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# The European Pilgrimage Routes for promoting sustainable and quality tourism in rural areas

edited by Gianluca Bambi Matteo Barbari



### THE EUROPEAN PILGRIMAGE ROUTES FOR PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AND QUALITY TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS

International Conference proceedings 4-6 December 2014, Firenze – Italy

> Edited by Gianluca Bambi Matteo Barbari

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#### THE EUROPEAN PILGRIMAGE ROUTES FOR PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AND QUALITY TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS

#### International Conference proceedings 4-6 December 2014, Firenze – Italy

The first International Conference on Pilgrimage Routes took place December 4 to 6, 2014. "The European Pilgrimage Routes for promoting sustainable and quality tourism in rural areas" was organized by: Department of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Systems (GESAAF) - University of Firenze in collaboration with the Tuscany Region, the Department for Life Quality Studies (QUVI) and Department of Agricultural Sciences (DipSA) - University of Bologna, the Italian Association of Agricultural Engineering (AIIA) and the European Association of the Via Francigena (AEVF).

The Conference was held in the historic center of Florence involving 150 experts from 18 countries and was divided into two-day meetings with presentations of important exponents of the sector and a day of technical tour to Monteriggioni, dedicated to the Via Francigena in Tuscany.

During the Conference numerous interventions were kept in the two parallel sessions for the five areas of discussion: conservation and evolution of the landscape along the routes; life quality and social impact; tourism and local development; sustainability in the rural areas; tools and methods for building a tourist attraction.

The book has been edited by Matteo Barbari and Gianluca Bambi. M. Barbari, head of the Department of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Systems, University of Florence, is the author of over 200 publications; Gianluca Bambi, is the author of over 30 publications on the structures and infrastructures for rural tourism.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe, along with the European Institute of Cultural Routes, has taken an important step to support and to obtain official recognition that, since 1987, firstly with the Camino de Santiago de Compostela and then with the Via Francigena, has given impetus to a strong growth throughout Europe, at national and regional level, of different cultural and tourist routes based on the theme of pilgrimage and spirituality. The pilgrimage routes are created in order to protect cultural and social aspects of today's society and, at the same time, to promote sustainable tourism and quality in Europe, particularly in rural areas and less known destinations.

Over twenty five years on, this conference has invited scholars, researchers, public and private actors in the sector, tour operators, associations and more, to a moment of reflection and sharing to examine the heritage of these routes, and in particular pilgrimage routes, often coinciding with ancient European thoroughfares. The themes proposed to participants have been culture and society, landscape, rural, multi-functionality, quality of life, rural tourism, including economic sustainability and methods for promoting tourism, with a view to sustainable local and international development.

The first International Conference on Pilgrimage Routes took place December 4 to 6, 2014. "The European Pilgrimage Routes for promoting sustainable and quality tourism in rural areas" was organized by: Department of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Systems (GESAAF) - University of Firenze in collaboration with the Tuscany Region, the Department for Life Quality Studies (QUVI) and Department of Agricultural Sciences (DipSA) - University of Bologna, the Italian Association of Agricultural Engineering (AIIA) and the European Association of the Via Francigena (AEVF).

The Conference was held in the historic center of Florence involving 150 experts from 18 countries (Italy, England, Poland, Sweden, Israel, Panama, Brazil, Spain, Lithuania, Slovenia, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, Hungary, Luxembourg, Jordan, Romania, Thailand). It was divided into two-day meetings with presentations of important exponents of the sector and a day of technical tour to Monteriggioni, dedicated to the Via Francigena in Tuscany.

The Conference has been the first attempt to scientific meeting and discussion about an important topic, with many disciplinary areas related to many universities (University of Firenze; University of Bologna; University of Catania; University of Parma; University of Pavia; University of Macerata: University of Roma: The Second University of Naples: The University of Naples Federico II; University of Sannio; University of Basilicata; University of Sunderland; Warsaw University of Life Sciences-SGGW; State University of West Paraná - UNIOESTE; University of Barcelona; University of Santiago de Compostela; University of Cambridge; University of Pisa; University of Udine; University of Cagliari; University of Eastern Piedmont; University of Perugia; University of Molise; University of Sassari; University of Bari; University of Milano: University of Marche; University of Foggia; University Mediterranea of Reggio Calabria: University of Lvon: University of Liubliana: Universidade Anhembi Morumbi; University of Girona; University of West Hungary; Sisaket Rajabhat University).

