

Landscape values for the tourist enhancement of the Via Francigena: an application to the Alpine vineyard landscapes of Piedmont (Italy)

*Original*

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**CULTURAL ROUTES  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:  
CULTURAL HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM  
WORKSHOP**

**SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR  
SILVIA BELTRAMO**



**DIST TEACHING PROJECT 2022**

LM48 PIANIFICAZIONE TERRITORIALE, URBANISTICA E PASAGGISTICO-AMBIENTALE  
MSc TERRITORIAL, URBAN, ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE PLANNING

LM3 PROGETTAZIONE DELLE AREE VERDI E DEL PAESAGGIO

LM80 GEOGRAFIA E SCIENZE TERRITORIALI

LM56 ECONOMIA DELL'AMBIENTE, DELLA CULTURA E DEL TERRITORIO



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CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: CULTURAL HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM  
Workshop with study visits (July-September 2022)  
DIST Teaching Project 2022  
Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning  
Politecnico di Torino-Università degli Studi di Torino

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and



# PRESENTATION

**Andrea Bocco**

Politecnico di Torino-DIST  
Head of the Department

In 2020, DIST signed an agreement of adherence to the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies, which includes 22 other universities interested in studying and researching the European Cultural Routes (ECRs) and supporting scientific, teaching and third-mission activities on them. With this act, a commitment was officially formalized with the European Institute of Cultural Routes – which some colleagues had been pursuing for years, in particular Silvia Beltramo, with her assignment as expert evaluator of ECRs. Only two other Italian universities are part of the network: Bologna and Milano Bicocca.

This adherence is entirely coherent with the institutional activity of the department: one of the three DIST research strands is “Heritage”, with reference to territorial cultural heritage and territorial systems of cultural heritage. DIST covers almost all the disciplinary fields present in the network: from heritage making and interpretation to cultural heritage management; from cultural and environmental landscape to urban regeneration; and from economics and the geography of tourism (with a focus on local development issues) to sociology (with a focus on local community participation).

Thanks to its multidisciplinary nature and its role in a Bachelors degree and six Masters degrees, DIST is able to offer courses in almost all the areas listed under the mission of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies: heritage; tourism; urban and territorial planning; geography; heritage and cultural tourism; territorial management; local development; governance and participation; political studies; new technologies; tourism economics; and heritage law. Particularly within the Masters degrees in “Cultural Heritage and Creativity for Tourism and Territorial Development” (Università degli Studi di Torino) and in “Economia dell’Ambiente, della Cultura e del Territorio” (Università degli Studi di Torino, inter-university), as well as the Masters degrees in “Pianificazione urbanistica e territoriale | Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape Planning” (Politecnico di Torino), “Architettura del Paesaggio” (Politecnico di Torino, inter-university), “Geografia e Scienze Territoriali” (Università degli Studi di Torino, inter-university) and “Digital Skills for Sustainable Societal Transitions” (Politecnico di Torino, inter-university).

A variety of skills and professional profiles that could unfold complementary contribution to really make initiatives such as the ECRs into opportunities for enhancing heritage, local development and strengthening European cohesion beyond the borders that today, after a period in which at least in Europe they seemed to have been erased, are sadly returning to being closed, to separate people, to radicalize real or fictitious identities that distinguish “us” from “them”.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme, launched in 1987, has the opposite aim: through the recognition and promotion of itineraries that can actually be travelled, or which are linked by a thematic thread, to highlight themes representative of a multiple European cultural identity made up of many elements, stratified over the centuries and even spurious, contributing to the interpretation of diversity in today’s Europe. There are now 48 itineraries as part of the programme, dedicated to themes of incredible richness and variety, plots that unite the many pieces that make up this small continent.

