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The rural vernacular habitat, a heritage in our landscape

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Marina Kuleshova

Vernacular habitat of Southern Russia

The rural vernacular habitat, a heritage in our landscape

Service photo du Conseil de l'Europe

All across Europe, the rural environment is treasured for its beautiful diversity. Many Europeans cherish the opportunity to spend time in a more natural and traditional setting in a particular region. Indeed, the rural world as a whole is a priceless part of our heritage, and the unique vernacular architecture of a region reflects and supports that region's own identity. Beyond its aesthetic value, it provides a unique and irreplaceable record of certain aspects of intangible heritage: local responses to the conditions of everyday life, such as techniques and skills, and ways of organising social life.

In spite of its immense worth, rural vernacular heritage is threatened on several fronts. Worldwide economic, cultural and architectural homogenisation of the agricultural sector is in large measure responsible for developments in the rural habitat. Rather than repair buildings or remain faithful to local tradition when building new ones, it is often more practical in the short-term to opt for modern, featureless buildings. Rural depopulation, itself in part a result of the homogenising industrialisation of agriculture, may leave buildings disused and perhaps abandoned to people who do not see or care about their inherent value.

Linked to both of these causes is perhaps the greatest threat: society's general under-valuing of this form of heritage. It has long been the "poor relation" of the heritage sector, perhaps overlooked in favour of more splendid monuments or areas of outstanding beauty. For their part, local communities, while appreciative of their built heritage, may not recognise its full value because to them it is so familiar. This is an area in which the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention leads the field in terms of heritage protection: it underlines the importance of appreciating and protecting the value of all types of landscape.

Indeed, the rural habitat is not a museum-piece. It is not fixed or static, a curiosity to be wrapped in cotton wool. In order to preserve this heritage, it must be fully integrated into the modern life of the community in such a way as to retain local practices and ways of life. Redundant buildings can be readapted and re-used, in particular to exploit the economic potential which can be derived from rural tourism. Vernacular architecture, seldom involves isolated sites – it is therefore desirable to form networks of related sites which are then more able to mobilise support. This brings further benefits in that it provides opportunities to share expertise.

This issue of the Council of Europe's magazine "Futuropa" brings together articles from experts from Europe and other parts of the world. It is through generating concern for this vital sector of heritage, and promoting co-operation from the international to the local level, that we can ensure that, rather than losing this vital link with our past, we will pass it on, intact and thriving, to future generations.

Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni
Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe


Giovanni Cascone

The vernacular rural heritage: from the past to the future

Rural heritage includes architectural and landscape features. These include dwellings and production units, like stables, piggeries, silos, barns, which have been shaped and developed over time until mechanisation, brought about by industrial development, altered the relationship between people and their land irreversibly and made the need for labour less necessary. Traditionally, rural settlements represent the best synthesis of people's ability to modify the environment to their own advantage with the least impact; the farming structure provides the elements that characterise the landscape.

The way buildings are shaped depends on: the limits imposed by local resources; the productivity of the farm and the buildings related to the crop system. The lay-out depends on environmental and social factors, including safety.

Recurring materials, shapes and volumes, always connected to local conditions, define specific architectural types that become representative of the various places.

As for the climate, the structure is arranged so as to make the most of local environmental conditions, eg south facing walls are characterised by wide façades and arcades, while north facing ones are thicker.

In many cases, farm buildings were built more than 1,000 years ago, restored and adapted over the centuries, according to the changing demands of farming practices. This constitutes an anomaly when compared with other utility buildings whose life span coincides with the practice that has generated them.

The international community has started taking an interest in rural heritage because of its state of decay. The reasons are economic and social as well as cultural.

The production system, once based on complex crop rotation, is now based on monoculture which leaves fields uncovered for more than seven months. By opting for monoculture or a simplified two-year rotation, cow sheds and barns have become useless and have made old farm buildings and dwellings of no use at all. In Italy, there are more than 5.5 million rural buildings and 1.5 million have been totally abandoned.

While in the past, the use of materials and labour was strictly local and bound to tradition, nowadays, the use of new technologies and building techniques has introduced elements and styles that are totally foreign to the local environment. The new imposes itself on the old and on the surrounding landscape and, while ignoring any reference to typologies, layout, building techniques, it has a strong visual impact on the landscape. As a consequence the scenario becomes monotonous and huge pre-cast storage buildings stand out against historical farmsteads in ruin. New buildings are the result of international border-free architecture, introduced by industrialisation, which tends to ignore any local value.

The traditional rural building, is the cause and the effect of a certain landscape. Farming and natural landscape are not to be confused: the one is the result of people's work and the result of agricultural policies. In order to cut down on production costs, fields are reshaped drastically with consequent dramatic changes to the landscape that becomes more and more simplified.

Meadows and marshy meadows are eliminated and the increase in the number of fields has made it necessary to carry out huge soil movement. Hedges and planting rows have been destroyed and traditional rural buildings are what is left of this impoverished landscape.

Recovery therefore concerns not only buildings but also countryside elements and links up with the idea of sustainable and compatible agriculture, which is clearly against the current trends, based on diseconomies.

Rural heritage means buildings and landscape together, and its safeguard implies careful attention being paid to the changes needed to enhance the local character. This demands a common approach by farmers, policy makers etc. that is difficult to realise.

As long as the traditional rural building keeps its territorial identity, it belongs to the cultural heritage that is worthy of safeguard. Obviously, the reconstruction of a historical scenario, incompatible with modern production, is out of the question, because the rich variety of this traditional landscape, safeguarded in the past by the farmer's constant care, would demand such commitment and a lifestyle which is incompatible with current social trends.


Giovanni Cascone

Farm building in Sicily, Etna in the background

Recovery and re-use of old buildings for modern use require careful evaluation of:

– the real re-use potential of the structures within the new production context. The solutions put forward need to be the result of careful examin-

ation of the farm organisation, of the produce and of its destiny;
– the management of properties, which would ensure acceptable maintenance standards after the recovery.

Upkeep depends on how much the building is used: a series of functions, compatible with the farm organisation, should be pinpointed so as to make the recovery viable. A priority list for recovery should be defined, starting from the most simple (machinery and equipment storage) to more complex ones such as storage of farm produce, dwellings, farm holidays, B&B etc.

All the proposals put forward acknowledge the need to define land policy aimed at enhancing the value of the heritage of existing rural buildings and promoting recovery by offering proper financial support and/or tax relief.

It is therefore necessary to:
– carry out a detailed analysis of the state of rural buildings within the same area, so as to make it possible to devise coherent restoration guidelines;
– discover the criteria that led to the choice of these sites where the buildings were constructed;
– list the existing buildings from a historical point of view, so as to define what impact can be admitted in case of restoration;
– devise restoration methodologies taking into account local customs and usages, so as to promote the ownership and the proper restoration of the building;
– provide guidelines to reduce to a minimum the impact of supply systems on traditional buildings;
– decide what the necessary interventions are in order to enhance the value of the landscape and upgrade it;
– set up, for each geographical area, an inventory of the necessary and available traditional building materials and explain how to use them;
– promote training courses for workers and make them more aware of the issue;
– make workers and public opinion aware of the wealth and peculiarity of this heritage and of its importance in the definition of our cultural identity;
– introduce the notion of recovery of traditional rural buildings, and the micro landscape, into the syllabus of undergraduates and upper secondary education students.

Franco Sangiorgi

Old chapel belonging to a farm in the countryside

Franco Sangiorgi

Ruins of an ancient "cascina", near Lodi

Undoubtedly, rural buildings are a direct testimony of human activity in a certain place and, if they are left to decay, part of our past will be lost forever. That is to say that the landscape, the environment, the land and the people are part of one and the same unit and that this heritage should be preserved not only as a memory of the past but also as a resource for future development.

The problem of the decay of the rural heritage is common to all countries as is the evolution and the specialisation of agricultural production. The problem becomes more severe where land is not profitable enough. It is therefore necessary to answer this question: is the issue of recovery simply a matter of the recovery of volumes or is it also linked to agricultural practices that provide the building with a context (and the landscape)?

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Hall farm, Hardenberg, Overijssel/ Ellen Van Olst

Farms and landscape of the Netherlands: Rural vernacular architecture of the Low Countries

Although the Netherlands is a small country, it contains a wide variety of landscapes and soil types. Essentially, it is a delta area, through which some of the largest northern European rivers find their way to the sea. Since it is also in the most north-western part of the European continent, it also contains the tail ends of different landscapes and soil types. As a result, some highly specialised and basically different farming economies developed in a relatively small area, which have led, in turn, to a wealth of different farm types.

The northern and western coastal areas are largely human-made and were reclaimed from the sea, through the construction of dikes and the drainage of polders. In these fertile marine clay areas, the availability of water transport, as well as the proximity of prosperous late-Medieval towns, provided a suitable climate for large-scale dairy farming (butter and cheese). Here, a remarkably modern farming economy developed from the 16th Century onwards, with farmers providing not only for local and national but also for international markets. Prosperous, well-sized farms were common in these regions. In a small sandy strip directly along the coastline, market gardening (vegetables, fruit and flowers – bulbs!) became the main agricultural activity. A wide band running through the heart of the country, along the great rivers, contains fertile river clay. Arable farming (wheat) was common here until the end of the 19th Century, when it was replaced by the cultivation of fruit trees.

In sharp contrast with these prosperous and progressive farming areas, the eastern and southern parts of the country largely consist of dry sandy regions. Here, until the mid-19th Century, the poor soil conditions and the absence of roads resulted in a farming economy which was largely self-supporting. Sheep farming and rye crops were long predominant, as was the breeding of cattle that were then fattened elsewhere. Marshy areas along the central inland sea, now dammed in and called the IJsselmeer, were used for the production of hay and peat. Reed were harvested for thatching. Farms in both areas were mostly small to medium sized.

Although most of the Netherlands is flat (the western parts even lie below sea-level), the extreme south-east (Limburg) is comparatively hilly. Here, on the fertile loess soils that were already farmed in Roman times, small castles and large manorial farms dominate the landscape, specialising in large-scale wheat production.

Ellen Van Olst

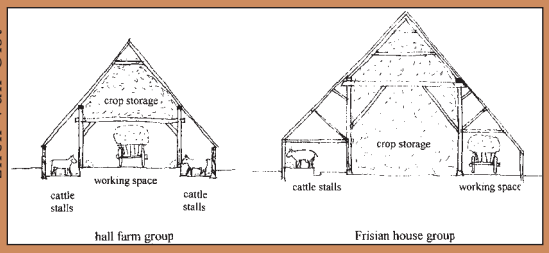
Typical farmstead or "Frisian" farm at Middenbeemster/

The traditional farm architecture of the Netherlands reflects the big differences in natural and agricultural conditions. By the beginning of the 20th Century, the country counted well over 30 different farm types. Notwithstanding their striking differences in external appearance, size, internal lay-out and structure, they still share some basic characteristics. The most important is the use of organic building materials, the aisled timber-framed structures and the fact that they combine dwelling and farm functions within the main building.

As the Netherlands contains hardly any stone, the oldest traditional rural buildings were all timber-framed. The roof was supported by a structure of heavy wooden frames. Walls were made of wood, twigs and clay (wattle and daub), roofs were covered with heather, rye straw or reed. From the late Middle Ages onwards, when a thriving brick industry started to develop, bricks were increasingly used as building materials for walls and tiles for roofs. The introduction of brick in farm building started in the more prosperous northern and western parts of the country. Here, clay for brick-making was available, as was the money to buy the finished products. In the poorer southern and eastern parts of the country, however, organic materials were used for agricultural buildings until well into the 19th Century.

