

The Recovery of Ancient Alicia

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Key words: Engineering survey, GIS, GNSS/GPS, Land management, WebGIS

SUMMARY

In 2010 in Salemi, a small town in Sicily, in the province of Trapani, Italian Surveyors backed a project by Mayor Vittorio Sgarbi called, "A Home for 1 Euro" that is, the possibility of buying a house, struck by the earthquake of 1968 and currently owned by the Town at the cost of 1 Euro. The goal of this initiative is to revitalise the beautiful historic centre of Salemi which still bears the old wounds of the forgotten earthquake.

In this context, the Italian Surveyors Foundation proposed a project to Mayor Sgarbi of a building census of the structures damaged by the earthquake, whose purpose was to then transfer ownership to the private sphere which would then be required to restructure the building, with the Ancient Alicia Recovery Project, promoted by the College of Surveyors and Graduate Surveyors of the Province of Trapani

The support activities of the surveyors aimed, through a series of measurements and data acquisition, to create a tool for the subsequent activity of planning and recovery of the area struck by the earthquake.

All of the work done on the gathering of data had as its receptacle an Automated Geographical System and the data bank was then published on the WEB with the creation of a WebGIS.

The versatility of the GIS platform permitted the creation of a product usable by all, from the average web user to the interested buyer or to the planner charged with a building recovery project.

All of the results of the Ancient Alicia Recovery Project and the WebGIS can be consulted at the <http://geometritp.anticalicia.it> website created by Trapani College which, among other things, hosts a documentary which, besides confronting the technical aspects of the project, touches on the traumatic human aspects of an earthquake event!

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The desire to revitalize and reconstruct the ancient town centre of Salemi was what motivated the surveyors to take part in the Mayor of Salemi Vittorio Sgarbi's project "Case a 1 euro" ("A home for 1 euro"). The idea behind the project was to restore the town's abandoned, run-down buildings through urban development with the aim of bringing back to life all the buildings which had been decaying and which people had forgotten about.

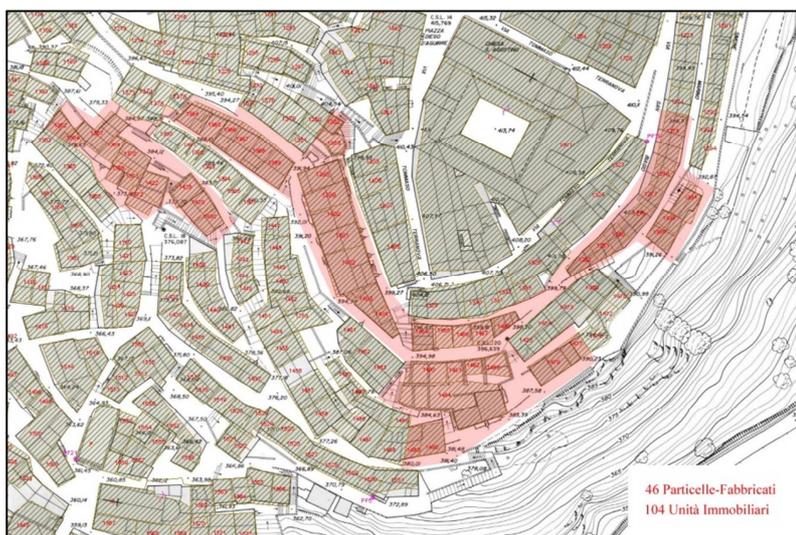
Mayor Vittorio Sgarbi's idea attracted special interest from figures across the socio-economic spectrum, not just in Italy but around the world. It was viewed slightly sceptically at first and then over time became a genuine solid plan geared towards protecting the environment and

the landscape.

The 1968 earthquake, which devastated the whole of the Valle del Belice area, including Salemi, caused the local population to leave the area, which up until then had been inhabited, and to move to newly-developed urban areas. The abandonment of the most ancient and distinctive part of the town of Salemi was inevitable. As the years went by, the desertion of the area led to its decay and decline.

The redevelopment project came about from an idea of the Italian Surveyors' Foundation, the eventual promoters and financial backers of the initiative. The foundation immediately shared its idea with the province of Trapani's Board of Surveyors and Postgraduate Surveyors, which took on the project.

The idea was to start work on some of the existing buildings – around 100 – and give the planning of the project to the Salemi local administration, the aim of which was to restore the



town's buildings and make them available for use by local inhabitants as well as for people interested in buying property in general.