A meeting with the participation of academics, researchers, public and private sector, tour operators, associations, and more. A sharing moment to examine the heritage of the ancient European pilgrimage routes. Five areas of discussion have been organized: conservation and evolution of the landscape along the routes; life quality and social impact; tourism and local development; sustainability in the rural areas; tools and methods for building a tourist attraction.

The opening works were held at Rectorate's Auditorium "Aula Magna" of the Florence University with greetings from: Alberto Tesi, Rector of University of Florence; Paolo Piacentini, Ministry of Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism; Maria Grazia Campus, Department of Tourism Tuscany Region; Giovanni Bettarini, Councillor of Tourism, Municipality of Florence; Alberto D'Alessandro, Head of Office, Council of Europe Venice Office; Massimo Tedeschi, President European Association of the Via Francigena; Carmelo Riccardo Fichera, President AIIA – II section; Juan Manuel Palerm, President UNISCAPE; Fiorella Dallari, Eunek coordinator. The greetings were coordinated by Prof. Matteo Barbari, Head of GESAAF Department, University of Florence, and were followed by introductory speakers: Johanna Devine, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Eleonora Berti, Council of Europe Cultural Routes, Project Coordinator. The Conference continued at Chiostro del Maglio with numerous interventions of the two parallel sessions for the five areas of discussion:

#### 1. Conservation and evolution of the landscape along the routes

Walking a pilgrimage route means entering into a deeper and more intimate relationship with the natural environment, which over the years is sometimes profoundly changed. Therefore the scenic value of the walks, often a primary source of inspiration and choice for those who go on the road, deserves careful conservation measures.

#### 2. Life quality and social impact

Pilgrimage routes have the goal to preserve the social identity of places and people, starting from food, linked to agricultural activity, to local activities such as crafts and manufacturing, from local awareness of a cultural heritage to the promotion of a "Slow Pace" as a healthy habit for life.

#### 3. Tourism and local development

Tourism along pilgrimage routes is the result of a broader vision of rural tourism, which requires appropriate methods of design, construction, maintenance of facilities and infrastructures at the service of the routes, which often have to follow the requirements and rules of the agricultural world.

#### 4. Sustainability in the rural areas

Tourism is a powerful motor for the development of rural areas, especially areas destined to marginalization, by virtue of its ability to generate both social and economic benefits. More and more often, however, the negative effects of tourism become apparent. A lack of proper planning may undermine the delicate balance of socio-environmental impacts of these territories.

#### 5. Tools and methods for building a tourist attraction

The implementation of appropriate marketing actions for pilgrimage routes begins with the identification of appropriate traditional and innovative methods aimed at the creation of a specific tourism product. This must be achieved by analyzing the demands of the market and of the users themselves. XVIII

The first two sessions (Session 1 and 2) were carried out in parallel on the first day, preceded by the opening plenary session with the reports of the two invited speakers Jordi Tresserras (University of Barcelona, Spain) and Laszlo Puczko (University of Applied Sciences, Budapest, Hungary). Sessions 3, 4 and 5 were carried out in parallel on the second day with the reports of the other three invited speakers: Heinrich Vejre (University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Thomas Panagopoulos (University of Algarve, Portugal) and Carlos Fernandez (Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, Portugal). The contribution of the poster session with 26 works exhibited was also important.

Finally, the conclusion and final greetings by Carmelo Riccardo Fichera, President AIIA – II section, Fiorella Dallari, EUNEK coordinator, Franco Iseppi, President Touring Club Italiano e Giovanni D'Agliano, Tuscany Region.

#### PRESENTATION

The rediscovery of the ancient pilgrimage routes is arousing the interest of many actors, different in nature but united in the common purpose of promoting paths having a noteworthy historical, religious and touristic significance. Tuscany is crossed by a large number of these routes, the most notable of which is the "Via Francigena"; this is a theme on which the Region of Tuscany has been particularly active.

Tuscany Region is committed to the transformation of the "Via Francigena" into a real tourist product. We are speaking of a tourist offer, such as the Tuscan, which is able to represent the real identity of places and local communities, even when speaking of lesser known destinations, located outside the typical tourist trails. This proposal goes well with a new idea of tourism that suggests a "slow " discovery of territories, which, however peripheral, are deeply characterized by genuine historical and cultural values.

