

A7003 Interpretations

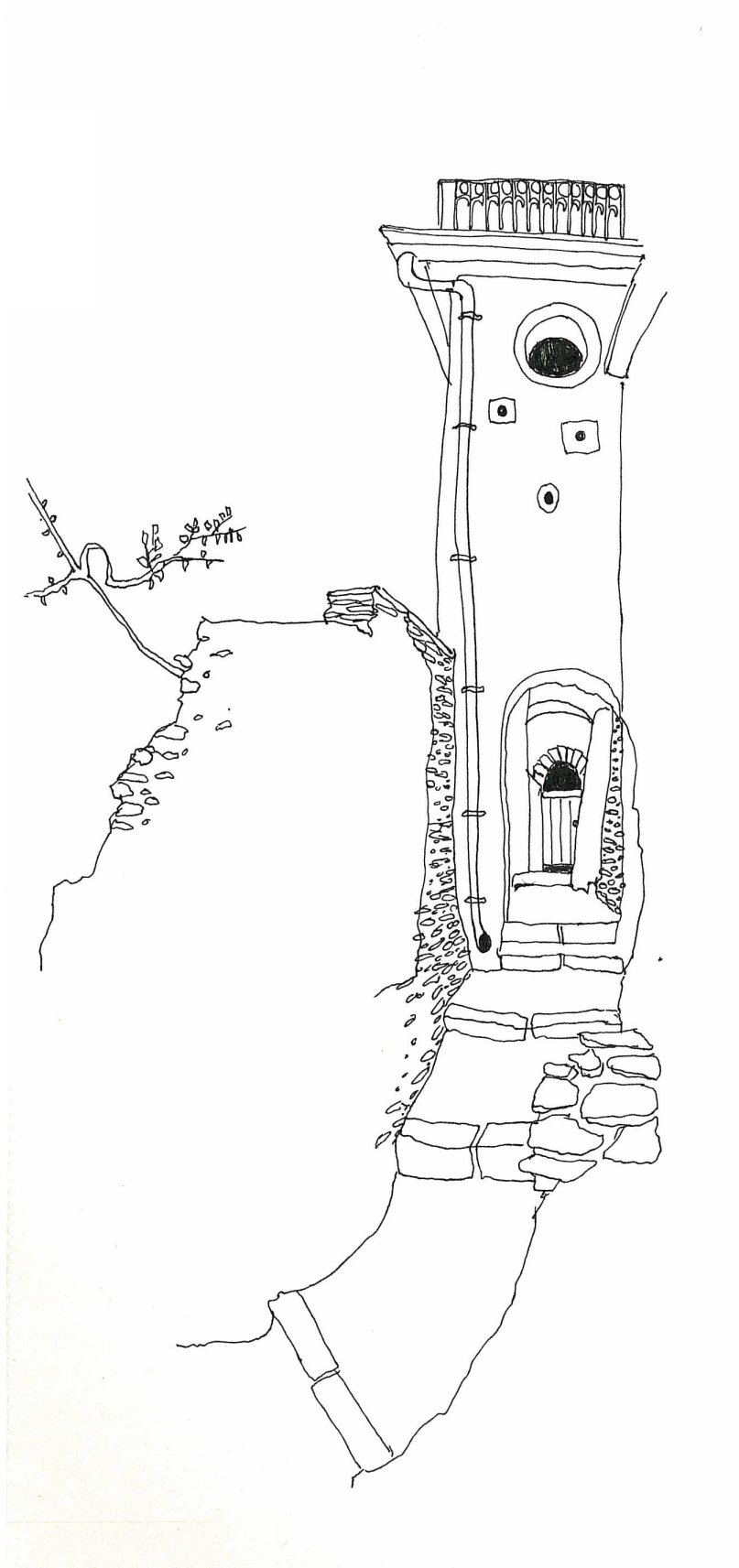
Rachel Buckley

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Body text: 4270 words

No-man's Land

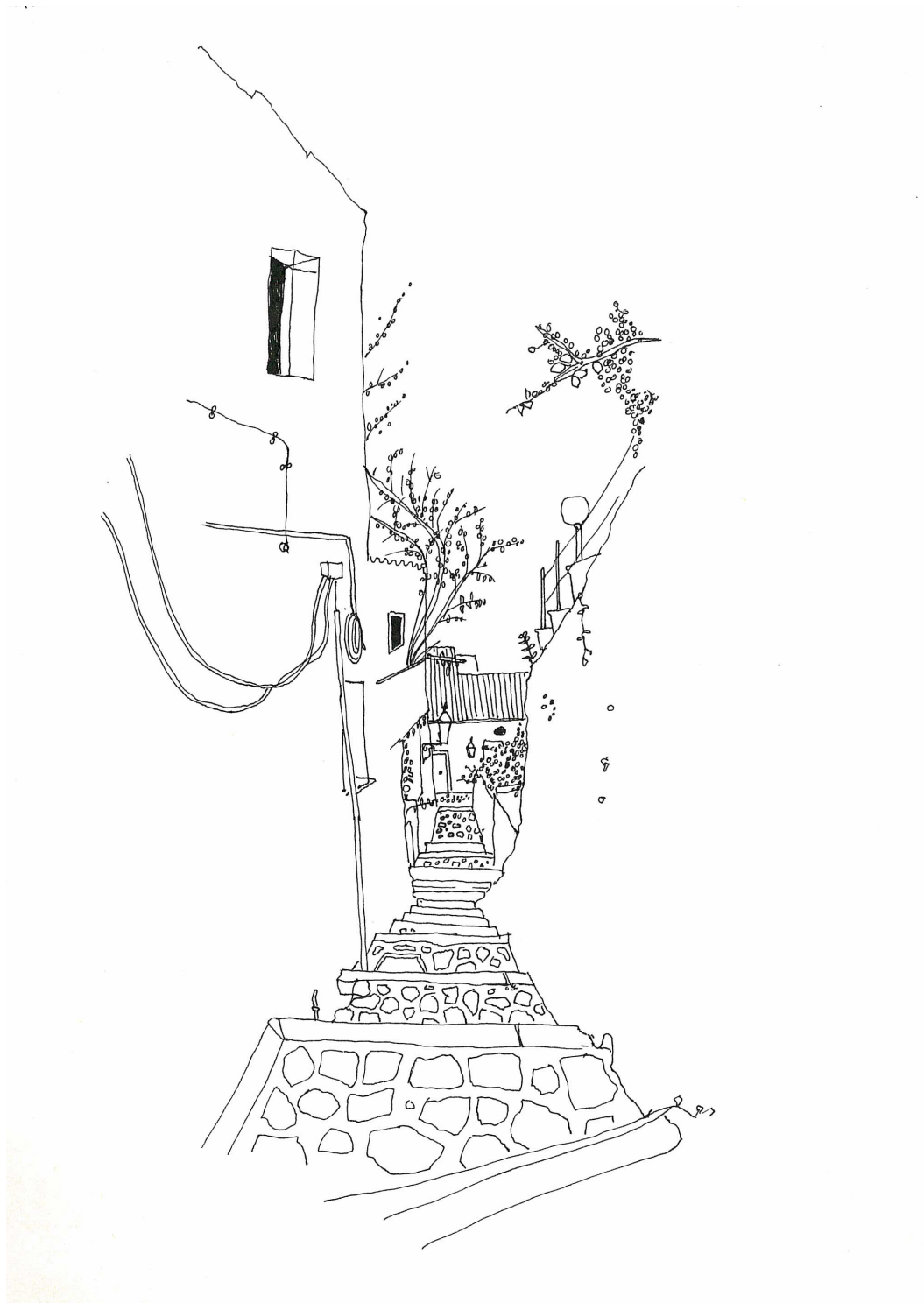
The Pre-occupation of Belmonte Calabro

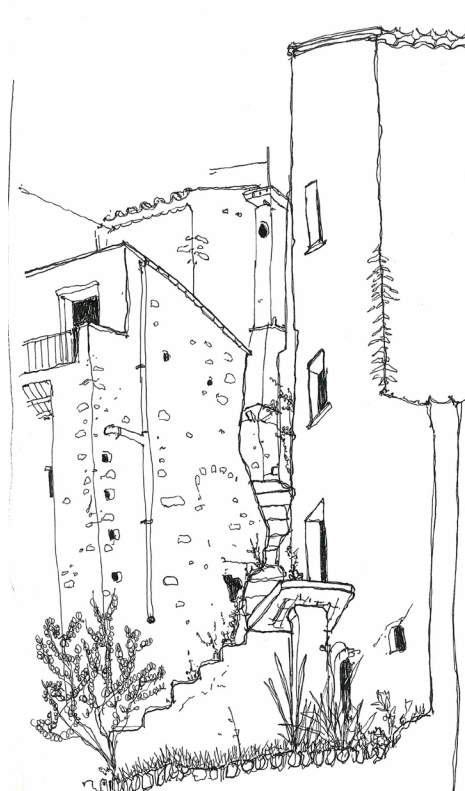


Pre-occupation

'It seems to be her first book, I said to myself, but one must read it as if it were the last volume in a fairly long series, continuing all those other books that I have been glancing at...for books continue each other, in spite of our habit of judging them separately. And I must also consider her — this unknown woman — as the descendant of all those other women whose circumstances I have been glancing at and see what she inherits of their characteristics and restrictions.'

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*





'Knowledge is...Intrinsically a factor of change...the map itself...modifies the territory.'¹ Virginia Woolf also wonders what sort of fictions would have evolved under different circumstances: '...the great part which must be played in that future so far as women are concerned by physical conditions. The book has somehow to be adapted to the body...women's books should be shorter, more concentrated, than those of men, and framed so that they do not need long hours of steady and uninterrupted work. For interruptions there will always be...'²

It brings to mind the Majestre, Calabrian weavers, who coded the programming of complex looms into lullabies,³ and Ada Lovelace's computer coding: 'The Analytical Engine...weaves algebraic patterns, just as the Jacquard-loom weaves flowers and leaves'.⁴ These complex languages are resilient, adaptable, forms of remembering. Acknowledging that the structure of the language itself bears influence in physical space, the discourse around the formation of the structures used to think with in contemporary times: 'the classical canon...the Western, male, rational understanding...is being questioned....the importance of mythical and of non-linear thinking';⁵ how tactical mythology can be a tool of defence in

a planetary system in a state of critical disbalance.⁶

These thoughts stem from a residency in a Hill-town called Belmonte, in Calabria, a town with a rich agricultural and artisanal heritage, now largely deserted due to the pull of cities in the North.⁷ The residency was hosted by Le Seppie, a cultural organisation, co-founded by Rita, who grew up in this area. They are involved in revitalising the town: 'through methods of participatory and auto-ethnographic ethnography';⁸ 'to study processes that aim to activate experimental methods, regenerate places and promote new forms of community and social cohesion'.⁹

This year their theme is Agriculture - tying the future of this locality's unique produce to the ongoing discussion around the role small scale local industry can play in developing more sustainable globally connected societies. Another strand of this paper is to support a colleagues' agricultural studies, which drew attention to non-collaboration between farmers, and significantly, the unwillingness to share the seeds of the Belmonte tomato plant. Words heard in association with this area were 'defensiveness' or 'backwardness';¹⁰ it is worth spending more time with this resistance.

¹ Elvira Adamo, Rita. 2020. 'Experimentation for Public Action: Another Dimension of Architecture' (unpublished PhD in Architecture and Territory, Reggio Calabria: University degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - Department of Architecture and Territory) [accessed 4 January 2023] p214, citing Korzybski, 1933, Bateson, 1970.

² Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. Epub, Delphi Classics (Parts Ed, 2017.)

³ "Brand Story." Cangiarì, <https://cangiarì.it/en/info/story>. Accessed 13 Nov. 2022.

Di Paolo, Novella. "A Loom against the 'ndrangheta. The Ethical High Fashion of Cangiarì." *Eco-a-Porter*, 20 Mar. 2018, <https://eco-a-porter.com/2018/03/20/a-loom-against-the-ndrangheta-the-ethical-high-fashion-of-cangiarì/?lang=en>.

⁴ Gregersen, Erik. "Ada Lovelace: Biography." *Britannica*, 6 Dec. 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ada-Lovelace>.

⁵ Johnson, Kathryn, et al., editors. *Surrealism & Design Now: From Dali to AI*. Design Museum, 2022. p17

⁶ Haraway, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble*. Duke University Press, 2016.
Wilk, Elvia. *Death By Landscape*. First Soft Skull Edition, Soft Skull Press, 2022.

⁷ Denicke-Polcher, Sandra. *Reactivating Underpopulated Areas through Participatory in Southern Italy by Creating a home for Newcomers*. UCL Press, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.amps.2022v2i11.003>.

⁸ Elvira Adamo, Rita. 2020. 'Experimentation for Public Action: Another Dimension of Architecture' (unpublished PhD in Architecture and Territory, Reggio Calabria: University degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - Department of Architecture and Territory) [accessed 4 January 2023] p19

⁹ Ibid. p19

¹⁰ Vespucci, Gerardo. *Informal Interview Gerardo*. Informal Interview, 5 Dec. 2022.



A defence is a story, and an acknowledgement of an insecurity. ‘Stories hinge on moments of change and transformation, but in this way they can also create continuity and coherence between eras and areas.’¹¹ ‘Tools of defence’ was the main axis on a diagram drawn by musician and storyteller, Gerardo.¹² I mention this, as was interested in the traditions and belief systems of the area - especially through the lives of women. If there is security in knowledge of something, there is insecurity in not-knowing: ‘Fiction is one of the best tools we have for making sense of hyperbolic situations...we may encapsulate it in the form of a story’¹³ and it seemed, akin to the tomato seed, a highly encapsulated and defended figure in this landscape, surrounded with stories, was a female figure. Women’s history in this region has arguably always been complex with ‘the institutions of both marriage and the family...cornerstones of society right up to the very end of the century’;¹⁴ the ‘cult of maternity...a generous and powerful figure whose unconditional love spoils her sons...Influences both Italians’ image of themselves and foreigners’ perceptions of Italian womanhood.’¹⁵ Traditions maintain stability, often arising at in-between, transitional points,¹⁶ and the tradition of this defensive family landscape, with a rooted, stable, productive mother became important when thinking about societies in times of intense change.

Whilst keeping this in the background, the final strand of this paper observes the methodologies of Le Seppie in parallel with the more traditional ‘defences’, and this familial landscape. Given the resilience of these traditions and the intensity of the ‘folk’ culture in the South of Italy, it is questioned: What constitutes a good defence? Where resources and power to build are scarce, what are the methodologies of resilient place-making that occur through mythology, as resistance, and how does this enter the physical world?

