

THE FEATURES OF SICILY IN CARTOGRAPHY

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Abstract: *The features of Sicily in cartography.* Since ancient times, Sicily has been by far one of the most desirable destination for many travelers, who were highly impressed by the island environments. This special attention for Sicily was manifested in an original attempt to represent the geographical profile through first forms of cartographic representations. Therefore, this study focuses on how Sicily has been represented through cartography from the Middle Age to the Modern Age in order to show how it is a clear and dense geographical object.

Rezumat: *Caracteristici ale Siciliei în cartografie.* Încă din cele mai vechi timpuri, Sicilia a fost de departe cea mai dorită destinație pentru mulți călători care au fost impresionați de specificul mediului natural de pe insulă. Atenția specială pentru Sicilia a fost manifestată printr-o abordare originală pentru a reprezenta specificul geografic prin intermediul reprezentărilor cartografice. Mai mult decât atât, studiul de față este orientat spre modul în care Sicilia a fost reprezentată în cartografia Evului Mediu dar și a perioadei contemporane arătând în acest fel individualitatea acestei regiuni geografice.

Key words: *cartography, representation, history, maps, Sicily.*

Cuvinte cheie: *cartografie, reprezentare, istorie, hărți, Sicilia.*



1. SICILY OF ITS ORIGIN

Since ancient times Sicily, located in the middle of Mediterranean, became an important crossroad of people animating trades and exchanges. Many travelers were attracted by island environments and many people pleasantly impressed by those places settled in Sicily. This special attention for Sicily was manifested also in an original attempt to represent the geographical profile through first forms of cartographic representations. Its characteristic geometric shape “Island with three points”, as it will be known, and the presence of an active volcano have constituted for many centuries a logos which geographers, artists and scholars have inspired to (Militello P., 2004). Such a hard land, with a smoking and pompous mount and fantastic landscapes induces to the construction of a myth. Above all around the volcano many myths flourished, some of them poetical while others expressing fear for flames and stirs of volcano. Despite that Sicily has been seen as a meeting place. It is like its insularity rather than increasing distance among people makes them closer.

Its inaccessibility is never isolation but stimulus for a further knowledge and to reinforce the bridge of communication and trades among different worlds. The first descriptions emphasize this opening by underlining its privileged geographical conditions that make it a crucial place for Mediterranean. This Mediterranean centrality in a sea that is, waiting for the discovery of the new world is the sea of history. Here different civilizations and cultures are concentrated as well as the most important commercial activities. Sicily concentrated these tensions and ferments welcoming a rich group of artists, scholars, astronomers, philosophers, physicists. First forms of representations of island were born in this way. The first descriptions of Sicily date back to ancient times, in particular to the V century B.C, when Pindaro (Cinoscefale, Tebe 518 B.C – Argo, 438 B. C) attributed to Sicily its triangular shape, defining it “the island with three points”. We can also include Empedocle (Agrigento, 484-481 B.C – 424-421 B.C) who wrote *Della Natura*, a cosmography in a poetic form; Iceta from Syracuse whom the merit goes to for having discovered the movement of earth around its axis; Dicearco from Messina (347 B.C – 285 B.C), whose studies Erastofene, geographer of III century B. C, was inspired by to measure the circumference of the earth. Strabone (66 B. C. – 24 A. D), during the first century B. C, and Tolomeo (90 A. D – 168 A. D), during the second century A. D, gave a geographical legitimation to the triangular shape of Sicily, allowing that the geometric shape of the island would characterized its self image for ever. Especially Strabon, proposed some measures of the island that have been proved wrong.