By selecting Silvia Beltramo’s proposal through a call for departmental teaching projects, DIST supported the creation of a workshop entitled “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Tourism” (to which this volume is dedicated), in which different local authorities and students from various Politecnico and Università degli Studi di Torino’s degree courses were involved. I believe that this workshop should be repeated in a more expanded version, for example as a summer school, to extend participation.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that DIST’s commitment to the ECRs will continue through teaching activities (with didactic programmes and degree subject offerings specifically dedicated to them at all three levels of education), through research (with collaborations and exchanges with other universities in the network) and through the third mission (with more direct involvement in the scientific and managerial support of the itineraries; also by developing projects that use these itineraries as an opportunity to increase the sustainability of the territories they pass through).



# INDEX

## *INTRODUCTION*

Silvia Beltramo

7

## *THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S HERITAGE VISION: FROM THE CULTURAL ROUTES PROGRAMME TO THE FARO CONVENTION*

Luisella Pavan-Woolfe

8

## **PART I - LECTURES**

10

### *EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES: HISTORICAL PILGRIMAGE ROUTES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM*

Silvia Beltramo

11

### *EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES: NETWORKING, REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT THE VIA FRANCIGENA. LOCAL RESEARCH PROJECTS*

Anna Trono

18

### *LANDSCAPE NETWORKS AND THEIR MEANINGS IN PLANNING ACTIVITIES*

Claudia Cassatella

22

### *LANDSCAPE VALUES FOR THE TOURIST ENHANCEMENT OF THE VIA FRANCIGENA: AN APPLICATION TO THE ALPINE VINEYARD LANDSCAPES OF PIEDMONT (ITALY)*

Federica Bonavero, Claudia Cassatella, Bianca M. Seardo

26

### *CULTURAL ROUTES AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: REFLECTING ON THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THREE TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS*

Maria Laura Gasparini

30

### *CULTURAL ROUTES AND HERITAGE SYSTEMS: A MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE*

Alessio Re

34

### *STORIES VS STORIES: THE ADDED VALUE FOR MANAGING THE CULTURAL TOURISM*

Dusan Vrban

40

### *THE PROMOTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF A SPECIAL PLACE LIKE THE MONUMENTAL CEMETERY OF TURIN*

Renata Santoro

42

### *CEMETERIES AS IMPORTANT URBAN GREEN SPACES OF TURIN*

Luca Battisti, Marco Devecchi

46



<b>PART II - SITE VISITS DAYS DIARY</b>	50
<b>PART III - STUDENTS' PROJECT PROPOSALS</b>	58
<i><b>INTRODUCTION TO STUDENTS' PROJECT PROPOSALS</b></i> Ilaria Papa	59
<i><b>PLAYGROUND ALONG VIA FRANCIGENA</b></i> Lin Yang	62
<i><b>MEETING VIA FRANCIGENA. INTERACTION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTE AND LOCAL ITINERARIES</b></i> Davide Brunelli	66
<i><b>VIA FRANCIGENA. CULTURAL REVIVAL PROGRAMME</b></i> Haici Chang	70
<i><b>CEMETERIES: FOR THE CITIZENS, JUST AS FOR THE TOURIST</b></i> Belal Neazi	76
<i><b>CEMETERIES AS PATHS OF MEANING. A SENSORIAL PATH FOR HISTORIC CEMETERY OF TURIN</b></i> Vittoria Biasiucci	80
<i><b>THREE CALLS TO ENHANCE AND PROMOTE THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE BY ENCOURAGING ARTISTIC PRACTICE: ARTIST'S TOMBS. PROJECT YOUR OWN TOMB</b></i> Daniele Pilla	84
<i><b>THE CERTOSA OF BOLOGNA HISTORIC CEMETERY: CATEGORY IS FASHION!</b></i> Mikhail Wassouf .	88
<i><b>SPECIAL STORIES FOR OUR CHILDREN IN HISTORIC CEMETERIES</b></i> Zeynep Ozeren	90

# INTRODUCTION

**Silvia Beltramo**  
Politecnico di Torino-DIST

The teaching project inaugurated with the workshop entitled “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Tourism” is based within a consolidated international network of contacts acquired with Italian and foreign universities as part of the scientific and teaching activities of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies under the patronage of the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, a network that the Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning–DIST joined in 2020.