Tourism on the Via Francigena embodies the values of a sustainable and culturally advanced experience. We are speaking of a very modern proposal, which goes beyond the niche of the pilgrims themselves, to meet motivated and responsible tourists, which are seeking a real life experiences, a real contact with the territory. For this reason, even though still modest in numbers, especially if we only consider the number of pilgrims passing through on foot, the itinerary is able to generate a significant tourist flow. The target is in fact very complex and goes from religious tourism to sports , hiking, cultural, environmental, food and wine tourism. The results so far available show a noticeable growth of the flows on the route, and this confirms the above mentioned hypotheses.

The actions undertaken have allowed, in a few years, to reach the goal of having the Tuscan stretch of Via Francigena completely usable and enjoyable for the public use of the pilgrims and, more generally, of the tourists who are interested in a new, rich and sustainable experience.

Finally, we remark that the results achieved would not have been possible without an attentive dialogue with all parties interested in the subject and, in the first place, the pilgrims and their associations. The international conference "The European Pilgrimage Routes for promoting sustainable and quality tourism in rural areas" is an important event for the exchange of knowledge between the different actors on the theme of pilgrimage routes.

The lectures presented will be particularly useful for the Region of Tuscany, to make further progress in the enhancement of the routes crossing its territory and, more in general, of responsible, sustainable and competitive tourism.

> Sara Nocentini Councillor of Tourism and Culture Tuscany Regional Authority

### THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE BLACK MADONNA AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FALLOUTS

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#### Summary

It is difficult to imagine forms of local development during a global crisis with devastating effects of long or very long term, deliberately "re-thinking" about forms of development on the base of the relation between place and culture and highlighting spatial characteristics according to a no-intrusive touristic valorization of territories and local communities.

The force idea of this research lies on the recovery and valorization of one of many pilgrimages to the Sanctuary of the Black Madonna of Tindari, from the Ionian coast to the Tyrrhenian one and way back.

It has been basically chosen to contemplate a territory with its administrative units, more or less directly connected to the passage of the "route", imagining this route as a catgut of various and different realities that are added to the diversities caused by the position between two distinct sides of the Peloritan Mountains. Almost of all these municipalities, excluding those ones that are located in the coastal areas, are characterized by the typical phenomena of internal areas.

It has been chosen to address to several prototypes of users who, on one hand, are oriented toward a bipolar approach of pilgrimages, on the other hand decide to travel on the edge and to explore urban fragments, often degraded, randomly spread from one side to the other, where the boundaries between rurality and city, development and not only economic marginality are not clear. At the same time, as in this research it will be induced, we are trying to offer an interstitial opportunity to communities that "live" pressed between touristic destinations characterized by strong attraction and others with international appeal.

Keywords: Geography, Religious Tourism, Rural Tourism, GIS, Agriculture

#### Introduction

Sicily, for its geo-historical central position, is located in the heart of space-time of Christianity's origins, along the way made by the action of evangelization, from the Holy Land to the places of the first diffusion along the Mediterranean coasts.

Through long historical events Sicily has experienced periods of great artistic interest. Among the most significant moments it has to be mentioned the statement of sacred art. This art grew during the centuries between Early Christian period and the nineteenth, leaving important traces and testimonies of Christianity in the island. The Christian artistic heritage has survived to battles, often dramatic, with other powerful civilizations of different creed that have damaged it. In Sicily the art was often combined with religion and contributed to the construction of many buildings and religious artworks. There are many ways to describe a region, one of these is to follow the religious itineraries present in the territory, full of history, charm and devotion, and at the same time rich of potentialities for a new territorial enhancement.