Claudio Tolomeo, considered even more authoritative, had the merit to have combined the studies of different disciplines together. He produced, on the basis of rigorous calculations, 27 maps, one of them about Sicily. The Ptolemaic Sicily, presented in the *Tabula VII Europae*, presented some variations with the traditional triangular scheme. Tolomeo took Strabone's error to the extreme, drawing closer, with a convenience morphology, Sicily with Greece and Africa. The *Tabula Peutingeriana*, whose origin is roman, was printed in 1598 by a descendant of the humanist Konrad Peutinger; but actually it is a medieval copy of XII-XIII century of a document dated in the IV century A. D. In this map Sicily is drawn in a rectangular shape rather than triangular, with the points in Siracusys, Messina, Lilybeo and Thermos; moreover the civitates, the mansiones (stops of itinerary), the mutations (place of exchange for the horses), even a thermal station are

described in addition of place names of the orography and hydrography. The Romans made these maps with a practical purpose, useful for their commercial and military activities, this is why many representations are reported formally or approximately. In spite of deformations The Ptolemaic Sicily and that one of Tabula Peutingeriana are the only documents of Greek and Latin antiquity that give us back the image of the island.

2. SICILY DURING MIDDLE AGE

The Middle Age, as we know, has its strong point in a cartography reflecting the narrow vision of time while modalities of the representation are concentrated in the production of planispheres made in a fantastic and allegoric way. The aesthetic and symbolic vision of the world darkened the objectivity of reality, showing a philosophical and deformed vision of the earth. This is the case of two of the most famous planispheres of Middle Ages, Ebstorf's one (1240 – 1290) made up of thirty goatskins, the biggest in the world, destroyed during the bombardments in 1943, and Hereford's one (around 1290), on parchment, located in Hereford that is the biggest medieval surviving planisphere. In these maps Sicily is represented with a lot of symbolic references. Between the eleventh and twelfth century, Arabs, driven by trade, used to representations free from religious influences, made several geographic maps using more rigorous methods. The encounter in Sicily of their culture with Norman's one was originally in several fields, particularly in geography. Arabs came to Sicily in 814. Among them there were Levantines, Syrians, Fatimids, Andalusians, in short, all those people who, from the closed East, along the North Africa up to the Iberian Peninsula, were subdued by Muslim empire. It has to be mentioned that with soldiers, agronomists, scientists, poets, artists, writers and lawyers travelled, in short, intellectuals and scholars like Idrisi, who adopted the Sicily – island full of gifts – as a second home, bringing the contribution of their genius, but also introducing new methods about irrigation, plants, organization of public administration or spatial representation. They soon addressed to the city planning and the civil and religious architecture. When, two centuries later, in 1061, Normans started to chase Muslims from the island in order to give it back to Christianity, a part of Arab society preferred staying and integrating with that heterogeneous people, made of Bretons, Italics and Lombards, who came down to Mediterranean along the oriental routes absorbing habits and customs of traversed lands.

This is the reason why Arabs of Sicily, like Idrisi, who saw the Normans arriving described them “analogous to Muslim rulers”. Since then, for on hundred and fifty years, the world saw an Arab-Norman culture that, growing up in an exceptional synthesis, build its richness right on respect and valorization of diversity. It is not a coincidence that the most important example of geographic knowledge of that period, the so-called Roger's Book, was conceived and made in Sicily, by now become the center of commerce, place of meeting for merchants and pilgrims. The ‘Roger's Book’ was a geographic book describing all countries, with notes about habits and customs of peoples. It was a collective work, made under the impulse of Roger II (1095 – 1154), first king of Sicily (1130 – 1154). Obviously in such an important work it could not be missed a geographical representation of Sicily. The production of this map was assigned to Al-Idrisi (Ceuta 1099 – Sicily 1164), in 1165, a Moroccan Arab who represented Sicily precisely in the trace of coasts and hydrographic network, and put also place names of 130 towns, not to mention farms and mansions.

Despite Idrisi's work was sufficiently precise and detailed, it had a low circulation in the West, because, as it possible to suppose, Christian world was closed to Arab culture. Anyway Idrisi's work inspired nautical maps of XIII century, when the survey of Sicily, once left the wrong Ptolemaic conception, appeared much closer to those obtained by modern measures. It was in the second half of XIII century, as a consequence of expand of trades that first "pilot's books", knew as descriptions of coasts, and first nautical maps by Catalans and Genoese appears.