The network of contacts established over the years thanks to participation in numerous European projects, includes national and international professors from the disciplines of landscape, architecture, geography, the economics of culture, territorial planning, cultural tourism and the history of architecture and the city. Together with some professors from DIST, and with the collaboration of the School of Specialization in Architectural and Landscape Heritage (SBAP) and the Interuniversity PhD programme in Urban and Regional Development (URD), they constitute the teaching staff.

The overall Teaching Project originates from the experience I have gained over 15 years as an independent expert for the Council of Europe as part the European Cultural Routes (ECRs) programme, and also includes DIST’s participation in the “Commissione per la qualità delle opere cimiteriali della Città di Torino”.

The aim of the workshop (held between July and October 2022) was to address, through a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective, the theme of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, which in their specificity represent a crucial node in the active interpretation of cultural heritage and are strategic tools for guiding processes of territorial and landscape valorization.

The activities also involved the collaboration of lecturers from other universities and from numerous national and international institutions and associations, as well as public administrations: Università di Bologna–Centre for Advanced Studies on Cultural Tourism (CAST); Università del Salento; Fondazione Santagata; Fondazione Homo Viator San Teobaldo; the European Association of the Via Francigena Ways; the European Association of Historic Cemeteries; Rotta dei Fenici; the European Association Romea Strata; AFC Torino s.p.a; the Piedmont Region; the Emilia Romagna Region; the Municipality of Turin; the Municipality of

Bologna; the Municipality of Fidenza (PR); and the Municipality of Pontremoli (MS).

The workshop, which lasted a total of 75 hours, was organized in three main modules: lectures (20 hours); site visits days (Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, the Historic Cemetery of Turin – 20 hours); and project activities (35 hours).

The seminar days (lectures) constituted the backbone of the workshop, from which the subsequent modules cascaded down. They were organized in order to offer both a general framework on the topic and an in-depth analysis from different perspectives on specific itineraries, activities, projects and programmes, ongoing and future, and also to address themes related to cultural promotion, management, applications, etc... The purpose of the lectures was to motivate a desire for knowledge, and to constitute moments of in-depth analysis and mutual exchange through collective discussions and reflections.

The site visit days and the students’ final projects focused in particular on two ECRs, which are examples of great interest: the Via Francigena and the Historic Cemeteries Route. They represent two specific cases: a development of the route on a territorial scale and a punctual network at the urban one.

This publication intends to summarise what matured during the opening experience of the Teaching Project, collecting some reflections of the lecturers and invited guests who have offered their contribution regarding the seminar days, together with the outcome of the students’ final projects. The volume is therefore structured into three main parts:

Part I is composed of short essays on topics such as the illustration of general themes inherent to the ECRs programme, more specific aspects referring to individual itineraries, challenges regarding the valorization and promotion of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism, and projects currently underway that also involve rural territories.

Part II collects a photo diary of site visits days.

Part III presents the students’ final project proposals regarding the ECRs on which they were invited to reflect.

The workshop represented the first event of a growing teaching project that intends to become a summer school, held on an annual or biennial basis, with the involvement of other university members of the network and open to international students.

# THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S HERITAGE VISION: FROM THE CULTURAL ROUTES PROGRAMME TO THE FARO CONVENTION

Luisella Pavan-Woolfe  
Council of Europe-Venice Office

The Council of Europe has always been acutely aware of the importance of culture and cultural heritage and, since its foundation in 1949, it has understood these as crucial to promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law and achieving greater unity among Europeans.

When the Santiago de Compostela Declaration was signed in 1987, a novel and exciting way in which to further those aims began. It marked the start of the Organisation's European Cultural Routes Programme.

