Film routes in Basilicata

Itinéraires filmiques en Basilicate

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Introduction

1. There is a wide-ranging geographical and philosophical (Assunto 1973; Turri 1998) tendency to place landscape at the intersection between nature and culture: “nature” perceived through “culture”. Turri (1998) argues that landscape cannot be an entity in its own right; rather, it possesses an identity determined by human activity. Landscape is therefore a representation that results from an objective formulation of material reality and from the perceptual and subjective orientation of the eye. Historically, art has played an important role in defining and communicating the idea of landscape (D’Angelo 2010).

2. Visual arts and subsequently photography and cinema have allowed landscape to be reenvisioned and depicted, while contributing to the definition of some of its main characteristics. Films can tell stories that are linked to the identity of the area, intertwining the narrative with its socio-economic background, but they can also be completely detached from it. Indeed, there are film productions that use a location exclusively as the setting for events which, in their fictional context, take place elsewhere or in entirely imagined places. In such cases a distance is created between the location of the film and the place it represents, so landscape can acquire a “cinematic identity” that becomes part of the local identity.

3. This is evidenced by the growing interest in film tourism (Hudson, Ritchie 2006) – visits to locations where films have been shot – and thus in cinematic landscapes. Curiosity about film locations comes from cinema’s ability to draw attention to these places. Indeed, film tourism can be understood as a phenomenon that demonstrates the film medium’s intrusion into reality (Lukinbeal, Zimmermann 2006). Authors such as Zimmermann and Escher argue that cinema re-presents and re-constructs places and landscapes in a way that it is no longer possible to distinguish between the cinematic world and the real world, between “real” and “reel” (Escher, Zimmermann 2001).
The film induced-tourism

Scientific literature regarding the relationship between cinema and tourism (Riley, Van Doren, Baker 1998; Schofield 1996; Macionis 2004; Beeton 2005) has pinpointed three major benefits of films for the territory: the hallmark event, longevity and vicarious consumption. In one of the first researches on film-induced tourism, conducted by Riley and Van Doren (1992), films are considered a ‘hallmark event’ for the destination (Ritchie 1984), because despite their limited duration, they can have a long-term impact and are capable of stimulating awareness, appeal and profitability of the destination. In fact, movies can create interest and attract attention towards the location featured on the silver screen; the locality becomes more popular, it captivates the viewer with its new cinematic appeal and hence becomes a potential tourist destination. According to Riley and Van Doren, the likelihood of becoming an event that activates tourism flows depends on the film’s capacity to create an icon. An icon is a single scene, performance or theme in a film that remains impressed in the spectator’s memory and which is generally linked to the location where it takes place. In this sense, an icon can be abstract, when referring to feelings such as love or friendship or tangible, when referring to particular events or places.

A concrete example of how an icon can become an important resource to promote a destination is Federico Fellini’s film “La Dolce Vita”. The film is the emblem of the lifestyle in Rome in the Sixties, becoming a popular synonym for worldliness. The charm of Rome at night, populated by celebrities and paparazzi, is still evocative after fifty years and persists in the collective imagination of many tourists, as confirmed by a recent survey on the influence of Italian films on international tourists (Rocco, Di Maira 2006). But “La Dolce Vita” also created a very effective, tangible icon: the scene of the bath in the Trevi fountain with Anita Ekberg and Marcello Mastroianni is one of the most famous in Italian film history. Riley and Van Doren claim that this icon-producing process is a prerequisite for the film to become a hallmark event for the territory. Although they have been generated by cinematic productions that have a limited time duration, cinema icons revive films and refresh collective memories, so that a motion picture produced in the Sixties can still have an appeal among spectators today. In their study regarding the film “Vicky Cristina Barcelona” (2008), Rodriguez, Fraiz and Rodriguez-Toubes (2011) analysed the effect that cinema has in the creation of destination images. The film, shot in Barcelona, was a commercial success and was distributed almost all over the world, also owing to the popular actors in the cast. The survey involved spectators before and after viewing the movie; its objective was to evaluate whether the film’s images had changed the audience’s perception of the city of Barcelona. It is interesting to note that for some spectators the places shown in the film acquired greater importance compared to what they had stated before the viewing.