They were drawn on parchment sheets and generally represented the whole Mediterranean basin, the Black Sea, the Atlantic banks of Europe and Africa, indicating summarily details of inner parts and drawing, instead, with extreme precision, the coastal boundary, with the most important points. Sicily also started appearing on nautical maps, eliminating almost completely those errors about the triangular scheme and the geographical position of the island. It was well drawn in the coast lines, traced with good approximation, and usually there were indicated also the place names of ports and most significant waterfront's promontories. Moreover, it is possible to deduce the commercial and strategic importance of Sicily, represented in a central position between the routes of Mediterranean, often fulcrum of cartographic representation. Therefore, it is possible to say that Sicily's representation on nautical maps was considerably improved compared with the precedents. The first one of these was the Carta Pisana, made on parchment in Genoa in 1285, where the contours of Sicily were represented with good approximation.

3. SICILY IN THE 16th AND THE 17th CENTURIES IN THE LAY REPRESENTATION

At the beginning of the XV century Ptolemy and his astronomical and mathematical cartography, as well as the nautical one, started to stand out once he was rediscovered by scholars of Renaissance. Ptolemy's geographic work was translated in Latin in 1409 by Jacob Angel, and since then it had a wide circulation in the West. However the XV century was characterized by the need to conciliate the Ptolemaic vision of world with the new scientific knowledge, result of the new discoveries. The Ptolemaic work was object of reviews and reissues, some of them with 'tabulae novae', that are tables that corrected the Ptolemaic configuration by introducing details and surveys from the nautical maps. Sicily in these 'tabulae novae' was represented in a shape probably more corrected compared with the past but it was only with Benedetto Bordone's geographical map in 1528, and above all with Gastaldi's one, that there was a complete breaking with Ptolemaic vision. Bardone's map was considered the union between "Sicily according to Ptolemy" and "Sicily according to modern times" in the sense that they, placed side by side, highlight on one hand the comparison, but on the other hand underlined the indecision still present in cartography of the Renaissance. Both in Tolomeo's map or in Bardone's one there was particularly emphasised the volcano (Etna), but while in the first one physical elements were highlighted, in Bardone's map the cities had more importance, especially sea cities, considered by same Bordone to be the strong character of representation of Sicily.

It was certainly Gastaldi's map in 1545 that represented a turning point for Sicily's representations. It was considered the cornerstone of Sicilian cartography. Gastaldi was the first one to elaborate a printed geographic map, where there was a fusion between empiric and erudite geography. Gastaldi's Sicily was much more detailed in comparison with

previous models; this is because according Roberto Almagià, famous geographer endowed with a fine humanistic spirit of the XX century, Gastaldi used to elaborate his map with the astronomical measures of Sicilian Francesco Maurolico's book, published in Venice in 1546. The fact that Gastaldi used a Sicilian book to make his map, highlights the contribution by Sicilian inhabitants for the territory's knowledge. As a matter of fact often the local scholars (geographers, writers, historians) gave important information that helped to make new maps. Gastaldi's map was inspired by the nautical map, with all contours drawn in detail; very rich the information about inner parts, while the coordinates and layout were less precise. Gastaldi's Sicily constituted such a progress in the representations of the islands that following cartographers, failing a strong economic and knowledge motivation, simply copied Gastaldi's map making just some marginal changes.

Another important geographer of the XVI century was Mercatone (1512 – 1594). He is considered the founder of the modern scientific cartography. This geographer, in his collection of Italian maps, used tables already developed in previous publications adding, with the help of several scholars and friends from everywhere in Europe, many precious details even if they were not sufficient to provide a work that can be considered updated. However, it has to be recognised to Mercatone, not only the merit to have elaborated the copious pre-existing material in a great attempt of interpretation and conciliation of the new with the old, but also to have given a scientific character to the cartographic representations that replaced this sort of eclectic empiricism prevailed until then.