The main objective of the Programme was to encourage Europeans to embark on voyages of discovery: learning about each other, overcoming differences and celebrating diversity in order to create a more cohesive and inclusive society. European Cultural Routes were conceived as grassroots tools, by which Europe's art and history would be better and more widely understood through exchanges among people from across the European continent and beyond.

This is about cultural diversity, mutual understanding, and intercultural dialogue – necessary ingredients of peaceful coexistence, something that we sorely need today on a continent which witnesses, once more, the brutality and tragic consequences of armed conflict on its soil. In the context of the war in Ukraine we are once again reminded of how cultural heritage is often a deliberate target and erasing cultural traces of the past equates to destroying people's memory, causing a permanent damage to their identity.

Europe – and the challenges we face – have changed since 1987. But the values on which the European Cultural Routes are based, and the benefits that they bring, both endure.

As the past thirty-five years have gone by, the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme has only grown stronger. There are now 48 certified routes, winding through all 46 Council of Europe member states and beyond. Their themes are varied and range from the lives of Mozart, Saint Martin, Charles V, Napoleon, Charlemagne to the deeds of the Vikings and the Phoenicians; from historic gardens and thermal towns to Jewish and Industrial heritage; from abbeys and fortified cities to Megalithic culture and Impressionism. But they all bear one message: the heritage of the different countries in Europe contribute to a shared cultural heritage and a European identity.

Through the years in order to achieve this, the Council of Europe has worked hand-in-glove with the other founding fathers of the Programme, namely Member States and the European Institute of Cultural Routes, as well as with important external partners – the European Union, the UNWTO and UNESCO.

All these initiatives enhance democratic culture, promote sustainable tourism and foster collaboration among stakeholders and institutions. The routes today more than ever fulfil their role as a tool for grassroots participation and democratic citizenship, as they operate as transnational networks, based on legally established associations, and bring together multiple European stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

They promote the educational value of European heritage, with a heavy emphasis on involving young people from a wide variety of cultural, geographical, and social backgrounds, so that they can meet, exchange viewpoints, and develop their common European identity and citizenship.

At the local level, the European Cultural Routes contribute to sustainable environmental and social development by highlighting the tangible and intangible heritage of an area, its traditions and crafts, raising awareness of its identity, creating unique cultural offerings for tourists, reaching out to home-grown SMEs and supporting their contribution to the local economy, especially in less-developed, rural areas.

By promoting a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society, the Council of Europe has been encouraging citizens to recognize the importance of cultural heritage objects, traditions, monuments and sites through the meaning that these convey and the values they express and with which they identify as individuals and members of communities. It has done so through the running of the European Cultural Routes Programme, but also through the adoption of legal instruments which have inspired national legislation and policies, thus strongly influencing the lives of millions of Europeans.

One of the main aspects of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, also known as the Faro Convention, is the importance it places on the need to involve all citizens, those aware

of their cultural rights as well as those less fortunate in this respect, in the definition and management of cultural heritage. This requires going beyond passive participation by trying to identify ways and processes that allow civil society to express fully not only its rights, but also its responsibilities vis-à-vis cultural heritage.

Long-term citizens' awareness and participation necessitate the conscious involvement of the younger generation to ensure that today's efforts by heritage communities are not subsequently thwarted by the indifference of young people. Heritage education and new technologies are thus crucial to retain young people's interest, their connection and contribution. This is another of the many suggestions coming both from the European Cultural Route Programme and the Faro Convention vision.

Another shared message is that cultural heritage can play an important role in responding to the global challenges facing us today and the need to ensure the sustainability of future human development. If cultural heritage is often the victim of unchecked growth, it can also actively contribute to economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability.

A clear example of this is tourism development which constitutes both a threat and a potential opportunity for cultural heritage preservation and enhancement.