However, the never-ending effect of film images even once the film is over - does not depend only on the creation of icons but also on what Beeton calls longevity. According to Beeton (2005), all audiovisual products are characterised by an intrinsic longevity that guarantees the continuous proposal of images. In the case of movies, besides being viewed in cinemas, they can also be seen on television, online streaming, DVDs, film festivals etc. In this sense, the strength of these autonomous images can rely on the long-
lasting effect of cinematic products that guarantees the continuous awakening of attention towards both the film and its location.

In the literature, the relationship between tourism and cinematic images is connected with the concept of vicarious consumption (Schofield 1996, Macionis 2004), the chance of spectators to virtually consume the tourist destination beforehand through the images of a film. Pre-experience and indirect consumption of the destination are significant (Riley and Van Doren 1992, Schofield 1996, Fagiani 2008) for two reasons: the first is associated with the seductive component of images, while the second regards the familiarity with the destination acquired through the film. The destination, being part of the setting and the storyline, is no longer a distant, unknown land, but becomes more familiar. Hence, cinematic promotion allows the potential tourist to enter the location right away, eliminating the worries connected to the discovery of an unknown place and simplifying the purchasing process. As we will see in the next paragraph, icons, longevity and vicarious consumption are aspects that can considerably influence a tourist’s destination choice process.

In one of the first studies on film-induced tourism, Riley and Van Doren (1992), analyse tourist flows in some American destinations which have been the locations of famous films. For example, the case of “Close encounters of the 3rd type”, a movie directed by Steven Spielberg in 1977, is interesting. The most important scenes of the movie were shot at Devils Tower National Monument, which, in 1978, recorded a 74% increase in visits compared to the previous year. This further increased after the movie was shown on television in 1981. In 1989, 11 years after the movie was released, a survey carried out on the tourists visiting Devils Tower showed how one visitor out of five indicated that Spielberg's movie was the principal source of knowledge of the place. Riley and Van Doren's study was revised and upgraded in 1998, when the two authors, examining the tourist flows of twelve locations of famous movies during a time period starting from 10 years before the movies' release to 5 years after it, ascertained how, after the movies were released in the cinema theatres, there was an increase in arrivals ranging from 40% to 50%. With regards to Italy, Rocco and Di Maira (2007) carried out an analysis of the impact on the territory of some successful TV series. An interesting case is the TV series “Elisa di Rivombrosa”, which was mostly shot in the Castle of Agliè in the Piedmont region. Before the castle became the movie location, the annual flow of tourists to the castle varied from 8,000 to 17,000 visitors, but, the year after the TV series, the numbers rose to about 92,000 visitors. This flow, which decreased in the following two years, has however remained far higher than the average of the previous years (Rocco, Di Maira 2007).

A recent international case, which has drawn the attention of a number of scholars is the “The Lord of the Rings” (2001-2002-2003). This is a trilogy, based on Tolkien's book, which was filmed in New Zealand and which has been a great success. The films portray an imaginary world, without any connection to the regional identity of the location, which has nevertheless stimulated growing curiosity about the locations where the films were shot. Tzanelli (2004) maintains that films undertake an operation of “staged authenticity”, constructing the authenticity of the location. Although aware that they are dealing with something fictional, film tourists treat film tours as an authentic experience in which New Zealand is actually perceived as “Middle Earth”, the location of the fantasy stories recounted in “The Lord of the Rings”. Thus cinema has a broad impact on the landscape, not only by recording its transformations, but also by producing new meanings and identities. Due to the particular timing of the release (the three
instalments arrived in the halls at a distance of one year, one after the other), the locations of the movie were able to draw a significant advantage from the longevity. In case of “The Lord of the Rings” there was an important synergy between the movie-promotion and territorial marketing operations. Four government agencies (Investment Nz, Tourism Nz, Trade Nz, and Film Nz) worked in close contact to promote tourism tied to the movies, also involving Air New Zealand, the national airline. Greater importance was given to the naturalistic aspect of the movie: the trilogy turned out to be an excellent way to strengthen the image of New Zealand and its brand, promoted through the “100% Pure New Zealand” advertising campaign before the movie. According to an inquiry carried out by Tourism New Zealand, 65% of the tourists who arrived on the island in 2003 confirmed they were influenced by the movie.