In the 1589 Mercatone made a further map of Sicily, considered a Gastaldi's derivation, above all for the general contour and traces of some rivers. However he improved the hydrography and orography, and enriched the map by providing names of an hundred towns. The XVII century began with the new cartographic projects by Giovanni Antonio Magini, whose principal work was *Italia*, posthumous published in 1620 by his son Fabio. This work can be considered the best cartographic product at that time. It was result of an accurate selection of all the known material until then. Obviously, in this work there was also a map of Sicily, actually failed of originality, because largely inspired by Mercatone's map.

Another important step forward in the field of historical-descriptive geography during the XVII century is due surely to Cluverio. He was a humanist, scholar and German geographer, founder of historical geography, who wrote the *Sicilia antiqua*. Cluverio based his work on the direct observation of places in order to make it, in addition to ancient sources and other Sicilian modern books. He himself claimed to have walked across the whole island and experienced many difficulties during the tour, due to hunger, thirst and the several dangers that this land presented.

In the field of scientific geography Carlo Maria Negro and Francesco Ventimiglia were the most important ones during the seventeenth century and they provided a representation of the island that, even if remained a manuscript, will constitute the basis for the following geographical maps. They made together during Thirties many plans of cities and urban territories, islands and peninsulas, and one big map of Sicily. The result was an "atlas" of Sicily and its cities, used not only by writers and scholars but even by architects and cartographers of the Eighteenth century, like Sipione Basta and Agatino Daidone. In this transition phase towards the full scientific modernity it has to be mentioned the figure of Giovan Battista Nicolosi, Sicilian geographer, but also priest and writer. His principal work is *Dell'Hercule e Studio Geografico*, made in 1660. An important work showing the

role a cartographic priest obedient to Church's dictates, but fascinated also, at the same time, by the new discovers and conceptions of Galileo whom he was a great admirer for.

4. SICILY IN THE MINOR CARTOGRAPHIC PRODUCTION

While Sicily showed a cartographic genius with an important and scientific vein it has to be mentioned a presence of a minor, but not less important, catholic cartographic production. Between the XVII and the XVIII centuries Atlas of Capuchin provinces were written, intended to be used as guides during the pastoral visits in the Capuchin provinces. These collections of maps can be defined "thematic maps" because their purpose was mainly to illustrate the diffusion of Capuchin houses in the various territories. They generally were inspired by a cartography that intended to control territory properties for administration purposes. This inspiration, diffused by authorities, was also part of religious orders that had to manage large properties.

The Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, so-called because of the hood completing their habit, was founded in 1525 by a group of priests who, under Matteo de Basco's example, intended to inspire to San Francesco. This order was later recognized by Pope Clement VII, and since then it had a fast diffusion all over the world. The Order arrived to Sicily in 1529, for about 40 years the island was considered as a single province; in 1574 it was split in Mazara's valleys, Demona and Noto; the provinces of Capuchin Messina, Palermo and Siracusa were then created. The Order diffused rapidly in Sicily, and around 1650 there were already an hundred convents: 34 in the province of Messina, 31 in Siracusa, and 33 in Palermo. According the constitution of the Order, the convents had to rose neither too far or too close by the cities: it was established around a mile of distance from the town. They were built nearby the most important arterial roads in order to facilitate the apostolic itinerant action of the Order; given that the friars could not ride, except in case of illness, according to the rules of the Order, the convents were located at a distance walkable in maximum one day.