Thinking strategically, physically, a defensive structure might be something solid, concrete, a marked boundary; like the walls of the town, or maybe something like the labyrinthine network of medieval streets that would disorientate an outsider.¹⁷ Or, tactically: a mythological labyrinth, that has so many branches and connections that it becomes too complex to view in its entirety. Some elements of this labyrinth are isolated.

No ‘History is innocent’;¹⁸ and this paper is where my background meets this place. Also, there wasn’t enough time to explore in depth. Therefore this is a more inconclusive study.

¹¹ Wilk, Elvia. 2022. *Death By Landscape*, First Soft Skull Edition (New York: Soft Skull Press) p101

¹² Vespucci, Gerardo. Diagram - Credenze. Hand drawing, 12 July 2022.

¹³ Wilk, Elvia. 2022. *Death By Landscape*, First Soft Skull Edition (New York: Soft Skull Press) p19

¹⁴ Willson, Perry. 2009. *Women in Twentieth-Century Italy*, ePub (London: Bloomsbury Academic) [accessed 20 January 2023]

¹⁵ Ibid.

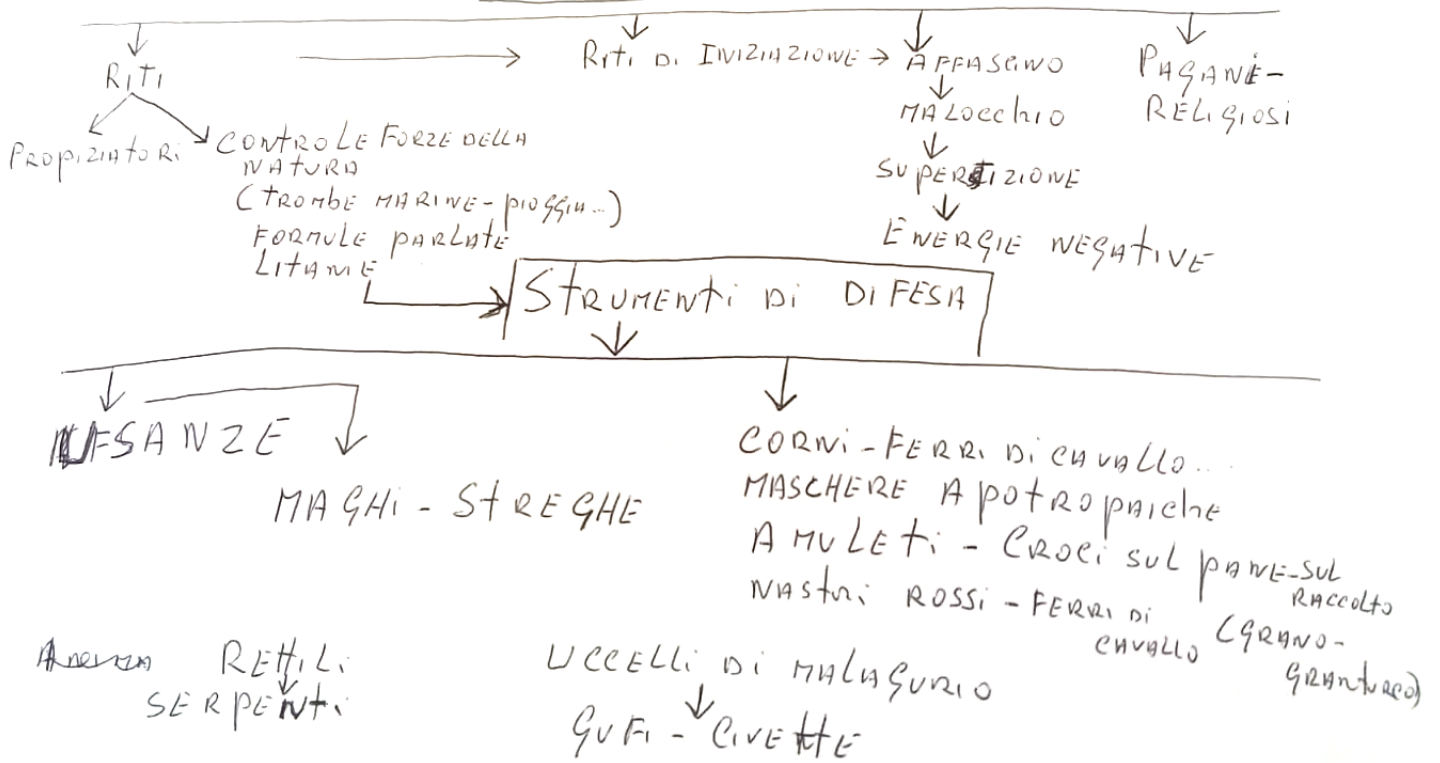
¹⁶ Turner, Victor. *From Ritual To Theatre*. PAJ Publications, 1982.

¹⁷ Scott, James C. 2008. *Cities, People and Language, Seeing Like a State* (S.I.: Yale University Press) p 53

Certeau, Michel de, et al. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. 1. paperback pr., 8. [Repr.], Univ. of California Press.

¹⁸ Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London ; New York : Dunedin, N.Z. : New York: Zed Books ; University of Otago Press ; Distributed in the USA exclusively by St. Martin's Press) p31

CREDENZE





I. Vessels

'The overriding political ideology is to favour the private ownership of individual housing. The architectural concept of composition is that of the single-family cell, of the monad...the interest of each single family cell competes with all other cells in the same urban aggregate. Separateness becomes, therefore, competition.'

Rita Elvira Adamo, Experimentation for Public Action





'The house in part originates...from a desire for stability...to live meant to confront extreme environmental conditions, the house offered a way to crystallize a routine against the chronic unpredictability of existence. For this reason, the first forms of housing were also temples where humans and gods were supposed to live together.'¹ The forms of enclosure, types of instability, and pictures of familial roles in this landscape could be pictured as follows:

The first seed is the south of Italy, where society formed under the leadership of Good King Italo, who founded democracy over communal meals.² The boundary is where land meets sea. The sea brings invasions, and across the water is volcano Stromboli, a volatile presence. The weather is changeable, destructive, so the farms and town, sustainers of life, need defenders. In nearby Reggio Calabria, two bronze statues thought to be ancient protectors of the settlement, were found at Sea - two patron Saints of the city are now Cosimo and Damiano: Doctors, healers, protectors.³ Saints, everyday people who's stories have been sanctified, are placed around the landscape: in shrines and chapels.

Moving inwards, the walled town brings another capricious landlord. Tenant farming meant that despite working the land, feeling it ones'

own, it was 'legally' a landlords', who could take an unfair share of produce. Within the community, a source of stability could be found in the structure of the festive year - communal celebrations of life in the vessels of the town: the Square, the Church. In the Church, bays house chapels to Saints: blending these human protectors into everyday life. Likewise, puppets, masks and statues give symbolic characters presence in the everyday on feast days.⁴

A final physical defence is the house, yet this does not protect against loss, the Landlord, the State. Houses may still have images and statues of chosen Saints. To tie this back through time, and upwards through scale, the ancestral Roman household had statues called 'Lares'. A 'Familiaris' would have originally been the Saint at the crossroad, a symbol of fertility and protector of cultivated fields, but on becoming domesticated, became the deity of the family cult, strategically placed in the larder - sanctifying and linking domestic and agricultural reproductive cycles.⁵ In this 'Domestic Religion',⁶ the role of stability, of continuation of life, and therefore the defended, has historically been heavy symbolic burden carried by women.⁷

¹ Giudici, Maria Sheherazade. 2016. 'Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique of Domestic Space', *Log*, 1:38: 105-29 [accessed 4 December 2022]

² Vespucci, Gerardo. 2022. 'Informal Interview Gerardo' [accessed 5 December 2022]

³ Vespucci, Gerardo, and Miranda Colavolpe. 2022. 'Interview - Gerardo Vespucci and Miranda Colavolpe' [accessed 10 December 2022]

⁴ Vespucci, Gerardo. 2021. *Luoghi Del Cuore: Racconti Belmontesi Di Terra e Di Mare* (Cosenza: Edizioni Erranti)

⁵ 'Museum Communication "Lares"'. 2022. (Naples National Archaeological Museum)

⁶ Museum Communication - Naples National Archaeological Museum. Naples National Archaeological Museum, 20 Dec. 2022.