Another major characteristic of traditional Dutch farms is that practically all buildings are aisled. The main timber structure stands inside the walls of the building, with the large roof sloping down on two or more sides to low exterior walls.

Finally, and perhaps even more characteristic, is the fact that living and working quarters, animal quarters and storage space are all combined within the same building. Outhouses simply provide extra space for storage or cattle, but the main building always has more than one function. Living and working quarters are



Schematic representation of farms in the early 19th Century

divided by means of internal walls. In some regions, however, until well into the 19th Century and sometimes later, there was no partition wall between human and animal housing.

Within the large variety of traditional farm types of the Netherlands, some essentially different house groups can be distinguished. Within each group, the different farm types share a number of basic characteristics or a similar historical development. The two main building traditions are those of the north-west and those of the south-east. Together, they used to cover most of the country.

The south-eastern house group (generally called "hall farm group") was developed during the late Middle Ages from a previous, smaller and more primitive kind of building, which only contained dwelling and cowshed. The resulting, much widened hall farm combined, for the first time, living, working, storage and cattle space within one building. The oldest excavated plans of this new type date back to the 14th Century. Its typical timber-framed structure, which was probably developed during the 16th Century, consists of a series of so-called anchor-beam frames. In this type of frame, the relatively low tie-beam (the main horizontal beam, which supports the attic floor joists) is wedged and anchored between two vertical posts.

The front part of the wide, rather square building contains the dwelling for the farmer and his family. The back (and main) part is for the different farm functions. In these aisled buildings, the floor of the nave remains open and is used for working purposes (threshing corn and feeding cattle). The huge attic above the threshing floor is for crop storage. Both aisles contain room for animals. The cattle were traditionally placed with their heads towards the open nave from which they were fed. In order to provide as much manure as possible for growing rye crops on the poor sandy soils, cattle in these regions were kept in sunken stalls. In these pits, almost one metre deep, large quantities of organic materials were added to the excrement and trampled by the cattle into a solid layer of manure, which was only removed a few times a year. From the end of the 19th Century onwards, the availability of artificial fertilisers and the growing economic importance of dairy production caused the unhygienic cesspits to be replaced by more modern ground level stalls with manure channels. The position of the cattle, however, remained unchanged: with their heads towards the central nave.

In sharp contrast with the early development of the south-east, the farms of the northern ("Frisian") house group have remained relatively small, narrow buildings. Crops were stored outside in the open air or in separate barns and the main building only contained dwelling, cow-shed and some working space. This type of building was what is generally known as a "Frisian longhouse".

For the northern regions, the second half of the 16th Century and the whole of the 17th was a period of great prosperity and economic expansion. A growing urban market for agricultural products and especially dairy products, led to extensive agricultural development and to the large-scale drainage of polders. The changed farming practices demanded new, more efficient and above all, considerably larger farm buildings. In the same period, much longer timber than the old inland types became available, through the importation (mainly for shipbuilding purposes) of pine from the Baltic and Scandinavian countries. This enabled the development of new and much larger timber-framed buildings, in which all basic farm functions could be combined. By the middle of the 18th Century, practically all the old longhouses of the northerly provinces had been extended or replaced by large aisled farms. Their huge sloping barn roofs have become one of the most distinguishing features of the flat and comparatively treeless northern landscape. These enormous farms have all major farm functions within one building, with the dwelling extending from, or incorporated within, the barn. In this respect, they resemble those of the older south-eastern house group, where the same tendency to multi-functionality had occurred several centuries earlier. However, the timber-framed structure and internal lay-out of the new so-called Frisian farms are entirely different. The main structural element of the northern farms consists of a number of tall timber frames. The tie-beams are supported by the posts and are placed much higher than in the southern farms. There is no attic floor and the aisle, which is open, is entirely filled with crops, while working space and cow-stalls are situated in the aisles. Another characteristic of the northern building tradition is the position of the cattle and the lay-out of the stalls within the aisle. In these regions, cows used to be tethered in pairs between wooden partitions, with their heads towards the exterior wall. Sunken stalls were not used in this part of the country. All stalls were at ground level or slightly raised, with a manure channel running behind each row. It is generally believed that this more hygienic type of cow-stall was indigenous to the north-western provinces, where dairy farming was always one of the main sources of income.

Over the course of time, a large number of different farm types and regional variations have developed within these two main building traditions. Different agricultural practices and specialisation, cultural traditions, the availability of new building materials and local differences in size and wealth of individual farms had, by the end of the 19th Century, resulted in a large number of regional farm types. The rapid agricultural revolution of the 20th Century, with its mechanisation and extreme specialisation, made these buildings (except the largest) redundant. Most traditional farms have now lost their original function and have disappeared or been converted to new use, with the inevitable loss of traditional features. The number of traditional farms is dwindling fast. In addition to the regrettable loss of historical objects, this also represents a threat to the Dutch landscape as a whole, which risks losing one of its most interesting and regionally defining features.

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Pere Vall and the Provincial Government of Catalonia

The industrial architecture of the Llobregat valley in Spain: a valuable cultural landscape in the process of change

The Llobregat valley, in the centre of northern Catalonia, became a primary industrial axis in the second half of the 19th Century, when "colonies" seemed to spring up like mushrooms over a period of a few years. These working-class towns formed one of the most dense and most interesting examples of the first wave of industrialisation. The towns were transformed into residential centres as industry developed, especially in the 20th Century, and as the tertiary sector emerged. Although the link between most of them and their original manufacturing basis has been lost, they remain of great historic and cultural value.

Aware of the value of the 18 industrial towns in the river valley, the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya), Spain's most industrialised region, which lies on the border with France and on the Mediterranean, has approved a planning blueprint to preserve the heritage value of these towns and to boost socio-economic activity in the sector. The blueprint covers an area of land 29 kilometres long and two kilometres wide, reaching as far as the plateaux on either side of the river, and with a total population of some 20,000, all of them town-dwellers.

The first objective of the blueprint is to adapt the quality standard of the towns' current housing stock and urban services to bring them up to the level of those of municipalities. The second is to consolidate the towns' role as part of an urban system with its own personality. The third is to preserve the heritage value of the valley by categorising it as a class 1 cultural landscape, on the basis of both its industrial past and the particular interrelationship between the river ecosystem and its use for generating energy. Fourthly, the aim is to safeguard the institutional consensus and public participation by setting up joint management arrangements for the main elements, such as canals and dams, fishing and leisure areas, tourist routes and buildings.

The implementing instruments for which the blueprint provides are, firstly, heritage catalogues containing an inventory of buildings and open spaces and the diagnosis and protective action for each unit. Secondly, urban improvement plans, including a delimitation of each town's residential growth. Thirdly, the definition of a "civic union" linking the 18 towns so as to guarantee efficiency and consistency. These measures will be accompanied by a strategic plan intended to develop tourism and quality production.

The challenge to be taken up by the Autonomous Government of Catalonia, the municipalities, property owners and residents is to make the Llobregat valley an example of how the cultural heritage can be respected against the changing background of a river basin at the service of human beings.

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Pere Vall and the Provincial Government of Catalonia

Tower and church of the colònia Viladomiu Vell, Gironella


Victoria Momeva-Altiparmakovska

House in the village of Brajcino

Vernacular architecture in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"


Victoria Momeva- Altiparmakovska

House in the village of Brajcino

"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" is a small country in the heart of the Balkans well known for its natural and cultural heritage, which make up the richness of the country. Heritage includes the natural world and the products of human culture with its wide variety of landscapes, towns, villages and all the rich details in them. It includes great monuments and many vernacular buildings such as mills, dry-stone walls, graveyards, farms, barns etc.

Vernacular architecture is an important part of the cultural heritage of the country. There is a significant number of preserved and abandoned vernacular settlements. The unstoppable pace of social change has influenced the profiles of rural buildings, the villages as a type of settlement and even the nature of whole regions. There are numerous traditional villages that make use of their ancient cultural heritage. They consist of authentic, well-preserved buildings of vernacular rural architecture, for both residential and occupational purposes. The architectural features of the traditional villages in this region, especially those high up in the mountains, still have authentic, well-preserved premises and ambiance. In addition to these elements, there is an intangible wealth expressed in the history of people, their folklore, language, music, food, arts, crafts, skills and industries.

The vernacular character of the villages is reflected in the way they are placed in the environment. For instance, this can be found in the architecture of a vernacular rural house, the interior design of buildings, the application of traditional building materials such as wood, stone or bricks and so on. There are also traditional building techniques that can best be seen in the construction.

Vernacular buildings represent an artistic expression within anonymous folk buildings. There is a great number of these buildings which still remain as individual structures or as a part of the rural ambient, particularly in the villages in the western and south-western parts of the country. They have not received adequate treatment, regarding scientific research or conservation. The ethnological criterion employed in evaluating the folk architecture treats it as a document showing past and present living habits. However, the aesthetic and art components have not been forgotten. The relatively plain buildings, of little aesthetic and artistic values, have been of considerable importance on the list of protected vernacular buildings, because they are witnesses of the past. Moreover, they are important as a group of buildings showing the rural concept of the area.

The listed rural vernacular buildings in 37 villages in the area of Pelister and Prespa, in the south-west of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" are typical of the variety of forms and rich detail. Structurally, they have specific vertical timber framing with brick and other filling between. The flooring is timber. Various overhangs, deep eaves, window openings aligned in a row, and timber elements as secondary details, have accentuated the external elevations. Another special feature of these buildings is their functional room layout. The interior details, including timber ceilings, either plain or ornamentally decorated, various built-in features, doorways, timber stairways and railings, and the other timber elements, create a picturesque interior.

The main reason for the disappearance of rural vernacular houses is their age (most of them dating from the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th) and the quality of the building materials used. Another reason for the rapid disappearance of these buildings is individual incompetent intervention, where the owner does not accept professional advice and instructions.

The everyday dwelling needs of the inhabitants are a major problem in the conservation of vernacular dwellings. As time passes, there have been various modifications to the buildings. The vernacular buildings should be protected and restored as individual buildings or complexes of buildings, as they are the essence of the historic and cultural identity of the region and an addition to the wonderful natural scenery. What is more, the development of alternative tourism can have an impact on the sustainable development of the country. This can contribute to the preservation of vernacular rural settlements and vernacular architecture. In addition, it is the only way for economic revitalisation and improvement of living conditions in rural regions.

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Wooden door

The rural vernacular heritage and society in France

It is something of a paradox to refer to rural vernacular housing. This is because economic imperatives have resulted in the disappearance of what was its main feature, its role as an architectural role model, described by Marie Pascale Mallé, custodian of the Hautes-Alpes Inventory of Cultural Heritage, as having a replicating function, *"not through written transmission, but by imitation, through contagion by architectural models which spread across an area that can be very precisely defined"*[1]. Like the materials used, styles have tended towards the uniform in France, and the skills appropriate to traditional building, once passed on informally, have frequently been superseded by industrial-type techniques which have achieved success through their relatively low cost. They are the only ones widely taught to construction industry workers. Where residential buildings are concerned, France's cultural diversity now depends more on a conservation policy for old buildings than on the maintenance of local architectural traditions, and the situation is the same in rural and urban areas.