The Faro Convention tells us that we should depart from the dominant paradigm of business-oriented tourism marketing and consumption and opt for a sustainable, environment friendly tourism that favours at the same time social transformation. The European Cultural Routes translate this into practice, forging pilgrims ways, paths and journeys respectful of land, history and people.

Finally, the Faro Convention and the Cultural Routes of Council of Europe are all about communities. Because of increased international mobility, population movements and displacement both within countries and across national borders, communities are becoming increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and diverse. Preserving and enhancing heritage can contribute to fostering recognition, empathy and mutual trust. It can help integrating newcomers, facilitating dialogue, opening minds, revitalising communities and ultimately improving people's well-being.

This is the Council of Europe's vision of cultural heritage as one of the strategic elements to help address global challenges and as driver of social transformation.

The aim, today more than ever before, is that of creating an open and diverse cultural space and a safe and sustainable environment as a basis for peaceful and democratic societies in Europe.

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[www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention](http://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention)

# LANDSCAPE VALUES FOR THE TOURIST ENHANCEMENT OF THE VIA FRANCIGENA: AN APPLICATION TO THE ALPINE VINEYARD LANDSCAPES OF PIEDMONT (ITALY)

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In the Alpine wine regions, the traditional practice of building dry stone wall terraces has shaped landscapes in which aesthetic, natural, and economic values come together. Like many cultural landscapes, the mountain vineyard landscapes of Canavese, Pinerolese and Valle di Susa in Piedmont are territories characterized by somewhat concurring trends: on the one hand, the ongoing process of land abandonment raises issues about their conservation and management; on the other hand, the growing interest in wine tourism and high-quality wine production opens new opportunities for local socio-economic development.

Though located in marginal areas, historic terraced vineyards represent a distinctive feature of these regions, a traditional element that contributes to their sense of place, attracting visitors interested in 'soft' rural and heritage tourism.

The Via Francigena Cultural Route, which runs through and along many of these territories, can play a role in their enhancement representing a cross-border itinerary, potential backbone of the dense network of local trails (*figs. 1-2*).

This contribution illustrates strategies and actions to preserve and enhance Alpine vineyard landscapes, as developed by the authors within the framework of the Interreg ALCOTRA Vi.A - Strada dei Vigneti Alpini | Route des Vignobles Alpines project, in cooperation with and on behalf of Città metropolitana di Torino (lead partner). By drawing on the main results of the Vi.A project (in particular, on the Study of landscape actions for the conservation and rehabilitation of vineyard landscapes), it presents the methodology used to move from landscape analysis to interpretation, and then to action, retracing the process that led to the development of landscape planning guidelines.

*Fig. 3* summarizes the main steps and outputs of the research. The first step consisted in the geographical delimitation of the study area, and the identification of Landscape Character Areas according to the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) methodology.

The systematic investigation of the landscape components of the area – combining both desk study and field surveys – led to the development of an interpretation framework that enabled the recognition of areas where those components (e.g.: topography, land use, vegetation, etc.) combine to create an area with a distinct, recognisable character.

*Fig. 4* shows the interpretation framework that was developed and applied for the purpose of the study. It brings together all the characters that were considered in the LCA by grouping them according to whether they relate to:

- landform and natural features (i.e.: valleys, morainic lakes, rocky outcrops, etc.), especially in their relationship with farming practices;
- visual and scenic values (i.e.: panoramic views and itineraries, landmarks, skylines, etc.);
- built form of traditional settlements (i.e.: historic rural hamlets, isolated dwellings, rural-urban fronts, etc.);
- tourist spots for landscape enjoyment (i.e.: signposted trails and routes, wine cellars, eco-museums, etc.).

For each landscape character area, the Landscape character maps (*fig. 5*) represent the main output of this analysis.

The LCA was followed by a second step in which, starting from the definition of Landscape Quality Objectives (LQOs), planning guidelines for the conservation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of vineyard landscapes were developed.