Basilicata region and tourism

Basilicata is a small region in the South of Italy with an important cultural (worthy of mention are the Sassi of Matera, a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and naturalistic heritage, and a significant wine and food sector. However, according to a recent study carried out by Demoskopea, in which place identity and place awareness of Southern Italian regions were examined, Basilicata has a “relevance index” (the capacity of the region to be included in “tourist destinations” at the time of decision-making) lower than the average of the other regions in Southern Italy. The scarce perception of the Basilicata “brand”, therefore, limits the possibility of converting awareness of the destination into a real travel experience. (Cassinelli, Chiarullo, 2014). This modest appeal is confirmed by tourism flows: the region still has a limited weight in the tourist system in Italy, as well as in the South of Italy. Basilicata, in fact, today accounts for 0.5% of the total number of visitors recorded in the entire Italian peninsula, and about 2.5% of those recorded in South Italy. An incidence that is substantially the same of ten years ago, when in 2000, Basilicata had a 0.4% share out of the total number of tourists in Italy, and 2.2% of those recorded in South Italy. However, in the last few years, the situation has improved in terms of tourism flows. In fact, if we observe the trend of the past ten years (1999-2011), we can say that tourism demand has increased at a mean annual rate of 4% in terms of arrivals and 3% in terms of presences.

Tourism in the Basilicata region (also known as Lucania) is once again characterized by the limited level of internationalization, which is much lower than in the other regions in Southern Italy. In fact, international tourism has an incidence of about 10% (11.3% of the arrivals and 7.9% of the presences). The domestic Italian demand is prevalently from the neighbouring regions: Puglia, which generates 22.4% of the total number of arrivals and 23.6% of the presences, Campania 18.2% and 23.3%, and Basilicata itself 7% and 9.7%. Jointly, these three regions represent 47.6% of the total arrivals and 56.6% of the presences. Another element that characterizes tourism in Basilicata is the strong seasonality of the demand.

The analysis of tourist data shows that the summer months of June, July and August concentrate, together, 48.3% of the arrivals and 66.7% of the presences. The high seasonality is a direct consequence of the prevalence of sea tourism, as is the case of the other Southern Italian regions, where the sea product is an important part of the offer. Besides the attractive capacity of the coastal areas, we must point out the importance of the city of Matera, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1993, and the
principal destination for cultural tourism in Basilicata. The city of Matera is undoubtedly the most dynamic destination, with a 10% annual growth rate in arrivals and 6% in tourist presences. Unlike the other places of the region, Matera can boast a rate of internationalization that is much higher than the regional one: 27% of the total number of visitors are foreigners.

**Basilicata region and cinema**

Basilicata has been the natural backdrop for over 60 movies, directed by some of the most important Italian and foreign film directors (Taviani, Rosi, Pasolini, Salvatores, Papaleo, Gibson, Jenkins). The success of the locations in Basilicata is probably determined by the landscapes and the morphology of the area that meets the different style requirements of movie productions. In fact Basilicata has been used as a setting for comedies (“Roaring Years”, “Basilicata coast to coast”), for dramas (“Tre Fratelli”, “Del Perduto Amore”), for historical movies (“Viva l’Italia”, “Alonsanfan”) biblical (“The Passion”, “The Nativity Story”) and fantasy (“Wonder Woman”). The movie depicts a region with a rich uncontaminated naturalistic heritage, which at times acts as a backdrop to scenes of underdevelopment, poverty and superstitions that have characterized the region for decades (“Cristo stopped at Eboli”, “The Demon”, “Del Perduto Amore”). However, the land of Basilicata has often been used also to represent other areas, such as the Puglia region (“I’m not Scared”), Sicily (“The Star Maker”, “She Wolf”) and Palestine (“The Gospel according to St. Matthew”, “Ben Hur”, “King David”).