This type of architecture, very much locally based, has been even less able to offer resistance because the communities within which these skills existed have been transformed from the outside, resulting in a complete change in the human geography of France: the distinction between urban and rural communities no longer reflects a human occupation pattern often divided between different places of production and consumption, with increasing numbers of people no longer working within the communities where they live. The rural world is no longer defined in terms of building density or the predominance of agricultural activity, but by its landscape. Thus France, the greater part of which is still hallmarked by agricultural and forestry activities reaching right into what are called peri-urban areas (55.4% of the surface area of which is suitable for agriculture; 35% of the farms in mainland France), retains a rural aspect, despite a high degree of urbanisation (75.5% of the population of mainland France lives in urban areas, with 82% in what are defined as predominantly urban entities in France's spatial zoning plans, known as ZAUs)[2]. From the sociological viewpoint, the rural nature of the peri-urban areas is all the more accentuated by the great similarity between urban and rural lifestyles: the landscape thus has a decisive influence on spatial differentiation. It is the relatively low population density and the less artificial nature of the land – and not the main economic activity – that defines the rural as opposed to the urban. It is interesting to note that many people who live in peri-urban areas consider that they live in the country, and, since the early 70s, there has been a reversal in one demographic tendency, with a positive migratory balance growing more rapidly since the latest census: between 1999 and 2004, over two million people left the cities and settled in communities with a population of under 2,000. Another 2.4 million are expected to follow suit by 2008. The cost of urban land is only one of the reasons for this social trend, the main one being that people are seeking a better and less stressful home environment, at lower cost and with less pollution, at the same time as they strive for greater fulfilment in the personal, family and occupational sphere since cities are now associated with general dissatisfaction, it is out in the fields that happiness now lies. The new country-dwellers consider their environment and the agricultural character of the land, the backbone of the French countryside for centuries, to be just one aspect of the place where they live. They are themselves part of a picturesque landscape which they intend to preserve as they envisage it. As Bertrand Hervieu and Jean Vivard said, farmers must get out into the landscape in order to preserve the farming culture[3]. This emigrant population superimposed on the existing, decreasingly homogeneous rural population also follows an urban societal logic which causes some integration problems. 63% of the mayors surveyed feared an excessive demand for amenities and services.

The countryside thus seems to be a source of tension and conflict between old and new country-dwellers because it is called on to serve three different kinds of purposes, generating competing uses. It has an economic or productive function, a residential and recreational role (an environment in which people live, whether permanently or temporarily), and a conservation function (protection of biodiversity and of the natural, cultural and landscape heritage). The diversification of the countryside's functions thus brings with it a new kind of landscape, as a desire to preserve the forms inherited from the past goes hand-in-hand with a wish to adopt an urban lifestyle so as to keep up to date.

Vernacular architecture does not always have its place in this new kind of landscape. Some older buildings have of course been renovated or restored, but, when new residents arrive on the scene, they often settle on housing estates just outside existing urban areas, more suited to the means and housing aspirations of new and old residents. In Riez, in the department of Alpes de Haute Provence, the 2005 census showed that there were 37 more households and 56 more homes than there had been in 1999. 33 principal residences had been completed since 1999, and 14.7% of the population recorded in 1999 had moved house between the two dates. The age of the housing stock within the historic centre and the lower cost of new building as compared to renovation only partly explain a development also resulting from a desire to have a garden and to benefit from all modern amenities. A similar tendency is found outside the built-up area, with some farmers preferring to settle in a village. A good number of farmhouses are thus no longer used for farming. Some are still occupied by retired farmers, but others have been converted into second homes or holiday properties for rental, while others are unoccupied or have even been abandoned. Residents and elected representatives are more sensitive about the future of the village than about that of isolated hamlets, so it is these outlying examples of vernacular architecture that are suffering the effects of recent socio-economic changes. Obsolescent and out of line with European standards, former utilitarian buildings are not easy to find a new use for, while there is a need for some modern buildings to be put up (barns for machinery, cowsheds).

Lauded as "an example of the architectural diversity and the range of influences which shaped it", the rural vernacular heritage now offers "continuing evidence of our own architecture and of the efforts and skills of the craftsmen who created it", but for how much longer? A recent report by France's Economic and Social Council[4]

provides a basis for taking stock of the situation of the buildings more specifically linked to agricultural activities. It was estimated in 1966 that there were 11 million buildings used for agricultural purposes, and the current estimate is that six million of them remain. Half are thought to belong to farmers, and the other half to be in private hands. One and a half million of those still owned by farmers are still being put to the same use as in 1966, with most of the farmhouses lived in by the farmer. The other 1.5 million are no longer used for the same purposes, standing empty or being left to go to ruin. A million and a half of those bought by people are reported to have been converted into second homes, principal residences, business premises, etc, with the rest awaiting new use or conversion.

This is an overview ignoring the disparities that exist between different regions. In peri-urban areas, which are in practice the most affected by the new demographic dynamic, frequent re-use raises problems of cost and respect for older buildings, and of the balance to be struck between production-related needs and the new arrivals' expectations of their home environment. Elsewhere, the new situation forces land prices up, leaving young farmers competing with foreign or French buyers seeking main or second homes. There is one component of French territory that is unaffected by the trend, namely the most remote areas of the countryside, where the worst effects of the decline of farming and the ageing of the population are felt, with vernacular buildings neglected. Can the word "heritage" still be applied to assets which may not be handed down, for want of anyone prepared to take them on? While vernacular buildings "contribute, through features unique to each region, to France's diverse range of architectural riches, and to its charm and attractiveness to tourists", it nevertheless has to be said that this contribution by no means safeguards their durability. There are two major obstacles to their re-use, in addition to the question of whether they can be adapted. The first is the cost of development, an economic and technical problem, while the second is of a cultural nature. The communities deeply rooted in their local areas which originally created France's rural vernacular buildings have either scattered or no longer exist. The "new countryside", where the local now forms part of the global, is still emerging. The future of the rural vernacular heritage depends on whether it can strike a new balance between respect for the legacy of the past and adaptation. Out of habit or aspiration, the people who live in the French countryside already share a common concept, that of a lifestyle based on the changing of the seasons. As time goes by, they still need to build up a common perception of their spatial environment. One of the main challenges ahead, as a new kind of rural area takes shape, and a greater challenge than the coexistence of different social groups with sometimes conflicting interests, is the emergence of a wish for togetherness in a space with many dimensions, including its productive dimension. The rural landscape will then, from being a mere patchwork of different pieces sewn together, be restored to its former state as a fabric skilfully interwoven, a mosaic in which each individual piece is perfectly placed in a harmonious whole. Only if this is achieved will the individual elements which make up the built heritage find their place and become vernacular again, having been adopted by a community not only concerned to preserve it for the present and the future, but capable of drawing inspiration from it when designing new buildings.

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[1] Mallé, Marie-Pascale, 1983, *L'inventaire de l'architecture rurale dans les Hautes-Alpes,* in *Le monde alpin et rhodanien*, No. 4, p. 10.

[2] An INSEE report on the structure of the countryside which focused on population basins (bassins de vie, a planning term referring to areas within which a population lives, is employed and uses amenities) (*La structuration de l'espace rural : une approche par les bassins de vie*), produced with the help of IFEN, INRA and SCEES for the Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Activity (DATAR) in July 2003, suggests using a limited reference framework of rural population basins which had as their focal point a community or urban centre with a population of under 30,000 in 1999, but adding to this the peripheral areas around the other 171 rural population basins which have as their focal point an urban centre with a population of over 30,000. To the limited rural reference framework of 429,000 km² (79% of the country) was thus added the supplementary reference framework of 82,000 km² (94% of the country), with a population of 25,765,000 (44% of the 1999 total).

[3] Hervieu, Bertrand and Vivard, Jean, *La campagne et l'archipel paysan,* in Chevallier, Denis (ed.), *Vives campagnes. Le patrimoine rural, projet de société,* Editions Autrement, Paris, 2000, p. 76.

[4] *Un atout pour le monde rural : la valorisation du bâti agricole*, report by Michel de Beaumesnil, 2006.

Magali Pons

House in Lozère, France

Mala Lehota village

Frantisek Petrovic

Small sacred architecture: an indispensable part of the landscape, not only in Slovakia

Pavlina Misikova

Wayside cross, Slovakia

The voice with a question *"what contributes to regional identity"* becomes heard more and more often in many forums organised in Europe. The reason is, as distances become shorter and customs less important, that we still want to feel the uniqueness and a different spirit in each country. Landscape is one of the main links to the answer we are seeking.

A typical image of landscape in Slovakia often appeared on postcards. It naturally depends on our location in the Carpathians. Beside landscape diversity, the image is greatly influenced by settlements (small sized towns and dispersed rural settlements, old castles and their ruins) and land-use in the forms of historical landscape structures, mosaics of fields, meadows and forests. A rich history influenced by religion is visible through thousands of shrines sensitively located in urban areas but also often in the open countryside. According to their workmanship, they differ from region to region. Roadside crosses, devotional pillars, small chapels, sculptures usually at cross-roads, at the beginning or at the end of villages, in their centres or on the highest points in the landscape. Today's symbols of meekness, serenity, and forgiveness played a significant role in the religious life of a village and were erected as a word of thanks or a prayer for something. They remain to bring to us not only appreciation of their esthetical beauty, but a challenge to name all of the landscape values. What do people appreciate in the landscape? How can we bring into landscape planning issues such as landscape awareness, protection of the values like landscape image, or subjective perception and connection of the local people? Public participation is the key word from the European Landscape Convention. It is the same challenge working with the landscape quality objective. Leading to the common historical roots, some of the monuments look similar to those of neighbouring countries. A legend of St. John of Nepomuk, now called the Middle European, is an example. Born in the Czech lands around 1350, John studied law and theology, and served as the vicar general of the Prague archdiocese. His reputed refusals to divulge the secret of Queen Sophia to King Wenceslas caused him to be put to death. His body was thrown off the Charles Bridge into the Vltava River. As the patron of lawyers, the protector of bridges and waters, and the symbol of discreetness, reliability and courage, we see him in many places in the countryside. His personality was an inspiration to the international symposium *"Sanctus Ioannes Nepomucenna Medioeuropeansis"*, (1999-2004) and the exhibition *John of Nepomuk – the Saint of Central Europe*. It shows drawings of contemporary Central European artists, based on historical legend.

As one of the exhibition curators, Aldemar Schiffkorn, said: *"we cannot define Central Europe strictly either by political or geographical border. We could do it mainly through history, culture and traditions. The Central European cultural*

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Statue of St. John of Nepomuk

space is where John of Nepomuk is known and revered – in close connection with the Czech lands, Bohemia, Slovakia, Austria and other middle European countries. The new Europe needs not only a successful economy, but also a common cultural and spiritual orientation".

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Jiri Havran © Riksantikvaren

"Trommald" farm in Buskerud County

Only around 3 % of Norway is arable, and only a third of this is good for grain production, so agriculture has always been dependent on the extensive use of the great forest and mountain areas covering most of the country. Restricted agricultural resources have created considerable diversity based on local adaptations to differences in climate and natural conditions. This diversity also covers the built heritage.

Norway's rural landscape is dominated by single farms, historically supplemented by separate mountain dairy farms for grazing, fodder-gathering and production of dairy products during the summer. The country has no villages nor many big estates. Free peasants on their own farms have been a dominant image in our agricultural history, albeit with groups of crofters and cottiers in-between. The ethnic diversity in rural regions is related to the Sámi indigenous population and two national minorities of Finnish descent, in the north and south of Norway.

During the second half of the 19th Century and at the start of the 20th, the Norwegian rural landscape changed dramatically. It was reorganised, with single farms dominating, and was reshaped by new technology. In numerous farm-yards, a large number of small, single-function buildings were replaced by a small number of multi-functional buildings. Luckily, a great number of the old buildings were also kept and preserved.

Timber is the main building material, with peat and stone also used, especially along the coast.

The Norwegian rural landscape and its built heritage

When people in Norway are asked to describe an old farm building, it is usually a log-built house without panel boarding and with a peat roof. This is the "classic" building in the inland valleys of Southern Norway from former times. Later, and in other parts of Norway, panelling was common. Regional differences are often found both in building techniques and visual expression. In the last century, the rural landscape in many parts of Norway was dominated by white dwellings, a red multi-functional economy building and log-built storage buildings from former times.