Based on the current landscape issues and its potential dynamics, the nine LQOs are:

1. Protect vineyard landscapes from abandonment and fragmentation, promote their rehabilitation;
2. Identify and enhance the typical features of traditional viticulture;
3. Protect vineyard landscapes from land-use change impacts;
4. Preserve the traditional character of rural buildings, settlements, and villages;
5. Preserve and rehabilitate minor structures and artefacts related to viticulture;
6. Enhance scenic values of vineyard landscapes;
7. Identify and mitigate visual detractors;
8. Enhance and manage biodiversity;
9. Adapt wine-growing techniques to climate change.

In response to these objectives, planning guidelines were formulated taking account of the various interests at stake and addressing the different actors committed, or potentially committed, to achieving them.

In particular: planning authorities at the metropolitan and municipal level (who hold responsibility for spatial planning and local development), farmers (who actually shape the vineyard landscapes and assure their day-to-day

management), civil associations and local action groups (who mobilize and support local level actors both from the public and private side).

With the aim of providing an effective decision-support tool, the guidelines themselves have been devised in such a way as to ensure an easy and consistent implementation of actions, having regard to their relationship with the planning tools already in force (for example the Regional Landscape Plan of Piedmont) and under development (such as the General Metropolitan Territorial Plan of Turin).

The “Landscape action maps” (*fig. 6*) represent the strategies and actions that it was possible to map, with reference to the relevant LQO. A number of onsite meetings to present and discuss the research findings with decision makers, technicians, and local stakeholders (e.g.: professionals, components of design/

landscape review commissions) provided the opportunity to ‘validate’ the results of the study both from a strategic and operative point of view, facilitating the creation of a community of interests.

The picture that emerged from the research is that of territories with a strong identity, whose landscape and productive values are inextricably intertwined, and potentially capable of attracting new residents and tourists. Unlike the areas where intensive viticulture is practiced, the landscape diversity – one of the factors most affecting landscape preferences – is high but threatened by a series of dynamics that go beyond landscape issues, calling for more integrated approaches.

Land-use changes, depopulation, socio-economic trends, afforestation, etc. cannot be dealt with without a strong connection to policies for better living and working in marginal areas.

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*figs. 1-2* – Settimo Vittone (TO). Via Francigena signposts in the middle of terraced vineyards (photos by the authors).

*fig. 3* – Research methodological framework (graphic elaboration by the authors).



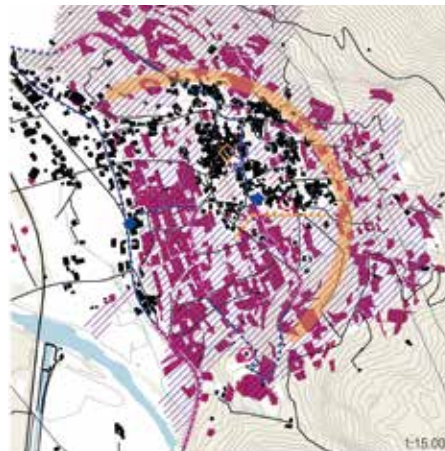


Relationships between vineyard landscapes, uniform and natural features
Landscape features that characterize vineyard landscapes (valleys, rock outcrops, stream beds, etc.)
Landscape components related to viticultural practices (terrace steps, dry stone walls, enclosed fields, etc.)
Minor grape-growing features (bottle openings, plants, drainage systems, etc.)
Natural resources for viticulture
Traditional polyculture systems
Scenic values
Views from vineyard landscapes
Major panoramic roads/paths on vineyard landscapes
Natural landmarks
Man-made landmarks
Mountain ridges and skylines
Landscape features related to traditional viticulture
Distinguished rural areas: vineyards, as identified by the Regional Landscape Plan
Traditional settlements
Historic settlements that characterize vineyard landscapes
Hamlets, buildings and minor constructions related to viticulture
Built-up areas of historic settlements
Landscape scenes pertaining to the collective imaginary
Places of interest for landscape enjoyment
Signposted board routes across vineyard landscapes
Major board distributions: paths, meadows, or meadows