These sanctuaries often suggest a world to explore and a secular history written by the pity and generosity of many generations. Seen with the eves of today, they represent a great opportunity to rediscover and an additional value for that territory where the Sanctuary is placed. Today, these "itineraries" are still able to speak to us, and invite us to a new reconnaissance, especially to feed our imagination. However not only this. We are attending to a rapid growth of participation of old and young people who want to retrace these routes of faith. An excellent example of this is probably the ancient Way of St. James leading pilgrimages throughout the world to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Crowds of people walk through an ancient and inaccessible itinerary, full of symbols and messages, discovering the ancient faith made of struggle and sweat as much as deeds and enthusiasm and driven by the challenge to know the world. This modern challenge is today at the basis of the relaunch of local development that is made possible through a synthesis of tourism and religiousness. The truth is that these paths and places of faith, fallen in the general removal, get strength back. Therefore, these paths, "itineraries" are able to speak to us and invite us to a new recognition and especially to feed our imagination and intellect. How were those pilgrims of past centuries? What did inspire their hearts made of prayer, grief and hope? We do not believe that in their soul there were something so different to that feeling animating devotees of today. Although, this feeling today is interlaced with a more fragile faith, an improvement in the road network, with the diversity of transportations, with a devastating innovation that does not spare the oldness, isolation, and silence of these places of faith. These places are still attractive and gifted of a suggestion and an extraordinary charm of repeal of the rural values of frugality and humility. Even today, the pilgrim relives the memory of his own decedents and takes comfort by the Communion of Saints. The walk, intended as a rediscovery of faith and places, helps to carry out an act of love. Its revival put pilgrims near the world again, and encourage to a more accepting and tolerant humanity.

#### **Religious tourism and local development**

In reference to pilgrimages, these "walks" towards holy sites, they could be evaluated by considering the wide sphere of interests driving the pilgrim. He generally considers the "journey" and the itinerary as complementary goods to the final religious place contemplating a combination of useful methods to achieve the atonement of sins or a pardon. In terms of local development it should be emphasized that this doubling is also reflected in the selection and evaluation of higher ranked objectives, the only ones that could represent in their totality highly recognizable elements. Moreover, it has to be remembered that creating opportunities of development in a urban areas with high concentration is generally easier than in places with an high diversified territorial construct as well as marginal, and characterized by, in addiction to classic territorial icons, territorial remains derived by dispersion phenomena and territorial re-elaboration generally wrong in the long run.

It is right the mentioned marginality the first challenge that our investigation focus on with a construction of an "itinerary" defined and recognizable also by those who have still not experienced it before. This research just undertaken, far from being completed quickly, has allowed us to understand how many and which lacerations, sutures, absences and lumbering presences are interlaced in general terms for marginal lands and, specifically, in these forgotten areas even by the local policies of territorial reorganization. The critical eye which we began to investigate with, allowed us to discover new possible solutions in the application of rural development tools, in addition to the use religious tourism as a driving force for the development of a vast and diversified territory that, as we noticed at the beginning, finds its strength in its own bipolarity. It has still to be defined in theoretical terms the boundaries where these political exercises, about development and integrated planning, should be conducted and regarding this point we simply warn the reader that the dispute on rural planning is far from being over<sup>1</sup>. The fact remains that the debate in objective geographical terms needs at least a first approximation of "places" and "situations" presenting characteristics of marginality that concern not only the territorial plane but also the cultural aspects. Therefore, the strategic operation we are proposing appears dangerous since the beginning, aware of the fact that only through strong participation governance mechanisms, cohesion and local enthusiasm, it would be feasible the necessary capacity building. This would be the only way able to "link" different political

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Should be highlighted that it is necessary to separate the rural plane from the agraria one, since they differ for both targets and methods, even if very often there are many points of convergence.

and social entities with the aim at building from the bottom the "itinerary", not only geographical but also cultural. Our choice definitely points at the "countryside", bucolic term but with a strong political sense with its bridge with agriculture and rural plane. The countryside apparently poorer then the city of cultural emergencies is, more than the urban environment, able to transmit a sense of belonging, identity and long duration of cultural values (Tinacci Mossello, 2002). Moreover, this territorial dimension seems to be the most appropriate to the non-mercantile relations of the "itinerary", the only one to guarantee and above all recognize those social, cultural and institutional relations that could influence somehow the economic impact of these marginal area with its mainly agricultural vocation, even in the presence of forms of integration with other sectors such as tourism. Specifically, we have "re-thought" about forms of local development on the basis of the relationship between place and culture and to highlight spatial peculiarities in function of a non-intrusive touristic valorization for territory and local communities. With the aim at emancipating from the traditional valorization of agricultural specialties, our interest focuses on territorial regeneration mechanisms through the construction of events characterized by strong touristic attraction able to communicate the cultural value of religious events for the macroregion Sicily and the microregion of the Black Madonna of Tindari and its pilgrimage. Therefore, there is a comparison between these two regions at different scale even if we focus much more on the microregion.