Inside the convents, among various cultural and manual activities that friars carried out, there was one particularly relevant that consisted in the compilation of collections of cartographic surveys relating to Capuchin provinces. These collections, on one hand were used as guides during the pastoral visits, on the other hand were a territory control tools for friars. The oldest atlas produced in this period was the manuscript, redacted in 1632 by Monk Silvestro de Panicale. This served as a model for the following printed "choreographies", surely more evolved under a scientific point of view, but with an identical setting; these printed editions were redacted by cartographers-priests who took more and more advantage of scientific surveys and cartographic techniques for the space representation. The most important edition was printed in 1649, in Turin, where there are three maps for the three provinces.

While in the handwritten version Sicily was depicted in a very rough shape, in the printed cartographic productions it was drawn much more accurately according Gastaldi's model. Moreover, a detailed exam of the three provincial different maps in the two versions of the Atlas reveals a different approach to the theme: the handwritten Atlas is a work of a painter-cartographer, very tidy also in the appearance for the use of colors and many ornamental elements, such as frames for the single surveys, many boats sailing the sea, sea monsters, characters (for example, a hunter collecting alms) animals animating the landscape

(for example a fox or a dog) and a lot of symbols adopted in order to show the location of convents (a little building with a bell tower, surrounding walls); the printed Atlas is rather specifically technical, for a wider catchment area and therefore richer of geographical information and mostly without no functional elements. However in both cases the indication of morphology is quite rough, especially regarding the representation of orographic systems and hydrographic networks, very reduced in the table of Palermo. Also the humanization of landscape is modest, it was characterized by the location of little architectural prospects, used to indicate the centers where the Capuchin houses were located: after all this was the main function of these atlases. Therefore, the possible lacks in the maps can be explained by considering the particular purpose which they were elaborated for. However, the Capuchin Atlases, even with their limits, should be considered as the sign of diffusion of the cartographic knowledge in the religious circles. They constitute probably a <<unique>> in the chorographic seventeenth-century production by religious Orders.

5. THE MODERN SICILY

In the XVIII century Sipione and Agatinodaione first, and Guillaume Delisle later, provided printed maps of Sicily, making improvements to Gastaldi's model. Sipione Basta's map is very rare, the only copy of it being at Vincennes castle. Basta was an architect of Palermo, who became "Engineer of the Royal Court", at Bourbons. In 1702 he developed his geographic map of Sicily, even if it was almost unnoticed even in those same years. Inside the island, the mole piles relief and the most important rivers were represented. There was also the division in three valleys, but there was no indication of streets. The place names were updates and often indicated by Sicilian version. This map was considered as a prototype used later by Daidone, and was the first cartographic representation printed in the island. Unlike Basta's map, Daidone's Sicily spread significantly over the western world, and for more than one century was a model to follow. At a first sight it could be strange that these maps had a different destiny, despite the similarities they have (richness of place names, an updated indication of meridians and parallels) but, if we compare them deeper there are differences, particularly concerning the location of place names, uncertain in Basta's map, very precise in Daidone's map, who even drawn the forests. Daidone, in addition, presented a detailed list of landing places, coves, promontories that were present in the coasts.

Moreover, both maps referred to a tradition that intended to represent the importance of the island to promote the due consideration at its local political representatives and central power. For the first ones these maps represented a strong awareness element of Sicilian identity, for the central power they were a strong demonstration of Sicily's importance. Daidone, anyway, updated his contents focusing on two elements: cities, and close to them, coasts, represented with the detailed list of landing places, coves and promontories and with indications of boundaries coasts. The population was reported next to each center, even the distinction in cities or baronial lands, the functions and administration, military and religious areas. Obviously, Sipione Basta's Sicily resulted less representative in comparison with all these elements, and also too tied to a "seventeenth century" image less focused on. Daidone's Sicily can be then considered as the real "poster" of the island, while Basta's one will be destined to oblivion.

