: Gemma Sirchia

Co-tutor: Silvana Grella

The Baraggia Biellese and Vercellese is situated in Piedmont, between the cities of Torino and Milano. It presents similar social, economic, environmental and agricultural features.

The Baraggia starts from Prealps Biellesi, under Monte Rosa, and slopes to Padana Plain, through slight slopes from north-west to south-east.

Its territory has a more elevated altimetrical position instead of remaining plain, from 150 to 350 metres above sea level, and the ground is clayey and waterproof.



The Baraggia's perimeter

Because of these features, during centuries, many agricultural reclamations were needed to till the soil. The first tillages began during the Roman domination and went on during the Middle Ages, with the introduction of rice-growing, but it was in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century that the overwork of the land began, through the construction of the Canale Cavour, in 1863, and the building of dams, in the late 20<sup>th</sup>.

In the first part of my degree thesis, the Baraggia's territory has been analysed, through a geo-territorial, historical-cultural, economic and water system analysis. In the second part I surveyed a smaller ambit, belonging to the Baraggia Vercellese, made up of these Communes: Albano, Balocco, Buronzo, Carisio, Casanova Elvo, Collobiano, Formigliana, Greggio, Oldenico, Villarboit and Vettignè, with 4642 people, and a surface of 18298.27 hectares. Through a wide and detailed photo reportage, I identified the landscape typologies: use of soil, vegetation, irrigation, castles and farmstead.

In the third part I planned the ambit's development, through the individuation of some tourist and cultural itinerary, inherent hydraulic archaeology, plain castles, a uniqueness in Italy, and historical farmstead. Every itinerary has been attached by a thorough filing of historical and architectural visible buildings.



Balocco seen from the sky

The fourth part regards the project's valuation and the analysis of the more actual and effective economic strategies to improve the ambit. I have chosen a "standard project" on a building belonging to each itinerary: in regard to the first itinerary I have planned the re-qualification of the house of the guardian near the Canale Cavour in Monformoso; in regard to the second itinerary I have planned the re-qualification of the castle in Baocco, and in regard to the third itinerary I have planned the restoration and the re-qualification of the historical farmstead in Vettignè.



Vettignè seen from the sky

Every project has been valued through a specified Community Impact Evaluation, that permitted to identify actors, costs, benefits and positives externalities deriving from the carrying out of the restoration and improvement projects. Recently in Baraggia, even thanks to DOCUP of the European Union, is starting the second phase, addressed to the local re-qualification and to the restoration and improvement of the historical and architectural existing heritage.

My projects aim at supplementing this process yet started, that through the protection of the environmental, historical and cultural features, will bring about a further development and improvement of the Baraggia's territory.

To a further analysis and improvement of this territory I have also created a Geographical Information System, by the software ArcviewGIS.

For further information, e-mail:

Paola Boati: [p.boati@virgilio.it](mailto:p.boati@virgilio.it)

---

Maintained by:

CISDA - HypArc, e-mail: [hyperc@polito.it](mailto:hyperc@polito.it)