The first tangible effects of the movie image and of film-induced tourism only started with the movie “The Passion of the Christ” (2004), shot by Mel Gibson in the city of Matera. The movie on the passion of Christ, which relied on an international cast and distribution, had the merit of promoting the city especially in the international tourist market. Gibson’s movie uses the setting of Matera to represent the biblical Jerusalem. Therefore “The Passion” does not show Basilicata for what it is; however, following the tragic events of the passion of Christ, the spectator can admire views of the Sassi. Thanks to the iconification process that spread an aura of sacredness over the Sassi, Matera has been given great visibility. Therefore the significant increase in the flow of tourists in the years after the release of the movie, can in part be considered a consequence of the captivating power of Mel Gibson’s movie. De Falco (2006) registered in 2006 an increase of 40% in the total number of arrivals and of 30% in the number of presences, compared to 2003 (the film was first shown in 2004). Furthermore it must be considered that the film was mainly a showcase for international tourism: while domestic Italian arrivals and presences showed a 31% and 24% increase, international tourism showed +83% in the arrivals (the French, German and American arrivals doubled) and +53% in the presences (De Falco 2006).

An other movie is “Basilicata coast to coast” (2010), by Rocco Papaleo, which has played an important role on the fame and consequently tourist attraction of the Basilicata region, even if on a minor scale. It was a small production compared to The Passion, but on a national scale it had important effects, even from the point of view of tourism, for the region. This film was the first movie product with promotional values knowingly made in Basilicata. In fact, it is the result of a joint-programme that involved some of the local stakeholders - the Basilicata Region and the Local Action Groups (Lag) – that defined the values/resources the movie had to highlight and enhance, and defined the locations to be
used. In fact, the movie received financial support from the Region and from the European Regional Development Fund, in form of territorial marketing, and with the aim of promoting a Basilicata characterised by an alternative way of life, authentic and slow, an image aimed at a tourism target capable of appreciating the rurality of these inland areas of the Region. In fact, in 2010 and 2011, more than 50% of the tourism operators confirmed an increase of tourism flows from 10% to 20% related to the movie (Bencivenga, Chiarullo, Colangelo, Percoco 2014).

**Film routes in Basilicata**

This paper presents a project of film routes, developed by Basilicata Region, Eni Enrico Mattei Foundation, Gal Bradanica and Osservatorio Nazionale sul Cineturismo aiming at make available the cinematic landscapes. The project is part of the interregional project “South Cultural Routes” promoted by The Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MIBACT) that involved five regions of Southern Italy focusing on a multi-regional product presented on the international market, which, due to its intrinsic characteristics, promotes low-season tourism.

Within the network of cultural routes, the Basilicata region has created the “Basilicata Movie Tourism” project, which encompasses 5 film itineraries integrated with other cultural, environmental and gastronomic products and offers.

**Key points of itineraries:**

- **Structured:** The routes are structured in various stages, in particular from Matera and from the coast towards the inland areas of Basilicata in order to encourage tourist movement also towards the less known towns of Basilicata in view of the deseasonalization of tourist flows.
- **Different targets:** The routes can be enjoyed in different ways in order to intercept both the cultural tourist and the tourist who wants to explore the region through sustainable mobility.
- **Innovation:** through a mobile application available for Android and Ios it is possible to follow film routes but also to customize the tourist experience.

*Figure 1: The movie map*

The construction of the routes follows the logic of feasibility. In this sense, in the same location, it is possible to view the different images of Basilicata represented by the film.
The way to enjoy the cinematic landscape of Basilicata is represented by movie map, website and mobile apps. Both of these tools give precise instructions on where the scenes of the movies were shot, so it is possible to re-live the various representations landscape.

The website and the apps, available for iOS and Android devices, offer a series of features to the user: description of the films and locations, videos, photos and text contents, search for locations by film, guided navigation, selection of points of interest, sharing of information through social networks.