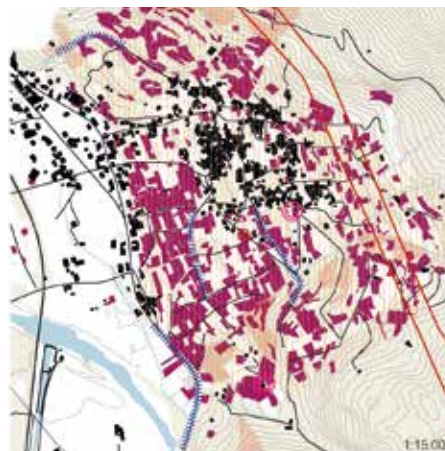
fig. 4 – Landscape Character Assessment: interpretation framework (graphic elaboration by the authors).

fig. 5 – Landscape characters map: heroic vineyards' landscape character area, Carema (TO) (from Bonavero and Cassatella, 2020).

fig. 6 – Landscape actions map: heroic vineyards' landscape character area, Carema (TO) (from Bonavero and Cassatella, 2020).



- Vignobles | Vigneti
- **Struttura geomorfologica e risorse naturali**
- Elementi della geomorfologia
- **Caratteri del paesaggio scenico-percettivo**
- Punti di osservazione e belvedere sui paesaggi viticoli
- ||| Principali percorsi panoramici sui vigneti
- Fulcri del costruito
- ∕ Trame paesaggistiche connesse alle forme di allevamento tradizionale della vite
- ◇ **Caratteri degli insediamenti tradizionali connessi alle aree vitate**
- ◇ Insediamenti tradizionali componente del paesaggio viticolo
- Fronti urbani di insediamenti storici componente del paesaggio viticolo
- Scene e punti di vista consolidati nell'immaginario sociale
- **Principali elementi per la fruizione dei paesaggi vitati**
- Principali itinerari e percorsi segnalati su paesaggi viticoli
- ◆ Principali mete (es. cantine sociali, musei, ecomusei)



- Vignobles | Vigneti
- ◇ **Ob. 1 Preservare i paesaggi viticoli dall'abbandono, dalla frammentazione e incentivarne il recupero**
- Bordi e aree bascate di cui verificare le possibilità di recupero a uso viticolo
- ◇ **Ob. 2 Identificare e valorizzare i connotati della viticoltura tradizionale**
- ||| Conservazione attiva delle "Aree rurali di specifico interesse paesaggistico" (PPR Piemonte, Art. 32)
- **Riduzione dell'impatto visivo della paleria dei nuovi impianti**
- ◇ **Ob. 6 Valorizzare la qualità scenica della fruizione dei paesaggi viticoli**
- Belvedere: riqualificazione panoramicità, realizzazione aree di sosta attrezzate e non, installazione segnaletica turistica coordinata
- ||| Itinerari e percorsi: riqualificazione panoramicità, gestione della vegetazione spontanea
- ◇ **Ob. 7 Identificare e mitigare le interferenze visive**
- Interamento o mitigazione delle linee dell'alta tensione



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“THE IDEALS OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE, AND CONFIDENCE IN PROGRESS ARE THE PRINCIPLES WHICH, THROUGHOUT HISTORY, HAVE FORGED THE DIFFERENT CULTURES THAT GO TO MAKE UP THE SPECIFICALLY EUROPEAN IDENTITY. [...] [T]HAT CULTURAL IDENTITY HAS BEEN AND STILL IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE EXISTENCE OF A EUROPEAN SPACE BEARING A COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND CRISS-CROSSED BY ROADS AND PATHS WHICH OVERCOME DISTANCES, FRONTIERS AND LANGUAGE BARRIERS”

Council of Europe, Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes declaration as Europe's first Cultural Route, October 1987



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