⁷ Willson, Perry. 2009. *Women in Twentieth-Century Italy*, ePub (London: Bloomsbury Academic) [accessed 20 January 2023]

Museum Communication - Naples National Archaeological Museum. Naples National Archaeological Museum, 20 Dec. 2022.



On one level, food is life, evidence of dependence on land, so the value of agriculture and the inseparability between reproduction of people and reproduction of crops is worth considering when food supplies are under threat.⁸ There is also the question of the effect familial roles being replicated from landscape, to state, to household, has in how societies operate.⁹ However, considering how 'every chain is a link of solidarity if you hold it right',¹⁰ the focus here is on how this scaling as a structure itself, can work resistantly: maintaining a continuation of 'place' and a form of solidarity.

Within the familial landscape, familial state, familial house, maybe stability is found in the consistency in values across scale; making the hierarchies within each landscape knowable, a sense of control. As children play with miniaturisations of the world: '...the cleverer I am at miniaturising the world, the better I possess it...', notably: 'values become condensed and enriched in miniature.'¹¹ In Rita's research, a methodology for engagement, regeneration, begins with a micro scale (e.g. a chair) to macro (a network of rooms). There is always something small, in which the values are embedded, and carried through, so despite inevitable

uncertainties, those involved become familiar within a loosely defined system. The landscape is not disorientating, does not arrive massive and fully formed. Such pacing of (re)development builds strength on strong foundations.

The way in which the venerated figures in this landscape bleed into everyday life, viewed as a process of resiliency, could be seen as a form of reassurance: a constant that navigates through time, and through space. The many Saints are also resilient as part of a non-physical, narrative, care-chain¹² in that they need not even be physical: although a token is reassuring, what it contains, a story, can become incorporated into a body. The Le Seppie projects here exist through 'a constant stream of presences'¹³ that can be reduced just to one person, or expanded to 200 for a yearly summer festival. This builds trust;¹⁴ and represents a form of caring, protecting, and defending.

Mythologies travel, mix, influence one another. There is a theory that the Riace Bronzes were buried so carefully as people did not think Christianity, brought in from an unpredictable State, would last long - hence the similarity of next generation of protectors.¹⁵ Likewise, the imagery of Mary and her Son, has been traced back to Ancient Egyptian figures.¹⁶ In

8 "The next Threat to Global Food Supplies." *The Economist*, 2 Sept. 2022, https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2022/09/02/the-next-threat-to-global-food-supplies?utm_medium=cpc.adword.pd&utm_source=google&ppc_campaignID=18156330227&ppc_adID=&utm_campaign=a.22brand.pmax-&utm_content=conversion.direct-response.anonymous&gclid=CjoKCQiA8t2eBhDeARIsAAVE-gazy7udohEvrk8kl2aFjDheNkGmJFeA8TTSnRCZn5a6TkCSIMKx-SwaAt_aEALw_wcB.

9 Environmental Activism and the Maternal: Mothers and Mother Earth in Activism and Discourse. 2020. (Demeter Press)

Giudici, Maria Sheherazade. 2016. 'Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique of Domestic Space', *Log*, 1.38: 105-29 [accessed 4 December 2022]

10 Petrescu, Doina, Constantin Petcou, and Nishan Awan. 2010. 'Trans-Local-Act: Cultural Practices within and Across (Paris: Atelier d'architecture autogérée) 'Caring for the Network Creatively' Zechner, Manuela. p378

11 Bachelard, Gaston, and Mark Z. Danielewski. 2014. *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (New York, New York: Penguin Books) Chapter 7: Miniature

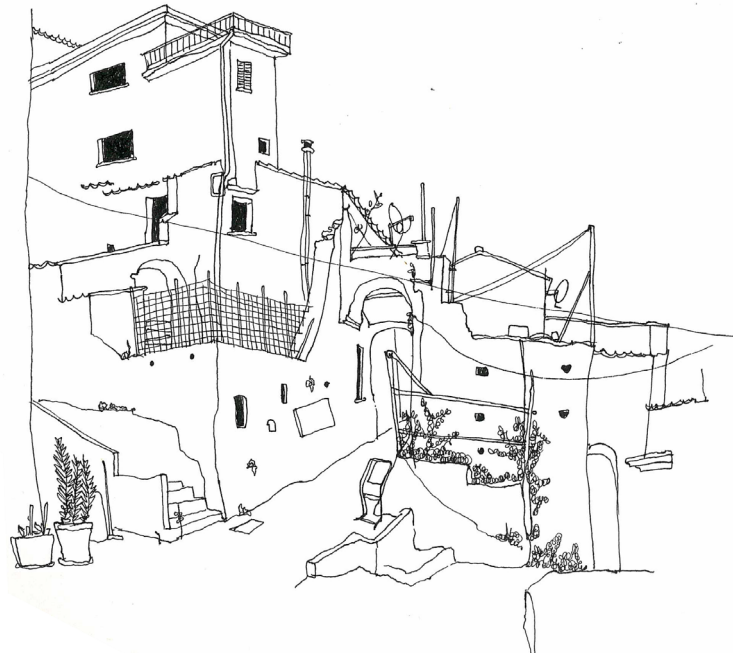
12 Petrescu, Doina, Constantin Petcou, and Nishan Awan. 2010. 'Trans-Local-Act: Cultural Practices within and Across (Paris: Atelier d'architecture autogérée) 'Caring for the Network Creatively' Zechner, Manuela. p378

13 Grant, Giuseppe, and Rita Elvira Adamo. 2022. 'School of Commons Piazza Talk' (Marina, Belmonte Calabro) [accessed 21 November 2022]

14 Denicke-Polcher, Sandra. 'Participatory Architecture Workshops with Asylum seekers and Locals: Experiences from the Crossing Cultures project in Southern Italy', *Journal of Refugee Studies* <<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/refugee>> [accessed 25 November 2022]

15 Vespucci, Gerardo, and Miranda Colavolpe. 2022. 'Interview - Gerardo Vespucci and Miranda Colavolpe' [accessed 10 December 2022]

16 Baker, Megan.. 'Isis and the Virgin Mary: A Pagan Conversion', Columbia Edu. <<http://www>



the Calabrian Giganti Festival the story of the partnering of a local girl to a traveller from the sea is re-enacted - the influence of an 'other' amalgamated into everyday life.¹⁷ Finally, in a city which in spirit somehow bears relation to this town, The Crib-scenes of Naples, where everyday society over multiple generations, in the state of 'almost becoming',¹⁸ are made miniature, almost overwhelm the presence of the 'holy family', who sit on the ruins of a pagan temple,¹⁹ seeing hierarchy simultaneously acknowledged and dissolved.