A total of twenty surveyors carried out non-stop, painstaking work on the project coordinated by the Trapani Board of Surveyors, which had its working base in the offices of the Salemi local administration. The planned stages of the project, which took place in the following order, were:

1. research using past records of each individual building, in order to identify the plots, the companies and any blueprints that were available in the database of the Trapani land registry office;
2. research using past records in the archives of the municipal planning department in order to obtain any planning documents, technical reports or sales contracts documenting the transference of ownership of the buildings to the municipality;
3. topographic surveys conducted both with traditional and new techniques, which gathered as much metric data as the local context permitted;
4. collection of the building's metric and qualitative data directly on site by compiling a technical data record;



5. work in the laboratory aimed at converting the analogue data (paper documents) to digital data (drawings, numerical and alphanumeric data);

6. creation of a Geographic Information System (GIS) which was set up both on the premises and on the internet in order to store all the data systematically and for it to be able to be consulted in the future.

All of the data that was collected was stored in the Geographic Information System and the database was then published on the internet following the creation of a WebGIS.

The versatility of the GIS platform meant that the end product could be used by everyone, from everyday internet users to people interested in buying property right up to the urban planner responsible for redeveloping the building.

All the documentation from the Recovery of Ancient Alicia project and the WebGIS can be consulted on





the website <http://geometritp.anticalicia.it>, which was created by the Trapani Board of Surveyors. The website, in addition to its other contents, features a documentary (Re-Make Alicia) which as well as looking at all the technical aspects of the project also focuses on the human aspect of the story, documenting the traumatic experience that accompanies an event such as an earthquake!

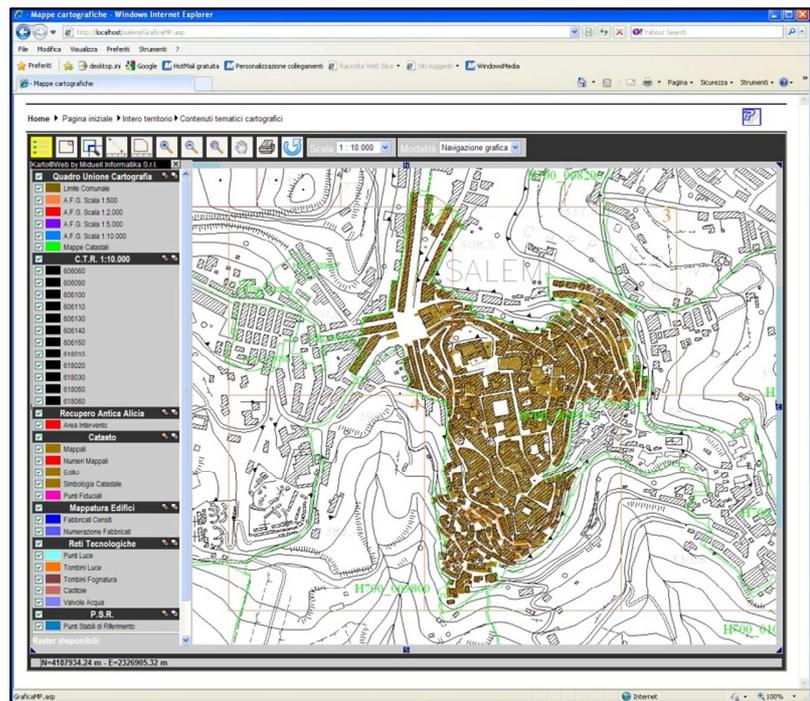
The completed project was the result of careful cooperation

between the surveyors and the Salemi local administration, who were in constant contact throughout 2010 in order to develop a concrete and effective action plan that respected the environment and complied with the earthquake protection regulations currently in force.

The experience and professionalism applied by the surveyors who actively participated in the project makes the project itself an example of the urban redevelopment of an ancient rural town such as Salemi, capable of being reproduced in any other similar environment.

The hard work and self-sacrifice shown by the surveyors plus the thorough socio-cultural analysis which was the fruit of months of research into the specific characteristics of the town of Salemi helped produce a comprehensive, in-depth study of the type of materials and the construction techniques that were used here in the past.

We have created a comprehensive, detailed picture of a small part of the area concerned, which we put together using techniques and methods that can obviously be used again for the rest of the area to be redeveloped. Furthermore, our study will be extremely useful when redevelopment work starts.



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The goal of all of this was to redevelop the ancient town centre of Salemi, and to give it the social and economic vitality to match up to its history and the beauty it boasted in the past.

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