A decade after Daidone's map two important representations of Sicily by Guillaume Delisle have been published. He was born in 1675, son of Claude Delisle (Nicolas Sanson's pupil, founder of a famous school of cartography) after an apprenticeship with his father at his studio, since 1700 began producing globes, planispheres and maps of continents. This time was characterized by a great rebirth not only scientific or technical but also political, because exploration missions revived the interest of leaders for cartography. Claude and Guillaume were able to fit with this context, having strong links with ministers, kings and scholars who opened for them new important information channels for the realization of cards. In 1702 Guillaume was admitted to the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris, founded in 1666 for Colbert's will, as a guarantor system for accuracy, and it was certainly a very important opportunity for him. In 1707 he opened his own studio in the centre of Paris and became a very able geographer, as much as getting in 1718 the nomination of "King's first geographer" and the assignment of teaching the rudiments of geography to the young Louis XV. By this episode it is possible to evince how geography was not anymore prerogative of scholars, but it became a science which the elites wanted to study and monarchs had to be able to use.

Guillaume Delisle in his work as geographer or cartographer first began by astronomical observations correlated to measures provided by ancient sources and integrated by local stories, trip relations and oral tales. After that, he elaborated his cards. A very important characteristic of his work was to update his own representations even after printing them. He made further updates according suggestions coming from the big network of his correspondents around the world. Two important examples of his accurate work are the maps of Sicily, one in 1714 (Ancient Sicily) and the other one in 1717 (Modern Sicily). For the making of these two maps he uses various sources. First of all he used three maps of Sicily by ancient authors: first one was The Tabula Peutingeriana, which he took indication of distances among the various stops from; the second was Strabone's one, which he took descriptions of various cities from; the last one was Idrisi's Geographia Nubiensis in the Latin translation realized in Paris in 1619. He used also synthetic papers where there was a summary of all information.

Another source was Cluver whereby anyway Deslide could not only use the report of a direct observation, but could also consult, even if in indirect form, the principle works about Modern Sicily cited by the German historian. The result of all this collection of information was a map of Sicily whose shape was significantly corrected. An important element in the map of Modern Sicily was the inclusion, for the first time, of the line marking clearly, in the southern part of the island, Modica's county. This is undoubtedly consequence of political-diplomatic vicissitudes experienced by the county in the first decades of the eighteenth century during succession war, when it was subject to Spain, as an enclave, for the entire duration of Savoy government in Sicily. Indeed, the king of Spain Philip V, with Utrecht's treaty, gave Sicily to Amedeo of Savoy, but still keeping under his control all the properties confiscated to Almirante of Castile, Modica's count. Modica's county became then a "small state", destined to create many difficulties to the new government of Savoy. Obviously, in such a political and diplomatic context, it was essential to have a map of the island showing clearly the borders of a territory so strategically important. Delisle responded immediately to this requirement, and two months after the treaty printed a map, in 1717, where the Spanish enclave was present. This map was particularly important not only for the delimitations of the three Valleys' borders, but also because became an essential politic, diplomatic and military tool. Delisle's Sicily represented a milestone in the printed scientific

cartography of the island, because it was based on observations by the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris: all that gave credibility and greater certainty to the map. In the early decades of the eighteenth century Sicily was probably the region with the best cartographic representations. It had this privileged position thanks to the strategic importance it had during Spanish succession war, ended with Utrecht's treaty in 1713, as already mentioned, by means Sicily was gave to Victor Amadeus II, Duke of Savoy, who took the title of king of Sicily. Afterwards, Sicily passed to Austria, by Ays' treaty in 1720, and the new king Carlo VI gave immediately the task of making an exact survey of the island to Baron Schmettau, task carried out between 1719 and 1721.

Schmettau, after his youth studies dedicated above all to mathematics, geography and history, undertook a brilliant military career in the service of many European sovereigns and, in 1719, took part of the imperial army, strongly wanted by Prince Eugene of Savoy, who directly gave him the task to make a map of the island. It was right Eugene to give precise indications concerning the realization of the card; moreover, Schmettau provided information about geographical features, war developments, reflections about Sicily, what emperor could have got, how to introduce an important trade and how to improve the country. Schmettau could provide all this information because, unlike Delisle, lived directly in Sicily and made in person the topographic surveys of the territory; he stayed in Sicily for more then one year spending his time by hiking and researching.