The 5 film routes are: Matera, Basilicata Coast to coast, Matera – Ionic Coast, Matera – Dolomiti Lucane, Matera – Vulture.
Matera

Matera has an extraordinary cinematic history. Some of the greatest directors have filmed here: Carlo Lizzani, Alberto Lattuada, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Francesco Rosi, Giuseppe Tornatore, Mel Gibson and Patty Jenkins. Cinema has represented the city in different ways: with a realist approach, in movies such as “Nel Mezzogiorno qualcosa è cambiato” (Something has changed in the South), “She Wolf”, “The Demon” and “Christ Stopped at Eboli”; as a Sicilian setting in the “The Star Maker” and a Spanish setting in “The Tree of Guernica”; as Jerusalem in many biblical movies starting with “The Gospel According to St. Matthew”, followed by big-budget movies such as “The Passion” and “Ben Hur”; Matera transformed into the imaginary island of Themyscira, the home of “Wonder Woman”, and finally, modern Matera in the “Sorelle” (Sisters) TV series.

Basilicata Coast to Coast

Basilicata Coast to Coast is the first movie directed by Rocco Papaleo. The movie, which was released in 2010, enjoyed great success among the public and critics, winning two Nastro d’Argento and three David di Donatello awards. It is an original, ironic comedy that successfully combines good music, laughter and the beautiful landscapes of Basilicata. The director playfully asks at the start of the film if Basilicata really exists: Not only does the wonderful region of Basilicata exist, but you can also travel from coast to coast, emulating the famous coast to coast trip in the US. Of course, this does not require you to cover thousands of kilometers, but to pass through the Apennines, the Calanchi, the Agri Valley and the Metapontum Plain: exploring the variety of landscapes and discoveries is certainly one of the most thrilling experiences in the region.

Matera – Ionic Coast

This itinerary links Matera to the sea, following the magic of cinema. Starting from Matera, you can travel to places in the hinterland and coast that have been used as locations in major films. The first stop is the town of Montescaglioso, which featured in the 1963 movie “The Demon” and was recently chosen by Edoardo Leo as a setting for “The Legendary Giulia and Other Miracles”. Next, there is Bernalda, whose film history is interwoven with the family history of the great director Francis Ford Coppola, the acclaimed director of movies including “The Conversation”, “Apocalypse Now” and “The Godfather” trilogy. His grandfather Agostino emigrated to the United States at the start of the 20th century, but kept the memory of Basilicata alive in his family. Before arriving at the sea, the route winds through the hinterland, passing the town of Pisticci, which is linked to Luchino Visconti’s masterpiece “Rocco and His Brothers”.

Matera – Dolomiti Lucane

From the splendor of the Sassi to the picturesque landscape of the Dolomiti Lucane. Starting from Matera, you reach, after a few kilometers, Miglionico and Malconsiglio Castle. Famous for its role in the Conspiracy of the Barons, the castle was recently used for the set of Wonder Woman. You can continue to Ferrandina, the location of Michele Placido’s movie “Of Lost Love” and finally arrive in the Dolomiti Lucane. Albano is known
for being the place where Ernesto De Martino and Luigi Di Gianni carried out ethnographic investigations into the magic of Basilicata. In Albano, ethnologist Ernesto De Martino dedicated a special chapter in his essay “Sud e Magia” (South and Magic) to rituals and practices in Basilicata. An evocative representation of this world is presented in one of Luigi Di Gianni’s most important documentaries, entitled “Magia Lucana” (Basilicata Magic). Finally, Castelmezzano and Pietrapertosa were transformed into the fictitious town of Pietramezzana in the recent “Un Paese Quasi Perfetto” (An Almost Perfect Town). The film, starring Silvio Orlando and Fabio Volo, was entirely shot in these two locations, demonstrating their scenic beauty and above all, the distinctive Volo dell’Angelo zip-line. The town’s characterful streets and the wonderful natural landscape of the Dolomiti Lucane provide the backdrop for this excellent comedy, which ironically explores important issues such as lack of jobs and the depopulation of the Italian province.