#### The macroregion sicily

The overview of the religious universe of Sicily here showed (fig. 1) is not totally complete. Moreover, the number of places of faith and particularly the sanctuaries is very large and does not allow to make a complete list. Therefore, it has been made a selection in this overview that, through a functional system, exalted by good infrastructures (airports, roads, receptivity, etc.) and richness of natural and cultural sites, allows to highlight the most characteristic signals of religious presences and to appreciate the surrounding territories. This overall picture we have selected presents a double function: on one side it indicates at a regional scale a possible scenario of territorial reorganization by using religious itineraries, on the other side these itineraries could positively affect the territory and its historical and cultural knowledge. In other words religious tourism, appealing on the network we have traced, the environmental and cultural excellences and a proper standard of infrastructures, could relaunch part of Sicily. The selected places of faith are listed as follow and showed in the map in the figure 1.

- 1) Monastery of Montevergine e Badiazza, Messina.
- 2) Sanctuary of Santa Maria della Neve, Santa Lucia del Mela.
- 3) Sanctuary of Madonna di Tindari, Patti.
- 4) Church of *San Filippo*, San Filippo del Mela.
- 5) Monastery of San Placido Colonerò, Messina.
- 6) Church of Santissima Annunziata, Forza d'Agrò.
- 7) Church of San Domenico, Badia Vecchia.
- 8) Monastery of Sant'Agata, Catania.
- 9) Sanctuary of Madonna delle Lacrime, Siracusa.
- 10) Sanctuary of Gibilmanna, Cefalù.
- 11) Church of Spirito del Vespro, Palermo.
- 12) Abbey of Santa Maria Nuova, Monreale.
- 13) Abbey of San Martino delle Scale, Palermo.
- 14) Monastery of San Francesco di Paola, Alcamo.
- 15) Abbey of Santo Spirito, Caltanissetta.

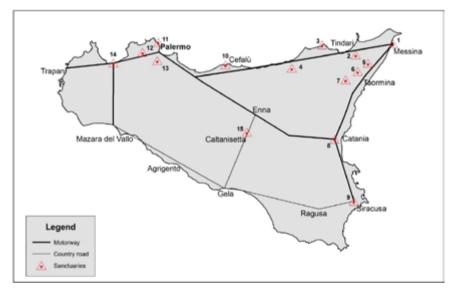


Fig. 1. Overview of Sanctuaries in Sicily. Our elaboration.

#### Black madonna of tindari: itinerary and local development

The core of our research basically focuses on an area of Sicily not very popular, one of those places where the authentic faith of few, made of struggle and pain, allows still today that this territory does not fall in complete isolation. Places that would deserve to be visited and valorized because rich of traces of the past and also depository of a good historical, cultural and naturalistic heritage. After having studied this reality deeper, we are convinced that it would deserve an operation of rediscovery, on one hand to prevent that it would be part of a sort of collective repression, on the other hand to try a territorial and touristic re-value. The force idea of this research lies on the recovery and valorization of one of many pilgrimages to Sanctuary to the Black Madonna of Tindari, from the Ionian coast to the Tyrrhenian one and the way back. It has been basically chosen to contemplate a territory with its administrative units, more or less directly connected to the passage of the "route", imagining this route as a catgut of various and different realities that are added to the diversities caused by the position between of two distinct sides of the Peloritan Mountains. Almost of all these municipalities, excluding those ones that are located in the coastal areas, are characterized by the typical phenomena of internal areas.

It has been chosen to address to several prototypes of users who, on one hand, are oriented toward a bipolar approach of pilgrimages, on the other hand decide to travel on the edge and to explore urban fragments, often degraded, randomly spread from one side to the other, where the boundaries between rurality and city, development and not only economic marginality are not clear. At the same time, as in this research it will be induced, we are trying to offer an intersticial opportunity to communities that "live" pressed between touristic destinations characterized by strong attraction and others with international appeal.