After that, when he collected all the necessary materials, came back to Vienna to elaborate the final work, the cartographic representation of Sicily. Once completed, the map had an important circulation and reputation, because he showed not only the military context but also the cultural one in Sicily: this is the reason why his map not was used just for military purpose. By this map, Sicily had a representation as perfect as it was considered adequate both, for the administration needs or for scholars and travelers.

The eighteenth century was also the century of «*récits de voyage*» and «*voyages pittoresques*». Since this century, until then excluded from the "Grand Tour", was opened to foreign travelers who usually added in their writings a map of Sicily, sometimes with the trace of their itineraries. The 'Grand Tour' was a cultural training trip undertook usually by sons of aristocracy and rich bourgeoisie of Central-Northern Europe, and it had, as principal destination, Italy and its natural and artistic beauties. It was already experienced in the Sixteenth century, but just since the Eighteenth century, especially with the birth of a great neo-classical passion for the discovers of important archaeological sites of ancient Rome, the Grand Tour became a cultural phenomenon, and Sicily was part of it.

After Schmettau's map, during the eighteenth century, there were not ground surveys in Sicily and cartographic production just limited to use astronomical observations and information known until then.

During the Nineteenth century Captain William Henry Smyth made a deep exploration of Sicilian coasts and islands, on behalf of English admiral. After this exploration, a nautical atlas, titled 'The hidrography of Sicily, Malta and the adjacent lands', was published in 1823. This work had an important series of nautical maps and a map of Sicily derived by Schmettau's one. Only Smith's observations in Sicily's cartography made the typical empiricism and uncertainty stop. Therefore, with this atlas Sicily had a modern and great artistic prestige cartographic representation. Step by step, since the end of the XVIII century until the annexation of Sicily to Italy, the cartography had been able to give a more and more precise and faithful to reality description of the island. Since then, the success of a map has depended on the accuracy of the trace and the showed indications

because it had served as “guide” for travelers who come to Sicily. It has to be mentioned that a production of educational-informative cartography has grown significantly. In 1832, Benedetto Marzolla, historian of Two Sicily’s Kingdom, printed a chorographic atlas: it sketched out the anatomy of the southern reality and highlighted the lack of road network that impeded the development of traded and accentuates the gap between inland areas and coasts. The work stands out also for elegance and clarity of the design, for accuracy of details concerning administration units, municipalities’ populations, ecclesiastical and judicial circumscriptions, customs offices and even provides information about history. The details are constantly updated, as happened for King Ferdinand’s island. The island appeared in July of 1831 was already put in the map published during August of the same year, part of the Atlas of 1832.

This atlas gradually had entered to houses and became very popular, favored by the new technique of printing, the lithography, adopted since 1823. Thanks to it, it was possible not only to reduce costs but also to carry out fast the work and make updates in short intervals. By concluding, it is possible to infer that cartographic representation of Sicily confirms its strong European identity, both geographic and cultural. Sicily is no longer a mysterious object, a land to “discover”: Sicily is rather a land where everything is known. Even before the political-cultural vicissitudes enveloped it in dark mysteries, Sicily is a clear and dense geographical object.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The history of cartography Sicilian certifies a particular vocation of the region towards the representation of the island in symbolic form. Centuries and centuries of cartographic work have represented the diversity of Sicily in an original and innovative way. It was due to the most advanced cartographic technique acquired from European models and due to the creativity of the Sicilian lovers of this discipline. The Sicilian mapping narrates through its many documents the characteristics and identity of an island from the mythical three-pronged points drawing evolves until its current form. It is also a demonstration of cultural vitality. Through the growth of Sicilian cartography we can infer the Sicilian will to open up to dialogue and the European culture.

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