The most valuable part of Norway's vernacular heritage is the great number of wooden buildings from the Middle Ages which are unique in the world. At present, there are 233 of them but, because the building types and techniques in certain areas have remained stable over many centuries, ongoing work to decide on the age of old buildings still comes up with additional buildings dating back to this period. In addition to the obvious heritage value, the knowledge and skills resulting from the study and management of these buildings has a considerable value-potential for the building and forestry sectors of today.

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Ragnhild Hoel © Riksantikvaren

Kruke farm in Oppland County

Trading house, Southern Transylvania
Gheorghe Patrascu

Vernacular heritage in Romania

Although vernacular architecture in Europe has a number of characteristics that give it a certain unity, the expression of traditions handed down from ancient cultures which have influenced one another over the years, with distinctive traits for each major cultural area, it still features numerous specificities at regional or local levels, especially in areas which have been isolated for religious, cultural or geographic reasons.
In much of Romania, vernacular architecture is the remarkable expression of a deep-rooted culture, particularly manifest in rural areas because of the profoundly rural tradition that characterised Romanian civilisation until the modern era. The golden age of this vernacular architecture in the Carpathians is considered to be from the latter half of the 18th Century to the end of the 19th.

The ancient element has always been present as the expression of a minor culture with timeless characteristics. It is the product of a spontaneous mind-set characteristic of people from a given community, linked to the unconscious workings of the mind or what one might call the "child" inside the adult.

Studying rural culture can be an exciting way of unearthing cultural resources still latent in a community, or a people. Vernacular architecture as a direct expression of a particular culture in material form occupies a central place in this approach. Its rural vernacular architecture reveals the hidden spatial ideals of Romania's communities and contributes to the creation of what Lucian Blaga[1] called a "stylistic matrix" and a "space-time horizon" of its people, while, at the same time, faithfully transmitting the community's original objectives and ideals. Romania's vernacular architecture, particularly its rural architecture, helps to preserve its traditions. In a "propitious" geographic and historical context that protected it from overwhelming outside influences, the country's vernacular architecture has helped to preserve some strong forms of stylistic expression to this day.

The strength and specificity of Romania's rural culture also stem from the nature and soul of the Romanian people. They form a special group within the European continent, even if they are part of South-East Europe, a particularly expressive ethnographic area, they have certain affinities with Central Europe.

Rural vernacular architecture shows the close relationship between Romania's country people and nature. Not many types of architectural expression can compare with Romanian rural vernacular architecture in terms of the originality of its design, with the functional and the aesthetic in forms which, while obeying the general rules of the building art, display surprising variety. The importance of vernacular architecture in Romanian life is expressed rather eloquently by Lucian Blaga in a work on Romanian culture: *"No monumental architectural style has emerged in Romania, but there is no need for it: the spirit of the country's architecture is fully revealed in a simple farmhouse or a church overrun with nettles"*[2].

Gheorghe Patrascu

Wooden door, Maramures, Northern Romania

Ernest Vella

Stone hut with a corral

Rural vernacular architecture in the Maltese landscape

The arid Maltese countryside, devoid of trees, led humans to adapt to it. The vernacular architecture found in the countryside is an indication of this adaptation process.

Fields, terracing and rubble walls
The Northern and Western parts of Malta are in great part karstic hilly regions. Where globigerina is scarce, numerous surface quarries known as *"mġiebel"* can be found. Most of these quarries are shallow and rarely reach more than five metres in depth. From these quarries, coralline limestone used to be extracted to build rubble walls, corbelled huts, apiaries and sometimes farmhouses. Once quarrying was completed, the cavity was filled with stone chippings and covered by a thin layer of soil collected from the surrounding garigue.
Most often, the hill slopes were quarried to create an artificial terraced field. Most of these terraces were enclosed by rubble walls which functioned as territorial markers, protecting fields from adverse sub-aerial elements and from wild animals.

Corbelled huts
Corbelled huts are found mainly in the Northern and Western parts of Malta where globigerina is rare while coralline stone abounds. The shape of the corbelled huts called *"girna"* (sing.), *"giren"* (plu.) is a truncated cone. Corbelled huts

are known traditionally to have served as shelters for farmers' and shepherds' guarding posts, animal folds and storerooms. To date, scholars have not managed to unravel the origins of these structures.

Apiaries

Collecting honey was another important activity in Malta especially in areas deprived of soil. There are three types of apiaries, known as *"mġiebaħ"* (sing.), *"mġiebaħ"* (plu.): (1) hewn in the rock, (2) built with dressed stone and (3) niche-shaped built in rubble walls. The first two have an L-shaped plan with a doorway at the end of the building. The façade was pierced, thus providing a passage for the bees. Beehives were built in earthenware jars called *"qollol"*, which were placed inside the apiary.

Corrals

Corrals, known as *"ċikken"*, consisted of a yard enclosed with a high rubble wall. Here shepherds gathered their flocks of sheep and goats, milked them and collected manure to sell to farmers.

Farmhouses

The old Maltese farmhouse, *"ir-razzett"* (sing.), *"irziezet"* (plu.), offered privacy and shelter. It was an introspective building with few apertures. Stables and barns were built on the ground floor around an open courtyard. The first floor was the area where the farmer's family lived.

Conclusion

Maltese rural architecture, although vernacular, demonstrates the skilful manner in which local people made use of the materials offered by the landscape. Although this type of architecture is gradually dying away, efforts are being made to teach the present and future generations how to conserve this heritage in order to ensure the sustainability of the landscape.

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The rural civilisation brings to mind the relationship between people and nature, a highly topical subject. In today's conditions, where this relationship has become strained, with little prospect of any improvement, we should take note of the lessons to be learnt from our rural civilisation. Its structures, including architecture, have never been in conflict with nature but have respected its rules and looked after it. The years of experience found in rural architecture can still offer us remarkable lessons in the logic of structures, their integration into nature and their functionality and aesthetics.

Today, rural architecture is undergoing a phase of acute change and loss of traditional values, through its physical disappearance, a natural and acceptable phenomenon up to a point, but also through its damage by the uncontrolled introduction of elements from other cultures, or by would-be "creative" architecture (often in doubtful taste).

This distortion of the traditional good taste of the peasant builder is a phenomenon for which the peasants themselves are not to blame.

Some causes are objective, such as the general social development trend in Europe, globalisation or development problems specific to Romania. It is worth remembering that, from 1985-1989, the communist regime introduced an aggressive policy to standardise the villages, with a view to destroying the traditional rural lifestyle. Today, those responsible for this continuing damage to the rural landscape are the politicians and the so-called specialists. They are incapable of understanding the real, deep-rooted value of the experience of vernacular architecture and do not do enough to conserve these worthwhile sites that still exist, or to preserve the traditional values through education.

These remarks do not refer to the exceptional heritage items which are already protected by law, although even here there are many problems with regard to the delimitation of protection zones and the raising of funds for restoration.

Gheorghe Patrascu

Oven and chimney, North-East of Romania

Romania's accession to the European Union is an opportunity to intensify efforts to preserve and make the most of our vernacular architecture, but this also means properly implementing the European Spatial Development Perspective, the Landscape Convention (ESDP), the Guiding Principles of the Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT) and other European legal instruments.

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[1] Lucian Blaga, Romanian poet and philosopher (1895-1962), who deserves to be better known outside Romania
[2] Lucian Blaga – *"The Trilogy of Culture"*, Universal literature Edition, Bucharest, 1969.

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Wooden barn with thatched roof, Northern Romania

Distribution maps of barns in England, pre-1750

New approaches to historic farmsteads in the United Kingdom

Historic farmsteads should be considered and analysed in relationship to their landscapes, as well as past and present social, economic and cultural contexts, for only then will patterns emerge beyond the narrow confines of building studies. We need to paint a picture based on what we know, posing questions for future research. Recent work, co-sponsored by English Heritage and the Countryside Agency, has stressed the need for the historic environment sector to promote more *positive* means of managing change and develop an evidence base that informs best practice, targeting resources and monitoring the effectiveness of current grant schemes and policies. National planning policy now requires local authorities to take a more flexible and positive approach to the sustainable reuse of redundant rural buildings, and place more emphasis on both better quality design and greater use of place-specific guidance and directions, the majority of planning guidance at local level reflects limited knowledge of the nature and character of historic farmsteads, whether on a local scale or in their broader context. The appearance in 2005 of the new Agri-Environment Schemes, which fund farmers for the delivery of environmental benefits (historic as well as natural, including buildings) has further revealed that there is far less information available on a *landscape scale* about farmsteads and their buildings than other aspects of the cultural landscape, such as settlement patterns, field systems and boundary features.

A revised policy on traditional farm buildings, which will highlight these requirements and the role that these buildings will play in the diversification of farm incomes, rural development and the maintenance and enhancement of a high-quality rural environment, was published by English Heritage and the Countryside Agency in 2006. One key recommendation is that solutions must take account of regional and local diversity and circumstances – differences in patterns of settlement, redundancy, dereliction and conversion, and in farmstead and building character – and the implications this has in terms of strategies for re-use. Eight preliminary regional character statements have, in response to this need, drawn together a wide range of available information as a first step in presenting an information base for a broad diversity of users with an interest in researching, understanding and managing historic farmsteads. These place regional developments into a national framework, and extend to summary statements outlining the agricultural development of each of the Joint Character Areas. A pilot project in Hampshire, now being extended into Sussex and the Weald of Kent, has demonstrated that the density and time-depth of farmsteads as well as the rates of survival of different types of steading and building are closely related to patterns of historically-conditioned landscape character and type. This is testing and amending the results of Historic Landscape Characterisation and contributing to a more integrated and richly-textured understanding of both buildings and landscapes, and are enabling us to make positive recommendations and develop toolkits for sustainable reuse based on an understanding of those features or elements that contribute to local distinctiveness and countryside character.[1]

Captions

Distribution map of barns in England, pre-1750 are presented.

The great majority of substantially complete pre-1750 barns has been listed. These maps pose important questions for future research. In the pre-1550 map, the concentrations in a belt around London, the southern Pennines and from the Feldon of Warwickshire into mid Devon conceal a wide range of sizes and types of barn, ranging from large aisled barns to relatively modest barns which have not been replaced in later centuries due to farm size and other factors. Many of the outliers, such as in Cornwall and Durham, represent the building of substantial barns on ecclesiastical estates in the medieval period. In the 1550-1750 period, regional patterns of building and survival emerge more strongly, such as the concentration stretching from the Lancashire Plain to the southern Pennines, and the relative absence of pre-1750 barns in the planned landscapes of eastern and central England most profoundly affected by the agricultural improvements of the post-1750 period.

Barns are generally the largest farm buildings to be found on farms. Barns solely built for storing and processing crops are most common in arable areas, such as this group in the Chilterns in southern England. This example of a field barn on the chalk downs north of Weymouth in Dorset exemplifies the sheep-corn economy that typified this area from the 14th-19th Century. The low building to the right is a rare example of a sheep shelter. Linear farmsteads such as in the Oswestry Uplands on the Welsh border are largely absent from the south and east of the country but were suited to upland areas where small numbers of cattle were housed for long periods over winter and there were obvious advantages in having all on-farm activities housed under one roof. The photograph shows, from the left, a stable, cowhouse, threshing barn and the house.

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17th Century farm, South Downs, England

[1] Lake, J. and Edwards, B. "Farmsteads and Landscape: Towards an Integrated View", *Landscapes*,7.1., 2006, 1-36.