There are more tools of resistance present here: diversity, multi-valency: a structural redundancy derived from a level of dissolution, and an unbroken link to the past. The army of figures, embedded in the both physical and non physical-landscapes become a system that does not rely on one sole operator or source to support itself: 'the emergence of a malleable city...it can be changed and reversed in the deployment of intelligent urbanism'.²⁰ It builds something simultaneously solid and flexible in keeping the past present whilst absorbing new influence: '...to absorb the new into the old without disturbing the infinitely intricate and elaborate balance of the whole...'²¹ How a complex interwoven whole develops and

sustains itself is important in the contemporary movement to adapt complex, damaging networks.²²

'In this situation making connections across scales through stories is a political project in itself.'²³ Maybe it is impossible to feel influential on a global scale, but there is possibility to resist on a small, local scale: 'The destructive de-siting of the world by global smooths out all differences and permits only variations of the same. Otherness, the foreign, inhibits production.'²⁴ Methods of resilience through collaboration, of building foothold and longevity into a structure through diversity are present in Le Seppie's methodologies here. For example, Safa and Chiara, co-creators of a workshop for young people who have migrated to the area, are attracting interest and life to the evolving Piazza; opening up further uses of the space. Collaborations with Universities bring diverse perspectives to be amalgamated into this whole. Where local industries and temporary communities were invited to create the 'Crossings' festival together, is another example of this 'horizontal' approach. This is a structure of multiple-authorship that accommodates within an overarching, loosely defined structure: generating responses that cannot be traced back to one source: 'Cultural resilience negotiates between the necessity of rebuilding local economies and maintaining a global connection'.²⁵ both forms of resilience found in mythology and tradition.

columbia.edu/~sf2220/Thing/web-content/Pages/meg2.html> [accessed 10 January 2023]

¹⁷ 'Museum Communication - Vatican Museum', Rome. 2022.

¹⁸ Cuzzocrea, Stefano. 2022. 'Informal Interview Stefano - Ex Convento' [accessed 28 November 2022]

Haid, Karen. 'I Giganti - Legend of the Giants in Southern Italy', Calabria: The Other Italy <<https://www.calabriatheotheritaly.com/giganti-southern-italy/>> [accessed 6 December 2022]

¹⁹ 'Museum Communication - Vatican Museum', Rome. 2022.

²⁰ Elvira Adamo, Rita. 2020. 'Experimentation for Public Action: Another Dimension of Architecture' (unpublished PhD in Architecture and Territory, Reggio Calabria: University degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - Department of Architecture and Territory) [accessed 4 January 2023] p72

²¹ Woolf, Virginia. 2017. A Room of One's Own, ePub (Place of publication not identified: DELPHI CLASSICS (PART 5 ED))

²² Hildyard, Daisy. 2017. The Second Body (La Vergne: Fitzcarraldo Editions)

²³ Wilk, Elvia. 2022. Death By Landscape, First Soft Skull Edition (New York: Soft Skull Press) p18

²⁴ Han, Byung-Chul. 2020. The Disappearance of Rituals: A Topology of the Present (Cambridge, UK ; Medford, MA: Polity Press) p32,33

²⁵ 'Rhyzom and Eco Nomadic School'. Rhizome <<https://www.rhyzom.eu/contributors/fcdl/>> [accessed 10 January 2023]

2. Balances

'No form is ever permanent; indeed the transience or ephemerality of form is necessary if the current of life is to keep on flowing. All of existence is suspended in this flow. Borne along in the current, beings meet, merge and split apart again, each taking with them something of the other. Thus life... is not an emanation but a generation of being, in a world that is not pre-ordained but incipient, forever on the verge of the actual.'

Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*

'The Calabrian Universe is an interconnected whole; tweaking one part of the fabric is likely to bring about changes in another part'

Stanley Krippner, *The Indigenous Healing Tradition in Calabria*



Belmonte Calabro



Folk-tales are a form of real history. Gerardo tells me of a woman, who had gone to the area which is now the tomb of Michele Bianchi, Mussolini's right hand man,¹ land which belonged to the baron, to collect wood. This could be swapped for bread at the communal oven. On reaching the square, she met the baron, who asked where she had found the wood. On finding it had come from his land, he took the bread and left her with nothing. Stefano, the puppeteer, is working on next year's production of *Il Polincino*. He has an interest in developing the father figure. At the beginning of the tale, the childless woman receives seeds which grow into children: there are hundreds, too many to support, so the father kills as many of them as he can. *Polincino* survives, but is later abandoned in the woods by his father.²

Human seeds and plant seeds: 'Other divisions between human and non-human...might then begin to decompose'.³ These moments of exchange highlight vulnerabilities, maybe expressed in the folk-tales in the bargaining figures who sit at crossroads, bridges, on the road: 'moment of dissociation itself...a cluster of memories...all lumped together, too persistent and systemic to trace to any single origin point'.⁴ This holistic vision of the resonance between seasonal, agricultural cycles and that of people, spirals outwards into further themes of decomposition. As seen, untimely loss was a constant pre-occupation in this town. Living in this proximity to death, some, when in a place where someone had died, may have made a phallic hand gesture to the floor: bearing semblance to the idea that something must be returned to the earth, in order for some-

thing to come back.⁵ Repeated across scales are pleas to fertility during the in-between, dark, empty, unsure times of year - late autumn, winter, early Spring. Mercury, Roman god of the underworld, also symbolised trade, and is often portrayed with a phallic symbol: a figure forging this link.⁶ All Souls' Day here is still marked by a large festive market. At this time, traditional sweets in some areas represent, or contain, seeds, or grains.⁷ There was also a tradition of putting seeds into a dark room, with small Saints to protect them and ensure germination.⁸ This festival is closely followed by the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, where a yeasted dough is eaten: the beginning of the festive season, celebrating this version of the Madonna as protector. Nearing the Solstice, the Vigil of Birth traditionally saw tiny boys made of a fried bread eaten, in a festival of games, riddles, music and dances with roots in Saturnalian agricultural festivals.⁹

On one level, revisiting the mirroring across human, plant and seasonal cycles, of the links between eating, land, people, and reproduction: 'that in order to live, every such being must constantly draw upon the vitality of others. A complex network of reciprocal inter-dependence, based on the give and take of substance, care and vital force...extends throughout

¹ 'Michele Bianchi'. . Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michele_Bianchi> [accessed 24 January 2023]

Vespucci, Gerardo. 2022. 'Informal Interview Gerardo' [accessed 5 December 2022]

² 'Little Chickpea'. 2018. *Sur La Lune Italian Popular Tales* <<https://www.surlalunefairytales.com/book.php?id=110&title=3598>> [accessed 10 January 2023]

Cuzzocrea, wStefano. 2022. 'Informal Interview Stefano - Ex Convento' [accessed 28 November 2022]

³ Wilk, Elvia. 2022. *Death By Landscape, First Soft Skull Edition* (New York: Soft Skull Press) p20

⁴ Ibid. p186

⁵ Bakhtin, M.M. *The Dialogic Imagination, Four Essays* by M.M Bakhtin (Austin and London: University of Texas Press)

Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1965. *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press)

⁶ 'Museum Communication - Naples National Archaeological Museum'. 2022. (Naples National Archaeological Museum) [accessed 20 December 2022]

⁷ Palmesano, Maximilian. 2021. 'The Gates of Winter: "i Cicci" (the Seeds), the Meal and the Host of the Dead'. *Axismundi* <<https://axismundi.blog/en/2021/11/06/the-doors-of-winter-the-cicci-the-seeds-the-meal-and-the-host-of-the-dead/>> [accessed 12 December 2022]

Bellio, Alfonsina. 2009. 'Women Who Cook with Angels in Calabria' <<https://www.semantic-scholar.org/paper/Women-who-cook-with-Angels-in-Calabria-Bellio/45f4852ece92b19f46280dac225c9d3cf88adb6>> [accessed 10 November 2022]

⁸ Vespucci, Gerardo, and Miranda Colavolpe. 2022. 'Interview - Gerardo Vespucci and Miranda Colavolpe' [accessed 10 December 2022]

⁹ Vito. 2022. 'Informal Interview - Vito' [accessed 7 December 2022]

Vespucci, Gerardo. *Luoghi Del Cuore: Racconti Belmontesi Di Terra e Di Mare*. Edizioni Erranti, 2021.



the cosmos, linking human, animal and all other forms of life¹⁰ is relevant in ways of defending life in the face of the climate crisis.

