

HERITAGE 2022 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE VERNACULAR HERITAGE: CULTURE, PEOPLE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Eds. C. Mileto, F. Vegas, V. Cristini, L. García-Soriano



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Preface

C.Mileto, F. Vegas, V. Cristini, L. García-Soriano

Research Centre for Architecture, Heritage and Management for Sustainable Development (PEGASO),
Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, Spain

“HERITAGE2022, International Conference on Vernacular Heritage: Culture, People and Sustainability” is organized in the framework of the “VerSus+ | Heritage for PEOPLE” project, co-funded by the Creative Europe Program of the European Union (grant 607593-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP1) and led by Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain) in partnership with Università degli Studi di Firenze and Università degli Studi di Cagliari (Italy), CRATERre – ENSAG (France) and Universidade Portucalense - Departamento de Arquitetura e Multimédia Gallaecia (Portugal). The “VerSus+ | Heritage for PEOPLE” project focuses on the transmission of knowledge to communities and the general public. It pays special attention to the society of the future (children and young people), as well as local, regional and national authorities in charge of heritage management, and includes specialists and experts in the field of architecture (architects, engineers, cultural managers, historians, ethnographers, university students, etc.) together with craftsmen and companies in the construction and tourism sectors, cultural and social associations, and educational institutions.

Vernacular heritage is a tangible and intangible heritage of great importance to European and global culture. This architecture, born from the practical experience of local inhabitants, makes use of local materials to erect buildings taking into consideration the climate and geography, developing cultural, social and constructive traditions based on the conditions of the surrounding nature and habitat. Above all, it plays an essential role in contemporary society as it is able to teach us important principles and lessons for a respectful sustainable architecture. These lessons from vernacular heritage for contemporary architecture have been extensively studied in the “VerSus: Lessons from Vernacular Heritage in Sustainable Architecture (grant 2012-2792/001-001 CU7 COOP7)” project, co-funded by the European Union between 2012 and 2014, and the “VerSus+ | Heritage for PEOPLE” (2019-2023) project, which follows on from the previous project, focusing on the transmission of this knowledge to society, as seen earlier. The wisdom of vernacular architecture in the field of environmental, sociocultural and socioeconomic sustainability is increasing both in interest and significance in the world today. Climate change, depopulation and the pressure of tourism all pose major challenges, as do the increasingly rapid social changes and loss of traditional trades resulting from the industrialization of the construction process. These challenges alert us to the pressing and growing need for education and increased awareness in society and for the documentation and conservation of architecture within a framework of up-to-date integration into contemporary life, managing territory and heritage assets for the sustainable development of society in the future.

The second project involved in this conference is “RISK-Terra. Earthen architecture in the Iberian Peninsula: study of natural, social and anthropic risks and strategies to improve resilience” (RTI2018-095302-B-I00) (2019-2022), funded by MCIU (Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades), AEI (Agencia Estatal de Investigación), FEDER - UE (Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional, Unión Europea). This project is geared towards the conservation of earthen architecture in the Iberian Peninsula, both monumental and vernacular, which continues to be undervalued and barely recognized. The RISK-Terra project aims to provide scientific coverage of the study of natural threats (floods, earthquakes, climate change), social threats (abandonment, social discredit, demographic pressure, tourist development), and anthropic threats (neglect, lack of protection and maintenance), as well as the mechanisms for deterioration

and dynamics and transformation (replacement, use of incompatible techniques and materials, etc.) to which architecture is exposed. The objective of the project is to establish strategies for conservation, intervention and rehabilitation which allow the prevention and mitigation of possible damage through compatible actions and/or actions to increase resilience.

As these two projects have major points of contact, particularly in relation to the challenges mentioned above, with potential for common reflection, their main themes have been combined in this Heritage2022 conference. The topics established for the conference are: 1. vernacular architecture: matter, culture and sustainability (study and cataloging of vernacular architecture; urban studies of vernacular architecture; studies of traditional techniques and materials; sustainability of vernacular architecture); 2. heritage education (research in heritage education; heritage education and social inclusion; heritage communities; creativity and heritage education); 3. artisans and crafts of traditional construction (intangible heritage: the management of know-how and local construction culture; training in traditional construction crafts; tradition and innovation in traditional construction crafts; plans and experiences for the recovery and maintenance of construction crafts); 4. conservation, restoration and enhancement of vernacular architecture (conservation and restoration projects of vernacular architecture; materials and intervention techniques for vernacular architecture; difficulties and possibilities of using traditional crafts in conservation; management and maintenance of vernacular architecture).