Croatia: An example of the old village of Posavski Bregi

The historic village of Posavski Bregi developed in the wider area of the Sava river valley, along the old road which connects Ivanić-Grad with the closest crossing over the river Sava. Until today, it has been the centre of the parish and a municipal centre. The village existed before the arrival of the Turkish in the 16th Century. At that time, the inhabitants were forced to leave. It was re-inhabited in about 1595, and the new parish established in 1790. The old wooden chapel of St. Cross (1649) was replaced with a parish church in 1815. The plan of the village is almost the same as it was on the map of the first cadastral measurement from 1861, so the scope of this big rural settlement with several smaller branches has not significantly changed. Old timber houses and barns today make up about 40% of the total number of houses in the village.

From the beginning of the settlements, vast areas of oak forests resulted in the almost exclusive use of wood for building materials. In these areas, wood was used continuously in the second half of the 20th Century, from palisades of fortifications, sacred objects to houses and all farm buildings. General stagnation of building in villages is the result of the weakening of agricultural production and depopulation in villages in the second half of the 20th Century. Until recently, there has not even been any new masonry construction in these villages. The timber house, over a long time span, differs in its form and construction. The basic characteristics of the older traditional buildings are corners of untrimmed beam ends, known as Croatian corner/connection. Roofs are covered by a plaint tile, but the oldest cover of rye straw has not been preserved anywhere. Most of the present timber houses emerged in the first half of the 20th Century and the oldest wooden houses date probably from the end of the 18th Century.

Due to a well preserved historical environment, there is a significant tourist potential in the village. The introduction of programmes connected with the traditional way of life, e.g. production of traditional cloth: flax growing and presentation of the traditional flax processing and weaving, have laid a good foundation for the development of cultural and ecological tourism.

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Goran Bekina, Melita Lubina

Old one-storey timber house

Goran Bekina, Melita Lubina

Unused timber house

Goran Bekina, Melita Lubina

Timber walls

Farm and landscape in Germany: reuse of rural buildings

In Germany, the structural system of many rural buildings is a timber framework for roofs and walls. They consist of a timber framework with primary and secondary members. Within the walls, the space between the wooden beams is filled with readily available materials such as wattling and clay, sun dried, or in later years, burnt bricks. Clay or chalk are used as coating and are daubed with natural colours. The complete structure is exposed to the different weather conditions. This paper will show how to conserve and restore ancient framework buildings, retaining their inherent expression and to develop a methodology for the renovation of ancient farm buildings.

Most of Germany's agricultural villages and small towns consist of traditional framework buildings. Conserving these buildings means finding new functions as well as appropriate restoration techniques. We must therefore have a good knowledge of the inherent problems of timber framework and its materials.

Analysis and preliminary design

The essential basis for the successful reconstruction of a historical building, eg a barn, is proper planning as described in the following steps:

- analysis of durability, record of damage and weak construction points;
- survey of construction, creating a site measuring;
- demand of new applications in respect of static, fire protection, insulation and humidity;

Design of details, record for submission and costs.

The survey of building should be done with the usual instruments.

Expensive photogrammetry is only needed for buildings of the highest quality with carving and ornaments.

The reconstruction will remove constructional and hygiene problems, and the quality of living and utilisation for modern purposes will receive warranty. The historical construction principles should be observed while changing the layout. Support and partition walls should be identified. Technical equipment should be modernised and the climate improved as a measure of building physics.

Damage to timber frameworks

Most of the damage to wooden frameworks is caused by moisture pollution through rain, damp and condensation. Unplanked frameworks cannot be made water or rain proof. Through inherent gaps between framing and the walls as well as the wooden joints and cracks in the beams, water can infiltrate. These are the weak points of the framework. Humidifying and dehumidifying are not an option on highly exposed weather sides. Condensation on the inner surface occurs if non-diffusible materials are used. Moisture must dry inside as well as outside. This is because inside vapour stopping layers and air layers are often arranged incorrectly. Shelving wall constructions should be homogeneous. Materials should be able to transport humidity by diffusion or capillarity.

Wood humidity higher than 18% supports the growth of wood destruction fungus. Boletus Destructor favours moist conifer wood. Wet-rot by mildew affects conifer and deciduous wood. Insects also affect wood with a degree of moisture that equals air humidity.

Renovation of wooden constructions

To renovate timber frameworks successfully, the followting is necessary:

- the quality and the humidity of the wood should be appropriate;
- connections of the beams should be ensured; and
- protection of the wood should be carefully carried out.

Quality of wooden constructions

The ratio between material and wages is 1:10 for renovating historical wood-constructions. As the wages are so high, the renovation should be effective and lasting. Oak should be used without sapwood, and conifer only as fully squared wood.

Wooden construction parts affected by insects or fungi should be removed. The replaced construction parts should be protected with boric salt. The causes of moisture need to be completely removed. During construction, short-term exposure to humidity like rain or wet mortar should be avoided. Wood with too much moisture will shrink when drying and all connections will have gaps. So all replacement parts must have balanced humidity (12-24%, seasonable).

Connections of wood in traditional constructions

In order to restore traditional constructions, only dry wood of the same type as the existing construction can be used. Big cracks must be closed with wood only, never using filler for splits.

All wooden clamps should be manufactured in the traditional way as wooden joints. Metal plate fasteners are an additional cause for condensation. Traditional clamps like joints, tenons, scarf, halving and notches should be described and sketches added. Manufacturing these wooden joints is time-consuming, and no machines are available.

Mortises should be opened by drilling. This drainage is also available in the case of deep cracks. Cross grain should be sealed with modern coatings. Surfaces of sills can be sloped to make the water run off. It is not advisable to put tarpaper underneath the sills as this leads to the accumulation of moisture.

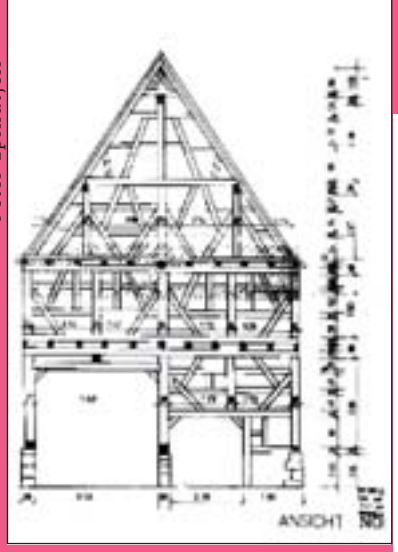
Artifcial wooden protection

The steps within the process of chemical wood protection should be carefully harmonised and products or product groups carefully defined. The quantity and the methods of application should be accurately stated. For timber framework, diffusionable dispersions or coatings in accordance with DIN 68800 are approved. The wood surfaces should be cleaned completely before coating:

- Macerating will lead to environmental problems with solvents. Materials will soak due to the amount of water which is needed after treatment;
- Peeling off is only to be applied on small surfaces as it takes too much time;
- Manual brush off or rubbing is also too time-consuming;
- Machine wire-brushing will grind the surface too much;
- Blasting with abrasion materials like glass-powder will remove old colour layers without damaging the wood surface.

Peter Epinatjeff

18th Century house and barn



Peter Epinatjeff

Survey of 18th Century house and barn

Wall constructions

For the last 400 years, framework buildings have been plastered to imitate stone houses, or to provide better fire protection. So plastered frameworks may also be a historical feature of the building. As a result of earlier renovations, the structure of the framework has been changed through the later addition of windows and doors.

Shelving and insulation

Shelving with clay and stakes are elements of construction which have been technically approved. Gaps or damaged parts should be repaired with clay and light clay (mineral and vegetable light filler materials). While improving the insulation, core condensation and condensation on the inner surface of the wall should be avoided.

Inside insulation

All insulation and shelving materials should be homogenious. Capillary and diffusionary moisture transportation to the inside as well as the outside should be possible. Mineral wool connected with damp insulating layers will interrupt moisture transportation and water will collect. The same effect is air layers inside the wall. Collected water will not dry up from the inside.

Insulation materials containing calciumsilicate have a low damp diffusionresistance ($\mu = 5$).

This material has a good capillarity to conduct condensation. Moisture will dry out in times of decreasing humidity. Calcium silicate is fire proof, resistant against fungus and recycable. The Institut für Bauklimatik (Bine-Info 7/00) has tested different wall materials for the framework in a historic building. Insulation with mineral wood collected too much condensation. This construction is impossible to use without damp insulating layers in winter. Historical straw loam mortar and calcium silicate layers (U-value = 0,7 W/m²K) have a reduced condensation problem due to the capillary transportation of calcium silicate. Shelving with light clay and calcium silicate insulation causes the least condensation problems and provides a better U-value (0,6 W/m²K).

Inside plaster

Loam plaster is useful for loam construction. Chalk plaster is more resistant and should be spread on special layers like rush mat or wire netting. The inner wall construction should be wind-proof to avoid the penetration of rain water.

Outside plaster and coating

Plaster layers should not cover the wood of frameworks. In the resulting splits, water will infiltrate and not dry out. The plaster should be spread without touching the wood. These edges are traps for moisture and will damage wood and plaster. The plaster should be coated level with the wood or, if necessary, pulvinated. Hydraulic mortar should be used, and not cement. The plaster layers should be open for diffusion, but not absorptive. Silicate coating should be used preferably.

Outside planking

Gable frameworks subjected to rain need an umbrella. The stress depends on wind direction, building site and topography. Traditional protection like shingle, slate, tiling, lap jointed sheeting and covered planting provide effective protection against rain. They should be restored in accordance with the traditional model.

Submission and cost calculation

In the past, restoration work was calculated in m³ for material and in running metres for joining and erecting timber work. Using the traditional wood-wood clamps, a more detailed description of manual labour is needed. For historical wood constructions, labour time values were laid down in German and Swiss projects and submissions (Gerner, 2002). High labour costs require precise construction supervision, carefully estimated cost plans should be controlled at short intervals.

Conclusion

Our framework constructions of up to 500 years old can only be conserved in the long term by professional reorganisation and construction measures which correspond to modern applications.

The extensive building inventory cannot be secured by museal conservation.
For the renewal measures, basic knowledge is necessary:

- concerning the building site;
- with regard to regional characteristics;
- concerning specific static, constructive and physical measures, essential for a particular design.

For that purpose, we lack suitable builders and craftsmen. New craft centres in Germany and Italy have again to acquire traditional working techniques and knowledge of the materials. Within the architecture departments of universities, new tasks are starting to be found. In the future, detailed reorganisation and modernisation preparations, cost-conscious planning, rapid conversion of research results and careful management of labour will help to reduce the costs of restoring our heritage of agricultural buildings.

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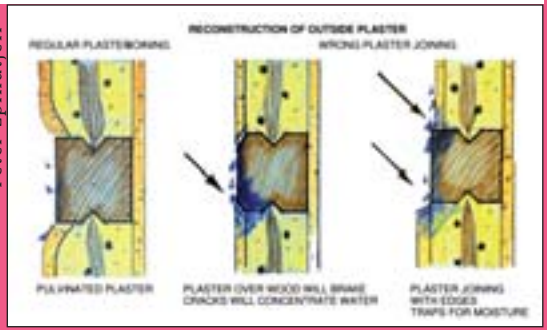

Peter Epinatjeff

Reconstruction of outside façade

Kimzha village, Arkhangelsk region
Marina Kuleshova

Specific features of the vernacular habitat in Russian culture

Vernacular habitat, as a common place for human life and activity, could be associated with the house, settlement and even the locality. The locality where people exercise their specific culture and certain traditions could be presented as the "tamed" or cultural landscape. In a historic perspective, such landscapes represent values of heritage reflecting the world views of various ethnic and social groups. In their system of universal perception, relations and interactions with nature are components of the landscape form and functions. As a result, it is possible to observe both total transformation of the natural system, or on the contrary, reverence for its intactness. Every element of the landscape acquires in this process an appropriate cultural context. "Tamed", meaning that the landscape is always cultural. It is natural that the key feature of such a landscape is a house, where stylistic and constructive peculiarities are adapted to the natural environment. Russia, which is a big country with diverse natural conditions varying from the arctic tundra to the dry steppes, demonstrates such adaptation.