But to think about resistance and defence of continuation, in the regeneration projects here, the festive yearly structure of growth and decomposition is also relevant. At winter, the operation scales back, but grows towards a festival in the summer. Then, a large and diverse group of locals and visitors work intensely to create; exchanging ideas whilst producing a physical thing which can then be expanded upon the next year. This level of intensity is not sustainable - there is an acknowledgement of the necessity of negotiating energy flows through time: sustainability itself only obtainable through a constant process of cyclical decomposition, gathering strength through repetition, in opposition to crystallisation and continual growth.

Events around the winter often included a temporary trading, or dissolution, of hierarchy. The traditional Carnival saw a momentary easing of the oppressive class system through wearing masks and travelling around the houses to celebrate together.¹¹ Although this temporary event culminated in a return to existing oppressions, in the use of locally produced media to generate “propaganda for the imagination”,¹² to question existing systems, whilst introducing ideas from the international presence, the spirit of this Carnival as a dissolver is recognisable in the ‘Festive’ practice of Le Seppie. ‘Building culture is not an elitist event...it is you

and me...it becomes a social event.”¹³ With building year on year, layering imagery and material over time, a strong brand and networks are formed.

Returning to control of time, symbolic weight and branding - women did not take part in Belmonte carnival until the 1950s, and remained unmasked in the houses. At the end of the festival, the puppet ‘Carnevale’ is burnt, leaving his mother, Corajisima, remaining, who represents the austerity in a time of scarce resources. Her body, displayed on houses, is old and barren, and is a clock, as her feathers are removed to count down to the end of Lent.¹⁴ The consistency of layering of symbolic links: seeds, children, women, ovens, bread, life, and it’s opposite - cold land, old, women waiting, and hunger, become densified through repetition onto ideas of a female body. To go back to deeper roots, even the three fates of Greek mythology, who determined the length of lives were women¹⁵ In defence of life, a commonly seen amulet is a horn of coral - said to link to Medusa, whom’s blood stained coral, the ‘tree of life’ of the ocean.¹⁶ This is linked to the chilli pepper, which has travelled around the south of Italy as a token of good luck. In contrast, figs, from the tree of life of land,¹⁷ exist as symbolic food.

¹⁰ Ingold, Tim. 2002. ‘Chapter Seven, Animism and the depiction of Animals’, in *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, Taylor&Francis e-Library (London & New York: Routledge), pp. 112–31 <<https://leiaarquologia.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/the-perception-of-the-environment-tim-ingold.pdf>> [accessed 7 November 2022]

¹¹ Vespucci, Gerardo. 2022. ‘Informal Interview Gerardo’ [accessed 5 December 2022]

¹² Johnson, Kathryn, Design Museum, and Vitra Design Museum (eds.). 2022. *Surrealism & Design Now: From Dali to AI* (London: Design Museum) p10

¹³ Schellnhuber, Hans Joachim, Barbara Widera, Andrea Kutnar, Annette Hillebrandt, Alan Organschi, and others. 2022. ‘Horizon Europe and New European Bauhaus NEXUS Report : Conclusions of the High-Level Workshop on “Research and Innovation for the New European Bauhaus”, Jointly Organised by DG Research and Innovation and the Joint Research Centre’ (Publications Office of the European Union) <<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/49925>> [accessed 25 November 2022]

¹⁴ Stefano. 2022. ‘Whatsapp Message’ [accessed 13 December 2022]

Haid, Karen. ‘Lent in Italy - Corajisima, A Calabrian Tradition’, Calabria: The Other Italy <<https://www.calabriadheritaly.com/lent-in-italy-calabrian-tradition/>> [accessed 5 December 2022]

¹⁵ Williams, Bethany. 2022. ‘The Fates in Greek Mythology: Hanging by a Thread’, The Collector <<https://www.thecollector.com/fates-greek-mythology/>> [accessed 23 January 2023]

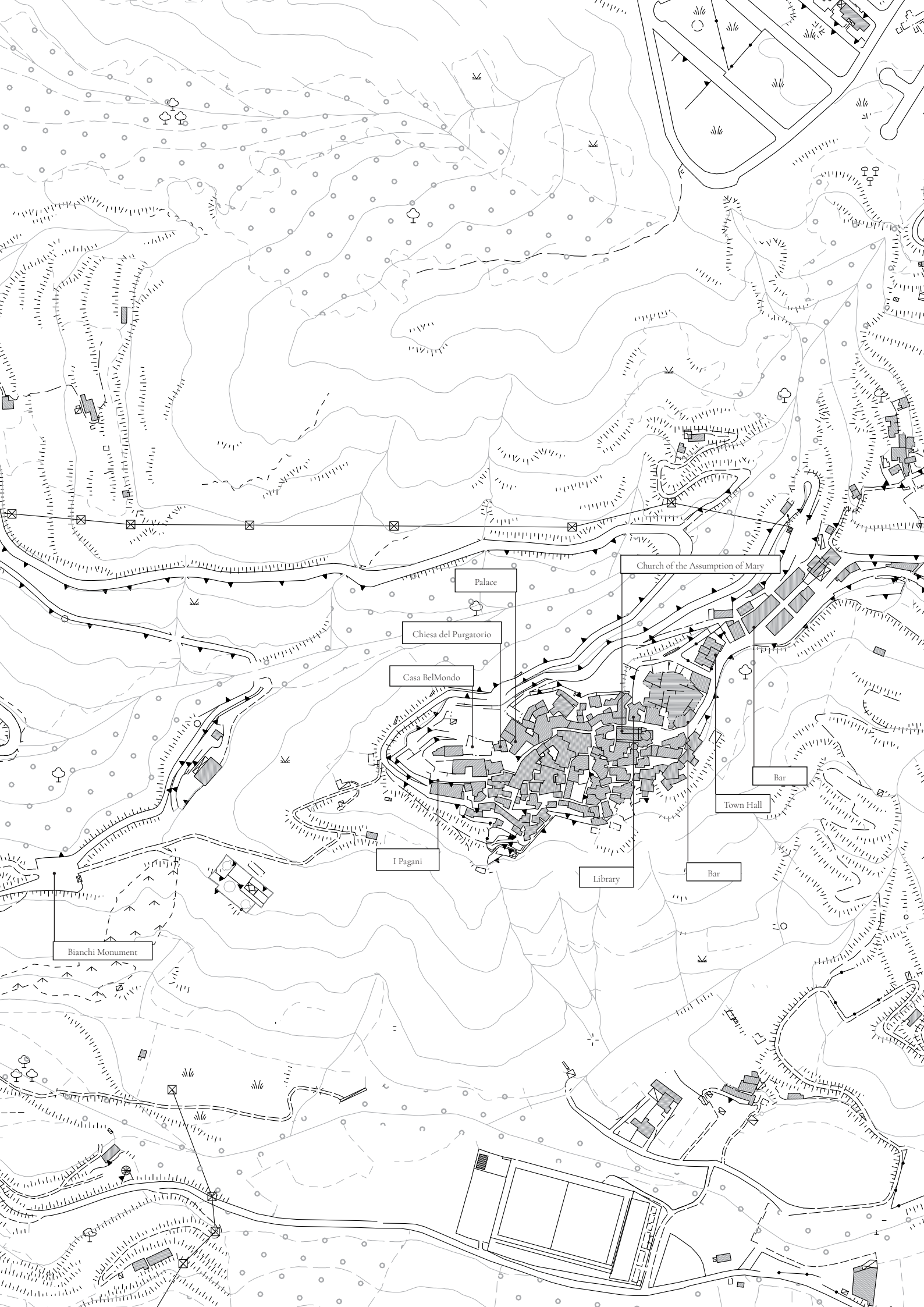
¹⁶ ‘Coral Symbolism’. 2023. Good Luck Symbols <<https://goodlucksymbols.com/coral-symbolism/#1-greek-legend-about-the-origin-of-coral>> [accessed 26 January 2023]