The route we investigated on is the Pilgrimage to the Black Madonna of Tindari which is held in Sicily for some time now, its path stretching from Santa Teresa di Riva (Ionian coast) to Tindari (Tyrrhenian coast), for a total distance of about 50 km (fig. 2, 3 and 4). It is an eminently regional traditional route of faith and devotion.

The route we are introducing, apart from being experienced as collective memory of devotion and crossing new places, is strongly growing at the moment and is part of the important trend of religious tourism in Sicily.

This itinerary has been mapped trying to combine an adequate metric measurement accuracy and the low cost of the equipment used. It is appropriate to mention that the phase of surveying made possible to draw a line, which corresponds to the path, joining points collected every 20 meters. It was also decided to survey the most interesting topographic elements, such as churches, votive icons, recreation areas, dining options, start/end of unpaved roads, fountains, signage, etc..

In support of all the collected data should not be overlooked the aid provided by a rich photographic, historical and recent, database. In fact, several georeferenced photos were made for a detailed analysis of all the most significant landscape and anthropic elements present along the entire route.

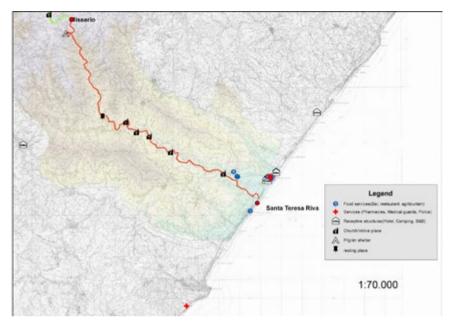


Fig. 2. Itinerary from Santa Teresa Riva to Misserio. Our elaboration.

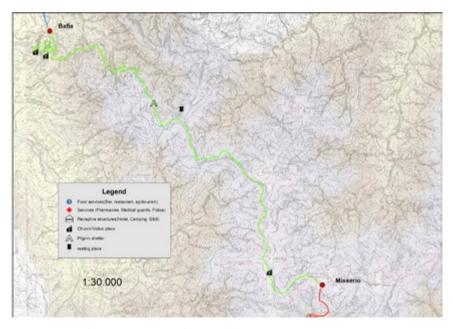


Fig.3. Itinerary from Misserio to Bafia. Our elaboration.

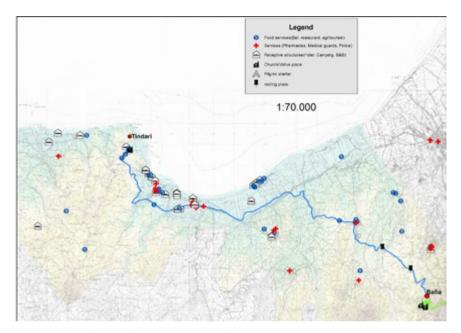


Fig. 4. Itinerary from Bafia to Tindari. Our elaboration.

In a subsequent step we dealt with the quantification, verification and correction of the error coefficient that is always present in this kind of survey.

The traced path is located in places that, depending on the type of fruition, may be considered "obligatory passage" for pilgrims and free passage for tourists. This double value is also a double perspective of travel given that who decides to begin the "itinerary" could appreciate the surrounding environment even if he is not driven by a religious sense. This environment is made up of urban fragments, often degraded, and allows also to contemplate the landscape attractions offered by territory. In this way deviations could create new interstitial opportunities for those communities living on the economic margins of society, oppressed among highly attractive touristic destinations, such as the case of the international touristic district Taormina-Giardini Naxos. By considering all of municipalities involved in the itinerary, with the exception of Santa Teresa Riva and Tindari, respectively the departure and the destination of the pilgrimage, the performance in terms of tourist offer is quite poor with very low quantity of basic and not basic services scattered in the surrounding territory. Therefore, the itinerary could be seen as an important tool of territorial governance in order to project, plan and program some socio-economic interventions able to activate economics in

addition to the "traditional" sense of welcome, the only one compensating every kind of "lack".

The geographical area covered by the "itinerary" presents a diversified territorial morphology: it is marked by low altitudes, flattened or lightly undulating shapes in the coastal parts of the ionic section between Santa Teresa di Riva and Furci Siculo and the Tyrrhenian part up to Tindari, by hill and mountainous parts in the hinterland, as well as by anthropic factors such as urban networks, agrarian lands and rural settlements (fig. 5, 6 and 7).