The northern point of European Russia, with its harsh climate, endless forests, huge wetlands, abundant rivers and lakes, has generated traditional wooden architecture later exported to Siberia and then reached the upper streams of its great affluent rivers. These are villages set on the uplands or steep river banks with massive northern houses, where the inner part and household constructions are joined under one roof, to avoid unnecessary exposure to cold and wind in winter. Russian vernacular architecture has always included decorative elements – rich wooden carvings on the architraves and the roof ("towels"; "wings", accolade), sometimes decorations were included on the porch and the staircase. In some regions, there are paintings on the "po Zor" (inner part of the roof hanging over the façade), on the doors, or on the shutters. The public centre of settlement is a church or a chapel. They always have key locations with a dominant topographic position, either on a hill, or in the centre of a natural amphitheatre – at the mouth of the river, etc. Houses are built with sun exposure, topography, wind and the planning situation in mind. These factors sum up the northern Russian village. It is surrounded by fields and meadows, going along roads, emerging in forest clearings and divided by the shrubs and woods. Here, northern peasants spent almost their whole lives – family profits were generated both by agricultural work and other activities. Sea mammal hunting and fishing provided significant additional earnings and the specific Pomor culture was formed. The Pomor people comprise a special stratum of the Russian population, connected to the northern coasts and maintaining seafaring traditions. They left villages hidden in the woods, travelling up the northern rivers for several months, and, on their way to the coast in the fishing and hunting areas, there were huts built thus "marking" the landscape with specific cultural elements.

Marina Kuleshova

Old door lock at Kyshtym, Chelaybinsk region

The vernacular habitats of Southern Russia have quite different rhythms, colours and forms. These are the steppes or borders of the forest and steppe zones, therefore spaces are stretched out, and settlements tend to be hidden in the shadow of gardens. Here crop fields, not woods, are boundless. Forest areas are found near river valleys or in areas not suitable for agricultural use. Field-protection woods and hedgerows are abundant and delimit the arable lands with geometric regularity. Settlements are placed on the slopes of valleys and erosion depressions. Houses are built of wood, stone and clay. Yards have multiple household buildings around them, forming a particular "ensemble" with the main house. The latter is often covered by a clay roof and white plastered. In the yards, additional stoves are erected for cooking outside in the summer. The prevailing colours are white and light blue. Rather wide streets with trees on both sides are common, and regular planning of the villages prevails.

In the south of Russia, they also like to decorate houses – carved architraves, painted shutters, fanciful forgery or the chimneys and rain drains, carving on the roof edges – all these elements are present in the decorations of the houses and public buildings. Churches are traditionally dominant in planning a settlement, surrounded by the square and the public and commercial centre. Historically, the southern borders of Russia changed, and a zone of contacts, not always friendly towards neighbours, was formed. The specific stratum of population – Cossacks – later in the Urals and beyond, extended the defence of their cultural identity and modes of landscape acculturation. In the southern and partially central part of Russia, closed yards with high blind gates, according to the "my house is


Marina Kuleshova

Private wooden house in Kyshtym, Chelaybinsk region

my citadel" principle are still popular, while, in the Russian North, the absence of any fencing is more common.

The central part of Russia also has specific vernacular habitats. The settlements are located preferably on the high, non-flooded banks of rivers and lakes. This is the forest zone of Russia, but spacious areas of ploughed lands and meadows are quite common. The landscape is mosaic-like due to the overlapping and intersection of these types of ecosystems. Both tree plantings and park cultivation are characteristic of this zone. In previous centuries, there were many estates with gardens and parks, some of them with well preserved literary museums. Most Russian poets and writers were born or lived in these estates and were eager to describe them in their works. In the traditional rural settlement, a house is usually made of stone or wood. In contrast to the northern house, it is painted, and, as a rule, household constructions are either dispersed or connected under a light shed. Decorative art carvings of the architraves are the most distinguished elements. The façade of the house is typically decorated by the "palisadnik" – a fenced flowerbed with cultivated and wild plants. Near the villages, woods are characteristic – usually these are birch groves, as Russians domesticate this tree and revere it. In central Russia, low and transparent fences are widespread. They neither limit, nor guard the household space, but symbolically mark it.


Marina Kuleshova

Konyevo village in the Arkhangelsk region

In the 21st Century, a new type of vernacular habitat has emerged, typical for the rather segregated population stratum of "new Russians". Eclectic three-storey cottages with massive blinds and tall fences, the dominance of concrete constructions and asphalt pavements on the estate, narrow, tunnel-like streets between the high fences – these are the main features of this emerging habitat. It tends to invade the neighbourhood of the most attractive localities, in particular with the presence of a vital infrastructure and surrounds the city by a new "cottage" landscape.

The value of traditional vernacular habitats lies in the selection of the most suitable adaptation forms for human cohabitation and economic activity in the natural conditions and social context in certain historical periods. During the intensive civilisation changes or shifts, the adaptation process sometimes failed and to establish a specific optimal form and many elements of the vernacular habitat could be irretrievably lost. In this context, the elaboration of methods and tools for definition, assessment and preservation of such elements is vital. The adaptation of the European rural guide, elaborated by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT) of the Council of Europe[1], recently undertaken by the Russian Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage, could be an important contribution in safeguarding the heritage, its enhancement and preservation.

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[1] www.coe.int/CEMAT

Stella Agostini

Sharecropper's house in Central Italy

Agriculture, land and people's identity in Italy

Stella Agostini

"Sassi", Matera, Italy

Agriculture represents human's oldest ability to modify a site to their own advantage and, traditionally, farming structures provide the elements that characterise the sense of the place. The relationship between farming, people and land shapes the landscape in response to the presence of such local factors as: the climate, availability of building materials and infrastructures on the land, the volume of farming production, the socio-economic system, building traditions, technical knowledge and local crafts.

All these factors converge in the organisation of farm buildings shaping, throughout the world, images of rural landscapes. On different side of the world, every region, however small, has its own recognisable type of farm. Often, looking at it carefully is enough to understand a farming system and it is still well recognisable in Italy, where farmland covers 50% of the territory. Here, agricultural models have historically varied along the north-south axis, giving rise over the centuries to a considerable heritage of widely diversified rural systems.

The high green landscapes of shepherds

In the mountain area, the land is barren and unsuited to cultivation. Traditional activities include sheep-farming, and grasslands dominate, whereas sowing is limited and generally decreases as the level of settlement increases. In order to use as little productive land as possible and for solidarity, given the environmental conditions, rural settlements are generally concentrated in valleys and on sunny mountain sides. The unitary structure of the mountain dwelling is typical, resulting in a rural building and a home under one roof. The dwelling is separated from the work area only in areas of higher socio-economic development. The practice of summer alpine grazing, in which the animals are gradually moved to higher altitudes as the weather grows warmer, gave rise to "mountain pastures" consisting of the grazing lands together with a group of supporting buildings.

When livestock is moved from the valley to the mountains, support buildings are needed due to the great distances to be covered and the difficulties in moving. Usually, they are scattered and include a byre and a barn. In some cases, groups form to help each other during their stay in the mountains. The typical construction in the Alps, which are semi-permanent stations located at different altitudes, can vary according to the resources available, including settlements built of stone or completely made of wood.

As we move towards the Appennines, we find mixed farming in the hilly areas, chestnut woods, meadows and pastures. The farmhouses are scattered or in hamlets (300 ÷ 1000 inhabitants).

The blue landscapes of the plains

In the plains of Northern Italy, the determining factor is water. Its presence means changes in the patterns of cultivation and determines the evolution of the rural settlements in the Po Valley. In the dry plains which include plains and foot-hill areas, the land is best suited to cereals. The farms here are high and gathered together. The settlement is organised around a small courtyard and is almost always a multi-farm, with lots of space for each farmer, wooden balconies and indoor barn.

In the water rich Po valley, south of Milan, the crops cultivated are: forage, rice, cereals, mixed crops as well as animal husbandry. The topography of these lands has been shaped by flooding, with mounds, basins and depressions, created by deposits of pebbles and sand, preserved over centuries to create a landscape of woods and marshes, which the patient labour of farmers has converted into fertile fields. The complex network of irrigation ditches and canals, necessary for this extension of cultivated lands, led to the construction of watermills and "closed courtyard" farmhouses, a typical farmstead form of the Po Valley region. The model is a continuous series of not very high buildings, industrialised, forming a solid perimeter around the farmyard, an open space which was originally used to place the sheaves and for threshing cereals.

In many instances, these farmsteads trace their roots back to the 13th Century structures. Across the plains, the clay-rich soil has made clay bricks and roofing tiles the prevailing material.

This model of farming systems changes in response to socio-economic conditions. Territories which came under Milanese or Venetian influence were characterised by the presence of a few large agricultural estates, whereas, in the area around Mantova and Reggio Emilia, the courts belonged to a nobility of comparatively minor rank whose estates were accordingly smaller.

Moving towards the Veneto plains, the characteristics of rural buildings are not well defined, except for the south Padua area where the typical building is the "casone", with its distinctive low, pointed roof. This simple model of rural settlement was first built in the first half of the 15th Century, when vast marshy areas were reclaimed, this brought about

a need for workers. In order to get the farmhands to stay, a fund was created to help them build their homes.

The town shadow on the sharecropping landscapes

For many years in Central Italy, agriculture and extensive animal husbandry were part of the landed estates. Here family-run farms prevailed and sharecropping was an integral part of the system. It is a system based on polyculture which combines grass crops, tree crops and animal breeding. The village dweller was both the owner of the house and of the land and farmhouses were built along the lines of city dwellings according to the owner's wishes.

The model of a sharecropper's house is known as "italico": a tall farmhouse also used as a dwelling, with a rectangular plan and saddle roof; the living quarters are located either above the outbuilding (outdoor stairway) or separate from it.

The fortified landscapes of the south

South-Central Italy was for many years dominated by landed estates. The system revolved around a rigid hierarchy of several figures: the owner, the administrator, the farmer, the farmhands. The model of this rural settlement (*masseria*) was built so as to be independent and self-sufficient. The structure is similar to the courts in the North. It can be simple or complex depending on how many buildings make it up.

Farm buildings become more and more urbanistic when moving further towards the South.

Often the grouping together of dwellings makes, for historical reasons, large estates, for defence, absence of drinking water in the countryside and long distances to markets, etc. Because of this, the *masseria* takes on a complex form, it can be a castle or fortified. The shapes of the farm buildings are characterised by the materials found in the area, in particular, tufa (volcanic stone) and the climate.

A particular form of rural settlement strictly connected to the local resources can be found in the area of Matera in Basilicata, including the "Sassi". They are dwellings carved out of the rock on the mountain side, making up a complex form of settlement giving rise to rupestral churches, water tanks along pastures, and fortified *masserie*. During the 19th and the 20th Centuries, the Sassi were mostly settled by poor people living in poor conditions.

The monochromatic landscapes of mobility

After a long period of decay, the Sassi have been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and have been rehabilitated as a tourist and cultural centre. However, the main farm model remains the same. While they remain, they will continue to reflect the considerable regional differences in types of farming and in housing methods and crop threshing or livestock feeding. But this heritage of buildings and construction techniques risks being lost today. This is a result of the considerable changes in farming methods since the Second World War, with greatly increased mechanisation and automation as well as because of the changing of the socio-economic conditions.