¹⁷ ‘Colavolpe’. 2022. Colavolpe <<https://www.colavolpe.com>> [accessed 24 January 2023]

3. Contamination



Naples



Palace

Chiesa del Purgatorio

Casa BelMondo

I Pagani

Library

Bar

Town Hall

Bar

Church of the Assumption of Mary

Bianchi Monument



The main industry of Belmonte today is the Colavolpe Factory. 100 years ago, Neapolitans who had travelled here began cultivating a local variety of fig tree, and used recipes passed down through generations of women built a strong seasonal, business.¹ The most famous recipe is the Crocette, crosses made from figs stuffed with ingredients that 'capture the Mediterranean', traditionally eaten at Christmas.² Fig trees have deep roots connected to creation, fertility, and female deities: hence their link to Christmas, and like the chilli pepper, these oral histories gain resiliency in their ability to contain a dense and complex story in a small package that can be carried on the person, whilst also having influence on an international field. Miranda, a member of the youngest generation, understanding how to manipulate newer media's internationally is motivated to continue to work within her families unique form of exchange, and navigate the influence of this product and the company's story.

In Italian, the word for flu and influence are both Influenza. When Miranda has had a tough day with customers, she gets headaches - brought on by what could be called stress, negative energy, perhaps historically referred to as 'malocchio'. A traditional remedy to this has been a ritual, which notably can only be passed on from mother to

daughter, in the temporal window of the already symbolically dense Christmas Night. Different versions of the ritual exist, but represent the filtering of bad influence from the body; healing as a defence.³ There is a subtle connections to this in the presence and use of the balconies as an in-between zone of judgement: where in the traditional marriage proposal, a serenade would be played under the balcony, and if the proposal accepted, the woman would go outside.⁴ Much like the flows of life from one medium to another in an interwoven system, acknowledgements of the non-physicals' interaction with the physical, is also played out in real space: maybe an enacted underlining of the importance of defensiveness and the role of filtration, healing. It also connects to the important awareness of a 'second body':⁵ one's own sphere of influence that exists elsewhere: 'The idea that a human body can be responsible for something which bears no tangible relation to it or its immediate surroundings is not a new idea...Everything that happens, political and natural, is an effect of human acts, but the reasons are so obscenely down to earth that it takes a leap of imagination to perceive it.'⁶

3 Vespucci, Gerardo, and Miranda Colavolpe. 2022. 'Interview - Gerardo Vespucci and Miranda Colavolpe' [accessed 10 December 2022]

Vito. 2022. 'Informal Interview - Vito' [accessed 7 December 2022]

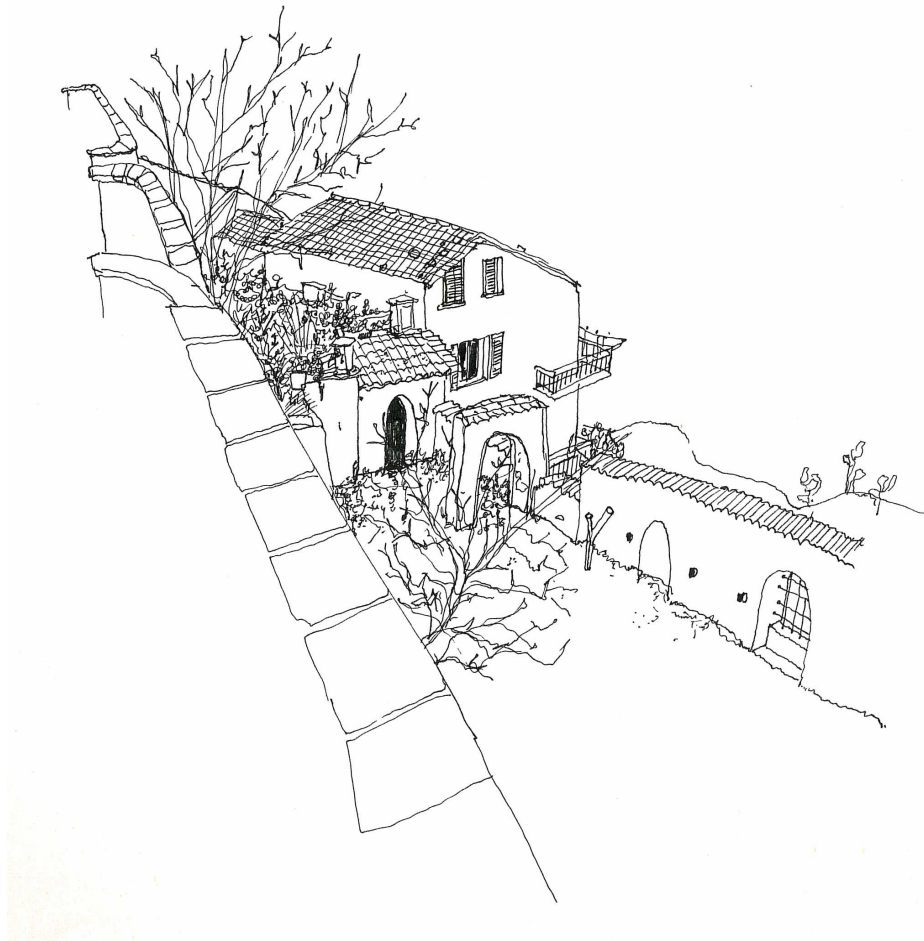
4 Vespucci, Gerardo. 2022. 'Informal Interview Gerardo' [accessed 5 December 2022]

5 Hildyard, Daisy. 2017. *The Second Body* (La Vergne: Fitzcarraldo Editions)

6 Ibid.

1 'Colavolpe'. 2022. Colavolpe <<https://www.colavolpe.com>> [accessed 24 January 2023]

2 2022. 'Colavolpe Factory Visit' (unpublished Guided Tour, Colavolpe, Marina, Belmonte Calabro) [accessed 16 November 2022]