**Matera – Vulture**

27 Starting from Matera, the first stop is Irsina, where Michele Placido set his film “Of Lost Love”. In 1950s Basilicata, a land of poverty and bigotry, a young woman follows her dream of teaching the young girls in the town. A few kilometers away, we jump forward into the ’60s. Lina Wertmuller set her first film, “The Basilisks”, in Palazzo San Gervasio. It is the ironic story of two apathetic young men, Antonio and Francesco, for whom the lack of future prospects is a convenient excuse for not facing up to life. It is a merciless, ironic portrait of the fatalism and immobility in the South at a time when Italian cinema highlighted the backwardness of the South in the face of the economic boom. From here, you proceed to the charming Via delle Cantine, in Barile, home to excellent Aglianico wine, which was used as the setting of the Massacre of the Innocents, one of the most intense scenes in Pier Paolo Pasolini’s “The Gospel According to St. Matthew”. Finally, in Melfi it is possible to find the immense gold wheat fields of the Melfese area, which were depicted in Gabriele Salvatores' movie “I'm Not Scared”.

**Conclusion**

28 Film landscapes are always alive, blending human affairs and the land, and loaded with the values and symbolism of cinematic poetry. Therefore, cinema simultaneously acts as a witness to the transformations of the area and as a producer of new meanings, related to its ability to define new relationships between man and the environment.

29 Movies can play an important role in promoting the image of a territory, and therefore in influencing tourist choice. An extensive theoretical reflection (Butler 1990; Gartner 1993; Riley, Van Doren 1992; Schofield 1996; Beeton 2005; Hudson, Ritchie 2006) has highlighted how the cinema, as an autonomous agent, can provide an original and suggestive representation of the places. The **hallmark event, longevity and vicarious consumption** are potentials that can affect a territory’s tourism flows and economy.

30 The territory of the Basilicata region has rich and diversified natural landscapes and a historical and cultural heritage, and it is particularly suited for movie settings. The peak of international arrivals soon after the release of “The Passion” had raised awareness of the promotional potential of movies. Rocco Papaleo’s film has turned this awareness into
action. “Basilicata coast to coast”, as we have seen, can be considered part of a marketing strategy that strengthened the position of the region on the national tourism scene.

In this sense, Basilicata has become a film tourism destination. The realization of film routes and structured film tourism supply in Basilicata can enhance the relationship between cinema and territory, maximizing its positive effects. The goal of the project “Basilicata Movie Tourism” was to realize a structured film tourism supply integrated with other cultural, environmental and food&wine resources. The project is composed by 5 film itineraries in Basilicata, available through movie map, website, mobile apps, and aims at the deseasonalization of tourist flows, the differentiation of tourism products and the integration of new technologies and sustainable mobility.

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ABSTRACTS

A classical definition of landscape is “nature perceived through a culture”. On the “historicity” of the landscape, some authors have underlined the cinema’s capacity to register the transformations of the territory and, at the same time, to direct the gaze on it. Since the end of the Second World War, the Basilicata region has been a film location; more than forty full length movies have been shot in Basilicata. Most of them, from The Gospel According to St. Matthew by Pier Paolo Pasolini to Christ stopped at Eboli by Francesco Rosi, have shown the misery and the backwardness of Basilicata, inspired by the works of some authors as Carlo Levi and Ernesto De Martino. In the last years, Basilicata has been the location of some worldwide box office hits: The Passion, Ben Hur, Wonder Woman. The paper presents a project of film routes, developed by Basilicata Region, Eni Enrico Mattei Foundation, Gal Bradanica, and Osservatorio del Cineturismo aiming at make available the cinematic landscapes.

Une définition classique de paysage est « la nature perçue à travers une culture ». A propos de l’« historicité » du paysage, certains auteurs ont souligné la capacité du cinéma à enregistrer les transformations du territoire et, en même temps, à diriger le regard vers lui. Depuis la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la région de la Basilicate est devenue un lieu de tournage de films. Plus de quarante longs métrages ont été tournés en Basilicate. La plupart d’entre eux, de L’Evangile selon saint Matthieu de Pier Paolo Pasolini au Christ s’est arrêté à Eboli de Francesco Rosi, inspirés par les travaux de certains auteurs tels que Carlo Levi et Ernesto De Martino, ont montré la

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