Farming and cultural landscapes are the result of people's work and of agricultural policies. In the last 50 years in Italy, the number of farmers and related labour has decreased from 72 million and depopulation has concerned both marginal areas and those more easily mechanised. The production system, once based on a complex rotation system – even seven-year rotations – which meant that 80 % of the surface was always green, is now based on monoculture which leaves fields uncovered for more than seven months. By opting for monoculture or a simplified two-year rotation, cow sheds and barns have become useless and have made old farm buildings and dwellings for dozens of people of no use at all. In Italy, there are more than 1.5 million totally abandoned farm buildings, in a trend of decay that extends beyond the Italian and European borders.

The countryside of Europe covers 85 % of the continent and the great diversity of rural landscapes is recognised as the basic value of this heritage, wherever the actual pattern of new farm buildings shows a direct link to industrial models.

While, in the past, the use of materials and labour was strictly local and bound to tradition, nowadays the use of new technologies and building techniques has introduced elements and styles that are totally foreign to the local environment. In the courtyards today, the farm buildings – stables, storage barns, outbuildings for lodgings and equipment – have been substituted by prefabricated structures in reinforced concrete totally unrelated to their function and the environment. Often the former manorial residences have also been abandoned by pretentious new villas imported from an urban context that seems out of place and dissonant in the countryside. New buildings are the result of international frontier-free architecture, introduced by industrialisation, which tends to ignore local value.

Accession countries and world markets in agriculture and food products, threaten a globalisation of people's identity, erasing their cultural heritage and the separate identities of each country and its people. This would considerably affect the cultural diversity of the world. Undoubtedly, rural buildings are a direct testimony to human activity in a certain place and, if they are left to decay, part of our past will be lost forever.

Sustainable heritage

The links between cultivated fields and farm buildings are important markers of local distinctiveness and hence contributors to the sense of identity of the local communities. Their transformation and the rapid evolution of agricultural techniques are a challenge to the world and to Europe.

The solution for the anonymous sites of globalisation does not concern the reconstruction of historical scenery incompatible with modern production. Sustainability in agriculture is correlated to the chance of development. Here sustainable means any form of care for local identity of farming within a frame of respect for the future of agriculture

Stella Agostini

Plains of Northern Italy

and makes a positive contribution to the development of the quality of life and work of farmers, compatible with current social trends.
Thus sustainable safeguards need first of all to recognise the links between farming, people and the land which form the identity of the place. They are the basis of "rural vernacular heritage". Until now, the attention of the international community has focused on "vernacular heritage" as a manner of building shared by the community in order to respond to functional, social and environmental constraints (Charter on the built vernacular heritage, October 1999). Adding "rural" to this definition means enriching this concept with the effects of farming in building a sense of place. The landscape, the environment, the land and the people are part of one and the same unit. To look at rural vernacular heritage means to look at this unit, understanding the main relationships assessing all aspects of authenticity of farming sites and settlements and evaluating the forms in which their integrity can be maintained. It means also developing specific guidelines and land policies, in order to promote the development of a new rural vernacular heritage, able to maintain the *genius loci* in the future development of rural areas. These are the aims of the "rural vernacular research" managed by the Institute of Agricultural Engineering of the University of Milan within the network of Forum UNESCO University and Heritage. This is an opportunity that should not be missed if the issue is to be tackled, in view of the ratification of the European Landscape Convention which underlines the high level of people's awareness.

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European Island Farm Landscapes Network Transnational Co-operation Project

Islands have largely been forgotten in European regional landscape policy, yet their impact on the rural communities, on the environment and biodiversity is profound. The European Island Farm Landscapes Network was established in 2005 as a partnership of islands working together to highlight shared concerns, looking at the impacts of EU agricultural investments on island biodiversity and landscapes. Prime activities include promoting island landscape features such as vernacular farm building architecture and of the rural built structures in the landscape including traditional and often unique stone and turf walls, livestock pens or shelters, and historic and archaeological remains. Farm recreation and farm accommodation tend to promote an important income for farm business and are invaluable in promoting the link with landscapes and wildlife such as by the restoration or conversion of redundant farm buildings. Tourism plays a key economic role in the majority of the island network and may be invaluable for safeguarding vernacular farm buildings into the future.

The project is coordinated by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, and is co-funded by Leader which is one of four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region.

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Vernacular European influences in Argentina

From the influences of the colonial period to the contributions of the massive migratory processes of the republican period, the European vernacular influence has been present in several historical periods. At any of these moments, European contributions were added to the local traditions generating new expressions.

The Spanish colonial process in America lasted from the end of the 15th Century until the beginning of the 19th. Beyond the acculturation process that the indigenous communities suffered, many of the Hispanic vernacular traditions, with their Arab component, were added to the local experiences. Most of the colonial architecture shows this adaptation process of the European traditions to those of a different territory. The action of the missionaries working in America was also important. Many of them brought architectural knowledge from their places of origin and they applied them in the construction of churches and houses in the new towns that were founded.

Between 1870 and 1920, the Argentinean government tried to give a European image to the country, seeking to forget the local traditions. As part of this process, massive European immigration was encouraged. Before 1910, more than two million immigrants entered the country, most of them from Italy and Spain, but also from other European countries. They brought, with their illusions of a new life, the culture of their home land, their language and their architecture. Maintaining these traditions was synonymous with maintenaining the values of their place of origin. Many of these communities of immigrants preserved their values, while others mixed them with local contributions generating new specificities.

Many of the groups of immigrants tried to maintain the productive structures of their places of origin; in some cases helped by the similarity of the new lands. They also contributed to the architecture related to their productive world. Some groups from Central Europe reproduced their construction customs in wood, thus creating new vernacular traditions. Many of the new residents chose the urban world, where they contributed with their traditions and their values to developing new languages in the popular architecture incorporating the new industrial materials that also arrived in the harbours.

Jorge Tomasi

House in La Boca, Buenos Aires

From all of these interactions, new vernacular traditions emerged. The European influences united with the local values and generated new original answers to the needs that arose.

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Valdir Zwetsch

Testimony Italian migration, Campinas, Brazil

Rural landscape in Southeast Brazil: the example of the Campinas Metropolitan Region

Valdir Zwetsch

Old train running nowadays for tourists, Carlos Gomes museum, Brazil

The metropolitan region of Campinas, is today one of the most important on the national scene because of its insertion in the current economic dynamics. It is composed of 19 cities, with 2.3 million inhabitants, responsible for about 10% of the total gross product of São Paulo State. Interconnected with the metropolis of São Paulo and other developed southeastern areas of the country through its complex motorway system, it is an extremely industrialised region. The strategic localisation of the region in the state urban net differentiates from other areas of São Paulo State, both because of the diversity of its industrial park and the intense agro-industrial activity – specially sugar, alcohol and citrus production – of its surroundings. Campinas, with its one million inhabitants, is the main city of the metropolitan region surrounded by Satellite cities.

It is within this municipality that one can find the remains of an important rural heritage, nowadays protected by the "Environmental Protected Area" state law. Located in the northeast quadrant of Campinas City, this area is composed of two small districts: Souzas and Joaquim Egídio[1].

This important route was used for going into the interior of Brazil by the *bandeirantes* in the 18th Century, this region was initially occupied by large sugar cane farms that were later transformed into coffee. With the arrival of the railways in the 19th Century for agricultural production, two railway branches were built. There is now only one – which cuts through the Environment Protected Area in the northwestern direction – in operation for tourist purposes. From the point of view of the historical process of territorial occupation, we can distinguish the strong presence of Italian migration during the golden coffee period, which can be noted in the religious and social traditions still present today. The colonial past of this region can be identified by its innumerable farmhouses which are still well preserved. They compose a unique rural architectural heritage[2] and are thus a testimony to the agricultural production that projected Campinas on to the national scene.

Beyond this rural architectural heritage of old farmhouses and railway stations, bridges and tracks, we can highlight the urban nucleus of the districts of Souzas and Joaquim Egídio which, despite the widening of the urban boundary and the raising of innumerable land divisions for high income condominiums since the 1970s, has kept, in its original nucleus, 19th Century constructions, some restored and placed under governmental responsibility.

It is necessary to remind ourselves of the significance of this Environment Protected Area, considering the rich drainage area that is essential for the metropolitan region water supply, and the still remaining vegetation covering due to the characteristics of rural land uses. In the context of development and urbanisation of the Campinas metropolis where the original *Atlantic Forest* was almost totally devastated, the importance of this region should be noted[3]. All the aspects of this Environment Protected Area are representative of the natural, historic and cultural heritage and necessary to maintain good standards of life in the metropolitan region of Campinas.

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[1] The Enviromental Protected Area corresponds to 27% of the total area of Campinas Municipality, totaling 223 km² where its 29,000 inhabitants are distributed in both districts.
[2] The first documentation on the farmhouses of Campinas' colonial period was produced by Professor Area Pereira da Silva in 1996. The most significant part can be found in the Environmental Protected Area of Souzas and Joaquim Egídio.
[3] Of 2.5% of the original vegetation that still remains in the city of Campinas, 60% can be found in this Environmental Protected Area.

Valdir Zwetsch

Colonial farmhouses of Souzas and Joaquim Egidio, Campinas, Brazil

National Institute of Culture, Peru

Contumaza street

National Institute of Culture, Peru

An example of vernacular architecture in Peru: European architecture of Lima in the 19th and 20th Centuries

The transformation of Lima started in the 19th Century as a result of the two Europeans revolutions: "the industrial and the scientific" which completely changed the way of life (modus vivendi).

The restoration of the city included the following public works: installation of public electric lighting, streetcars, construction of new avenues made with concrete and asphalt, installation of domestic drinking water and a drainage system. The use of "fine materials" *("materiales nobles")* like cement, reinforced concrete, wrought iron in new public and private buildings. Also, they created new institutions that invested in the modernisation of the city.

The middle class housing construction continued using traditional materials like stones for the foundations, bricks for the upper foundations, mud bricks and wattle and daub *(walls made with cane and mud),* crushed cane, wood and plaster on the façades for decoration; also plaster was used on the internal and external walls. Only prefabricated iron imported from Europe particularly from France was used on balconies, banisters, door railings and windows. That is the case of the houses built on the Contumazá, Lino Cornejo and Pachitea streets; they belong to the "Urban monumental environment" of "Historic Downtown Lima".

These apartment buildings of two and three floors have decorated façades. On the first floor, ledge walls dominate, on the second floor, there are columns, pilasters, sculptures, molds (flowers and caryatids), balconies, pilasters, entablature, the surmountings have cornices or pediment. The buildings' interiors were entirely transformed. They introduced halls instead of hallways, they replaced courtyards for halls with skylights.

The styles that we can identify are: Art Nouveau (1910–1915); the Italian floral style (1916–1919); the new colonial style, was the only style imposed by law in 1920 to all buildings. Some elements of the Italian palace style *("palazzo italiano")* influenced the facades (1924–1928).

European architecture influenced local architecture and, as a result, "vernacular architecture" appeared and is at present being studied by the National Institute of Culture.

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Lima, 1925

Adrian V. Lizares

Façade of Balai ni Tana Dicang, Philippines 18th Century

Arquitectura Mestiza in the Spanish Colonial Philippines

The arrival of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi's expedition in 1571, brought about the rise of Spanish Manila on the banks of the River Pasig. Fortifications, churches and dwellings were built in the style typical of the Pacific-Southeast Asian region: houses-on-stilts built entirely of wood, bamboo, and thatch, the most abundant materials in the region. The native constructions' predisposition to fire however, prompted them, under orders from King Philip II in 1573, to re-design the structures by using fire-retardant materials and changing the norm of construction altogether. In the mid-1580s, through the discovery of volcanic tuff deposits, known locally as *adobe*, in San Pedro de Makati north of the city, a Jesuit priest-engineer, Fr. Antonio Sedeno, trained Filipino master builders or *maestros de obras* in quarrying and dressing stone. Thus, along with the efforts of the first bishop of Manila, Domingo Salazar, they commenced the building of what was once regarded as "the Europe of Asia" in the walled city of Intramuros, the heart of Manila.