Further examples of the way influences are built into minds and landscapes is in the two Belmonte churches. At the most well protected end of the town, where the bars, cafés, library, daily life, has continued, there is the Church of the Assumption of Mary: whose bells play a melody that can be traced to Candlemas: a festival to commemorate the purification of the Virgin Mary after childbirth. The other church in the town is in ruin, the Church of the Souls in Purgatory. This sits close to an overgrown walled garden, attached to the out-side of the town walls; once a burial ground for unbaptised children.⁷ This church is positioned on the square next to the palace. With many women working for members of the 'upper class', through abuse or not, these births were not necessarily uncommon. Despite the injustices encapsulated between these two spaces, the physical presence of an unofficial Church, and associated burial ground, (named 'I Pagani', like the unofficial beliefs amalgamated within Catholicism) could be seen as demonstrative of this culture of celebration of life existing within the stricter binds of unjust systems; that any loss must be defended against. Contradictory environments such as the lost Roman theatre of Naples, which became eaten by, but not entirely demolished, by more recent inhabitations, seem also to hint at an attitude towards preservation and memorial in which the landscape of 'sacred' spaces shifts, but nothing gets completely destroyed or forgotten.

In the way that the making of the Crocette is 'A laborious process, which involves the slow cooking of figs and the filtration of the decoction'.⁸

The concepts of susceptibility to, and awareness of, influence, and tools of filtering and healing in times of change become interesting to think with in the forms of regeneration practices here. The organisations' care, awareness, and sensitivity, is a vital dimension, especially when navigating through a complex field of influencers; or considering their own influence on the community, which is often nuanced and hard to understand. The methodologies value any 'Agent of Change'⁹ in this 'Domestic Building Site'¹⁰ responsibility towards forms of protection, and an importance to continually exercise forms of judgement from a perspective of care. There is also the influence of the media, and of visitors telling their stories of the place elsewhere, and the uncertainty of not knowing what the impact of allowing these things to happen will be.

⁸ 'Colavolpe'. 2022. Colavolpe <<https://www.colavolpe.com>> [accessed 24 January 2023]

⁹ Elvira Adamo, Rita. 2020. 'Experimentation for Public Action: Another Dimension of Architecture' (unpublished PhD in Architecture and Territory, Reggio Calabria: University degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - Department of Architecture and Territory) [accessed 4 January 2023] p219

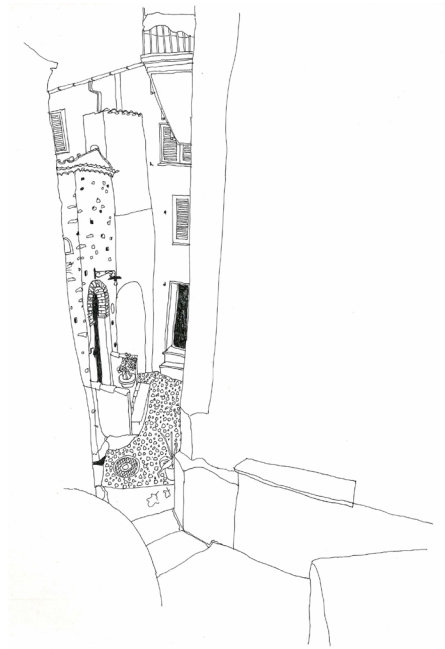
¹⁰ Ibid. p233

4. The Resistant In-between

'It was only in the 2010s that machine learning began to produce convincing results, when computer programs were modelled on the architecture of the brain as 'neural networks' and set to iterate freely in an unpredictable way...the most impressive achievement was the decision to relinquish control'

Surrealism & Design Now: From Dali to AI. Design Museum, 2022.





A defence is an expression of vulnerability: the in-between states. When I can't sleep, I listen to the World Service: a placeless airport of rapid information exchanges where the folk stories and streaming presences of the world bleed into one another.

Much hinges on continuity and connections: a story about a 'French' tidal power station in the 'British Channel' in which the dial showing the effectiveness of the power station was manually operated at the opening event to show a high power output, deceiving the public. A program about Prince Harry's book, which draws out the dysfunctional relationship he has with the King, and the loss of his mother, and the degraded behaviour the storytellers, the press.

In Calabria, the press were once travelling musicians. Whilst drifting, I remember the Calabrian folk tale, versions of which can be found in places as far away as Scotland, in which a woman throws herself from the balcony of her captor's Castle into the sea, to defend her honour. Her body transforms into a harp, which plays her story.¹ Then I remember a story from home, in which a woman's drowned body is found in the pond, and recall being told she had drowned herself because of her unbearable headaches, for which there wasn't a cure.

'Enchantment can also be considered a function'.² 'Weird occurrence might happen right in front of you, but it is not completely explainable according to current structures for categorising the world.'³ The ongoing world of oral histories, myths, demonstrate how, on an individual level, awareness of susceptibility to influence, of a mind being subject to an ongoing form of coding, and acting within a complex network of pattern-finding and folklore is important: 'Resilience is not just an outer process: it is also an inner one, of becoming more flexible, robust and skilled.'⁴

This is brought into more focus when considering that the pace of change globally is so fast that technologies and the built environment often replace themselves faster than human generations; a strange, destabilising inversion of scale. Significantly, the 'millennial' generation has been labelled 'weak' or 'lost',⁵ perhaps being the tail-end of this age of growth.

Looking back to the times when old beliefs absorbed new in Italy, in increasingly fragile contemporary times, there is a question here about how imagery and stories are shifting: what is amalgamated, contaminated, what forms of continuity, connection and exchange are taking place, where densities are being built up and insecurities manifesting themselves in defences.

The imagination world exists in space also. Methodologies of 'regeneration' being employed by a 'young generation, including architects'⁶ such as those in Belmonte, as a 'critique of existing models' emerge from an understanding of 'the strength of intangible relationships, which are expressed in gestures, trades and traditions, according to the dynamics of each community...where a strong identification between places and communities emerges'.⁷ Being rooted to the land and building strong methodologies becomes a form of resistance, making 'the idea that building more resilient social and economic systems ...to correct the distortions of urban development...increasingly credible'.⁸ This is a subtle form of non-compliance: 'a type of resistance that women, and other supposedly unstable bodies, have been cultivating for centuries, because they've had to.'⁹

ecture autogérée, 2010.

5 Lower, Anne. "Millennial Don't Strand a Chance." The Atlantic, 13 Apr. 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/millennial-are-new-lost-generation/609832/>.

6 Elvira Adamo, Rita. 2020. 'Experimentation for Public Action: Another Dimension of Architecture' (unpublished PhD in Architecture and Territory, Reggio Calabria: University degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - Department of Architecture and Territory) [accessed 4 January 2023] p11

7 Ibid. p270

8 Ibid. p265

9 Wilk, Elvia. 2022. Death By Landscape, First Soft Skull Edition (New York: Soft Skull Press) p9,10

1 Vespucci, Gerardo. 2022. 'Informal Interview Gerardo' [accessed 5 December 2022]

2 Johnson, Kathryn, Design Museum, and Vitra Design Museum (eds.). 2022. Surrealism & Design Now: From Dali to AI (London: Design Museum) p10

3 Wilk, Elvia. 2022. Death By Landscape, First Soft Skull Edition (New York: Soft Skull Press) p10

4 Petrescu, Doina, et al. Trans-Local-Act: Cultural Practices within and Across. Atelier d'archi-

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