The geographical area of interest presents cultural and environmental potentialities poorly integrated in a tourist dynamic logic in addition to the well-known environmental criticalities (fig. 8). In relation to locations or stops along the itinerary, the most part of services or facilities are located in the area overlooking the coast and, specifically, in the ionic part of Santa Teresa di Riva and Furci Siculo and in the Tyrrhenian coast of Falcone, Oliveri, Patti and Tindari while very few services or facilities are in the inner zones. It would be desirable, in a process of new territorial elaborations, to consider the presence of new services and facilities to support the interaction and participation of tourists/users with an organizational and relational logic.

We are currently evaluating, with further interventions on the field, the possibility to individuate flexible forms of accommodation and food

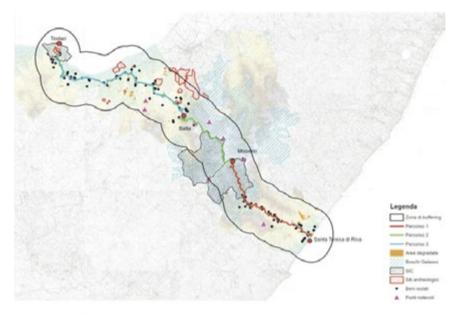


Fig. 5. Map of Landscape goods. Our elaboration.

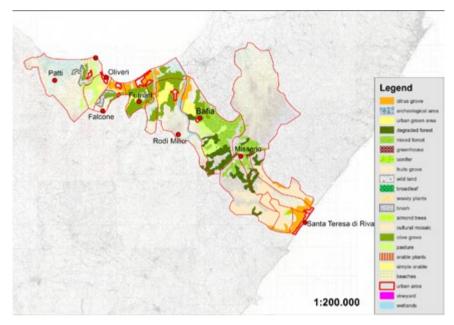


Fig. 6. Map of agricultural parcels. Our elaboration.

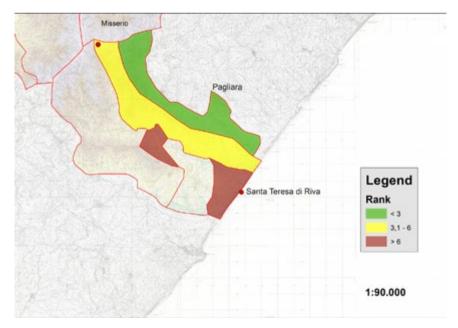


Fig. 7. Map of services Rank. Our elaboration.



Fig. 8. Photo of environmental criticality. Our elaboration.

services, supported by the implementation of a register of users in every point of departure of the pilgrimage. This would be functional to the quantification of the different needs according the classes of users: devotes-devotes, devotes-tourists, tourists-tourists. Moreover, it has been created a signage ad hoc, a black arrow designed according to the shape of the statue and including the statement engraved at the base of Black Madonna's statue (fig. 9).

The final considerations of our group of research highlight the ungluing between the "religious route", the "touristic route" and the intermediate level, where both these routes take place.

#### Conclusions

Sanctuaries in Sicily are undoubtedly expression of a concrete faith that sees in the meeting and meditation a safe point for the spiritual life. However, built during different periods and according various styles, they emit an attractive fore and an exceptional suggestion. The environments, landscapes, and human works are exalted invoking a strong attraction. In our work we wanted to recall the great value they could generate in a modern period. If they are evaluated separately or in relation with one another thanks to routes or itineraries, they could be a driving force for the development of huge areas using these places of faith for a sustainable

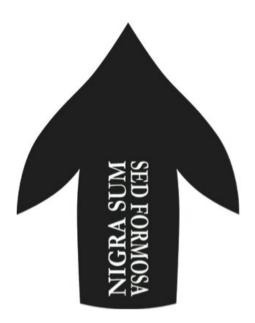


Fig. 9. Picture of the symbol of the black arrow. Our elaboration.

development tourism. Our work has faced thanks to methodological and empirical analyses many issues and aspects in relation with:

- The role of territory in development processes and territorial transformation operated at different scales;
- The use of the concept of "local territorial system" (SloT) as theoretical and operational model;
- Procedures and principles for analysis and evaluation of territorial value and sustainability in the cases of cultural religious goods and touristic development.

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