Manila was laid out in typical new-world-colonial fashion: streets on a gridiron pattern, with a grand central square or *plaza mayor*, dominated by the cathedral and its attached rectory or *convento*, surrounded by the governor general's palace, the tribunal and city council, and other institutional and civic structures of importance. Moreover, the structures were built following a new method of architecture which permeated even the local dwellings of those who had become wealthy and received higher education in Europe known as the *ilustrados* or the enlightened ones.

A new style of architecture was created, described as *arquitectura mestiza* or mixed architecture because the structures were built in stone and wood. It was likewise referred to by locals as *bahay ng kastila* (Castilian house) or *bahay na bato at kahoy* (house of stone and wood). Similarities to vernacular Northern Iberian architecture can be noted with the pragmatism of its basic design. Like the Basque *caserio* or the *pazo* of Galicia, it is identified with a ground floor of stone and an upper floor of timber. The ground floor was used not for human habitation but for storage and/or livestock, with the second floor as the home's main living quarters. In comparison, the spaces in the lowly Filipino *bahay kubo* or cube-house of bamboo and thatch had the same use. What makes the *bahay na bato at kahoy* remarkable is that the core form of the house remained exactly the same as its predecessor: a house-on-stilts, but this time the wooden stilted skeletal structure was surrounded by a stone skirt on the ground floor and a wooden skin on the upper floor.

Arquitectura mestiza was most influenced by Europe becoming the showcase of European-style living from the 17th-to the early 20th Century, spreading not only in Manila but throughout all the islands as well. The ground floor, *zaguan*, was paved with Chinese granite, *piedra china* or patterned floor tiles, *baldosas*, surrounded by volcanic tuff, *adobe*, or fired clay brick, *ladrillo*, walls of at least a metre thick bound together by mortar, *argamasa*, of powdered lime and water with crushed shells, corals, even molasses and egg whites – ingredients they believed made the structure more sturdy and enduring. The columns, *haligue*, disengaged and independent of the walls were made of solid hardwood indigenous to the islands. The ground floor walls were punctuated by large arched windows and doors often laced with decorative grille work, *plateria*, and shielded by wooden latticed windows glazed with the translucent window-pane oyster shell, *capiz*, instead of the more expensive imported Venetian glass.

The second floor and main residence, reached by an elegantly carved wooden staircase, *escalera*, was a more sophisticated space where the trappings of European life were displayed. The wooden skin of this upper storey, in decorated bas-relief, had 90% of its wall space open ensuring its function as ventilation in the hot and humid tropical climate. Its enclosure, composed of central sliding wooden lattice windows, *ventanas*, glazed with *capiz*, in tandem with operable louvered *persianas* (for keeping the sun but not the breezes out), included *ventanillas* with *barandillas* or balustraded windows below and *callados* or traceried fretwork above, all bringing the maximum passage of air into the home. The entire structure was roofed with *tejas*, fired terra-cotta roof tiles in the Spanish mould. All these details kept the inhabitants comfortable all year-round.

There was a conscious effort to impose European techniques in the creation of this type of Philippine architecture. However, it resulted in an East-West fusion of styles due to the native culture, its other foreign influences, and the tropical climate thus resulting in a truly Philippine architecture found nowhere else in the world.

Sadly, there are very few ancestral homes that still exist in Manila that are well maintained.

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Sala of Balai ni Tana Dicang (Clan Lizares)

UNESCO – Rural vernacular architecture: an underrated and vulnerable heritage

By definition, the rural vernacular heritage is a humble and everyday heritage, and this may be why it features so little on the World Heritage List. There is not much of the spectacular or monumental about it, and the top names of world architecture played no part in it, for it was the work of ordinary unknowns. Yet the simplicity of the materials used to build the rural vernacular heritage, and its structures and functions should not blind us to the ingenuity of those who invented the systems and procedures that enabled climate, topography and financial constraints to be taken into account. And the achievements of many contemporary architects cannot rival the way in which it is integrated into the landscape.

What is more, this living heritage is as fragile as it is vulnerable. In both Europe and North America, an irreversible change occurred following the Industrial Revolution and the drift away from the land. This process is continuing apace, as these assets are being bought up by well-off city-dwellers trying to get back to nature.

Taking on a new function, the landscape undergoes far-reaching changes as the close, deep-rooted bond between agriculture and the buildings put up for it fades. A gradual process of gentrification of farmhouses, barns and even whole villages as a result of this influx from towns and cities brings about far-reaching structural changes and adversely affects the physical and functional integrity of these assets. Modern materials are used, as are processes unrelated to old-established practices. Glass wool is used instead of cob, and breeze blocks take the place of dry stone. This is as much due to the disappearance of traditional skills as to the sometimes prohibitive cost of traditional building techniques.

In spite of itself, this heritage sometimes, under pressure from the cities, becomes an urban heritage, the very existence of which is under threat because of its inappropriateness to present-day lifestyles or its use in a new context alien to its former one.

This heritage, highlighted in 1994 by the Global Strategy, and which ICOMOS identified subsequently as one of those left off the World Heritage List[1], is now in danger. It is important for it to be inventoried, documented and explored so as to ascertain its characteristics, its value and how to preserve it. There is also a need for conservation techniques and practices to be developed which respect its integrity.

Heritage conservation is a selective process highly revealing of the priorities of the governments and communities where the memory of the past is concerned. The countries of Europe thus need to react to prevent the memory of the rural past from being irrevocably lost. Especially because some sites could be deemed to be of exceptional universal value if they fall into a cultural landscape category and meet one of the criteria for the World Heritage List, such as criterion number v. in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention[2]. Such a loss would be one for humankind as a whole. The features of Europe's rural vernacular heritage proliferated as various migratory movements took place towards emerging countries such as China, India and Brazil. Many assets in these countries bear witness to the skills that the immigrants brought with them and made use of in their relations with their new environment. The countries concerned, which have always been predominantly rural, have started to experience the same industrialisation process and rural depopulation on a huge scale. There is therefore a great – and decisive – need for Europe to safeguard its rural vernacular heritage.

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[1] *The World Heritage List: Filling the Gaps – an Action Plan for the Future*, Paris, ICOMOS, 2005
[2] Criterion v. *"to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change"*.

Marielle Richon

Farm along Hadrian's Wall, United Kingdom

Council of Europe – A comparative reading of the Granada and Florence Conventions: an alliance between architectural heritage and landscape

Under the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 3 October 1985), the expression "*architectural heritage*" is considered to include the following permanent properties: monuments (all buildings and structures of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest, including their fixtures and fittings); groups of buildings (homogeneous groups of urban or rural buildings conspicuous for their historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest which are sufficiently coherent to form topographically definable units); and sites (the combined works of people and nature, areas which are partially built upon and sufficiently distinctive and homogeneous to be topographically definable and are of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest). According to the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 20 October 2000), "*landscape*" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

Should we not consider vernacular housing, which is all too often ignored or mistreated, in the light of these two international treaties? Surely, the unique beauty of housing and the surrounding landscape often stem from the harmonious combination of the buildings and their location.

So it is worth drawing attention to the basic principles laid down in these two treaties:

– the architectural heritage constitutes an irreplaceable expression of the richness and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage;

– landscape contributes to the formation of local cultures and is a basic component of Europe's natural and cultural heritage;

– the architectural heritage is a "common heritage" of all Europeans;

– landscape contributes to "consolidation of the European identity";

– the quality and diversity of European landscapes constitute a "common resource";

– the architectural heritage bears inestimable witness to our past, and it is important to hand a system of cultural references down to future generations;

– infringements of the law protecting the architectural heritage must be met with a relevant and adequate response by the competent authority;

– landscape and its protection, management and planning entail "rights and responsibilities for everyone";

– it is important to reach agreement on the main thrust of a common policy for the "conservation" and "enhancement" of the architectural heritage;

– we need to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment.

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ICOMOS – A Charter for Vernacular Architecture

Researcher John B. Jackson opts for a pragmatic approach to vernacular architecture as he defines this concept in the following terms: "*the vernacular is whatever the average home builder accomplishes daily*" [1]. The authors of the Charter on the built vernacular heritage share this sense of practicality. For instance, in this Charter, which was officially adopted by ICOMOS at its 12th General Assembly (Mexico, 1999), examples of what constitutes vernacular architecture are provided instead of a definition[2]. According to this document, the vernacular may be recognised by a manner of building shared by the community, by a recognisable local or regional character sensitive to the environment, by coherence of style, form and appearance, or by the use of traditionally established building types, by traditional expertise in design and construction which is transmitted informally, by an effective response to functional, social and environmental constraints, or by the effective application of traditional construction systems and crafts.

A large measure of pragmatism can also be found in the principles and guidelines of the Charter on built heritage, as they do not try to enforce a rigid doctrine of conservation principles that would only result in the loss of this type of heritage in the long run. The Charter's principles are based on the involvement and support of vernacular communities and make an appeal for their continuing use and maintenance. In a sense, these principles are in line with Kingston W. Heath's concept of "*cultural weathering*", as they allow dwellers to shape and change their built environment according to their needs[3]. Instead of being prescriptive, the principles of conservation of the Charter can be liberally used in order to maintain living communities. Changes to vernacular buildings are acceptable if they respect the cultural values and the traditional character of the communities. The Charter further states that the built vernacular heritage is an integral part of the cultural landscape and that this relationship should be taken into consideration in the development of conservation approaches. It implicitly recognises that rigid conservation measures applied to a cultural landscape can result either in destroying this landscape, as it would no longer be economically viable, or in transforming it into a museum. The Charter is aimed at maintaining and preserving groups and settlements of a representative character, region by region. This is why it recommends that interventions to vernacular structures should be carried out in a manner that will respect and maintain the integrity of the situation, the relationship to the physical and cultural landscape, and of one structure to another. But more importantly, the Charter acknowledges the importance of maintaining traditional know-how as the vernacular expression is mostly founded in the continuity of traditional building systems and of traditional skills. The Charter recommends that these skills be retained, recorded and passed on to new generations of people and builders through education and training.

The authors of the Charter on vernacular architecture never intended to draft a doctrinal statement. Their pragmatic approach is based on the fact that it would be impossible to use rigid conservation standards in preserving the basic character of an evolving cultural landscape because, as Professor Pierre Larochelle has noted, living communities are constantly making changes to their built environment[4]. In fact, the Charter asks conservation professionals dealing with vernacular architecture to understand the formation and the transformation processes of a cultural landscape before making any intervention. This level of attention should be applied when dealing with vernacular settlements and buildings as well[5].

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[1] John B. Jackson, "The Domestication of the Garage," *Landscape* 20,2 (1976), p. 19.
[2] The Charter is available on line at the following site: http://www.international.icomos.org/chartes.htm
[3] Kingston Wm. Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Landscape,* University of Tennessee Press, 2001.
[4] Pierre Larochelle, "Le paysage humanisé comme bien culturel", *Continuité* (Quebec, Canada), No. 110, Fall 2006, pp. 20-22.
[5] The author wishes to thank Ms Rhona Goodspeed from Canada, Ms Kirsti Kovanen from Finland, and Ms Monique Trépanier from Canada, for their cooperation.

Village of Dagnjia, China

Houses in the Dominican Republic

Orleans Island, Quebec, Canada

Coptic Village near Luxor, Egypt

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Next issue: ***Landscape and transfrontier cooperation***

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