The scientific committee was made up of 102 outstanding researchers from 24 countries from the five continents, specialists in the subjects proposed. All the contributions to the conference, both the abstracts and the final texts, were subjected to a strict peer-review evaluation system by the members of the scientific committee. Out of the 200 proposals submitted, 134 papers by 254 authors from 25 countries from the four continents were chosen for publication. All the articles have been published in print and online in the two-volume book “Vernacular Heritage: Culture, People and Sustainability”.

“HERITAGE2022 (Versus+ | RISK-Terra), International Conference on Vernacular Heritage: Culture, People and Sustainability” was held from 15 to 17 September 2022 in in-person and online modality at the Universitat Politècnica de València. The conference was under the aegis of: ICOMOS-CIAV (International Scientific Committee of Vernacular Architecture); ICOMOS-ICICH (International Scientific Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage); IEB (Instituto Español de la Baubiologie). The organization, publication and implementation of the conference have been made possible thanks to co-funding of the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union for the project “VerSus+ | Heritage for PEOPLE” (grant 607593-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP1); and the MCIU, AEI and FEDER - UE for the research project “Risk-Terra. Earthen architecture in the Iberian Peninsula: study of natural, social and anthropic risks and strategies to improve resilience” (ref.: RTI2018-095302-B-I00). Furthermore, Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura and PEGASO - Research Centre for Architecture, Heritage and Management for Sustainable Development of Universitat Politècnica de València have also contributed to the whole project.

Finally, we would like to thank all the authors who contributed to the quality, range, diversity and richness of these publications with their articles. We give special thanks to all the partners of the European project “VerSus+ | Heritage for PEOPLE” and the national research project “Risk-Terra” for participating in the conference and helping to spreading the word about it worldwide. We are grateful for the aid of all the members of the advisory committee and the scientific committee for their work throughout the process of revising the abstracts and papers. And, above all, we thank the organizing committee for the complex setting up of the whole conference, the style and language reviewers for their corrections, and all the collaborators for their invaluable work in the management and organization of all stages of the process.

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Table of contents

Preface.....	I
Organization and Committees	IV
Conference Support.....	VIII

PLENARY LECTURES

A Vision for CIAV. Addressing the challenges facing the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Vernacular Architecture	3
<i>H. Mahdy</i>	
The National Plan for Traditional Architecture as a safeguarding tool. Action programmes and projects	11
<i>M. P. Timón Tiemblo, E. Agromayor Navarrete</i>	

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE: MATTER, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

STUDY AND CATALOGING OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

The standardisation of vernacular architecture. Wine buildings in Andalusia	23
<i>J. Aladro-Prieto, F. J. Ostos-Prieto, M. Murillo-Romero</i>	
Vernacular architecture in Brazilian semiarid region: survey and memory in the state of Sergipe	31
<i>D. Felix Andrade, M. A. Penido de Rezende, S. Araújo Lima Bessa</i>	
Knowledge and conservation of Mediterranean spontaneous architecture: some of the villages of the northern Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria	39
<i>B. Canonaco, F. Bilotta</i>	
Architectural and constructive characteristics of vernacular settlements in southern Italy: the Esaro's valley and the popular identity of some exemplary cases.....	47
<i>B. Canonaco, F. Castiglione</i>	
Spanish traditional architecture abandonment and destruction: an initial analysis of social risks, phenomena, and effects in earthen architecture.....	55
<i>M. Caruso, C. Mileto, F. Vegas, V. Cristini</i>	
A taxonomy of vernacular heritage in the mid-Adriatic: Landscape relations and architectural characteristics of the farmhouses in Tronto Valley (Italy).....	63
<i>S. Cipolletti</i>	
Traditional houses in the South-Western Iberian Peninsula: Themes for a cross-border comparative typological study	71
<i>A. Costa Rosado, V. Gómez Martínez, M. Reimão Costa, M. T. Pérez Cano</i>	

The Hameau de la Reine at Versailles and the reproduction of vernacular architecture.....	79
<i>D. Crispino</i>	
Vernacular architecture of the Amalfi coast: a medieval domus in Villa Rufolo in Ravello (Italy)	87
<i>E. De Feo</i>	
Architectural survey, realized with integrated methodology, of the complex of Walser houses in Alagna Valsesia, Italy	95
<i>A. Di Paola, S. Vecchio, G. Frosini, B. Verona, S. Garuglieri</i>	
Modern attitudes towards vernacular architecture. Works by the Italians Luigi Angelini, Alberto Alpago Novello, Ottavio Cabiati, Alessandro Minali	103
<i>M. M. Grisoni</i>	
Wind and the villages in Rincón de Ademuz, Spain	111
<i>W. Ji, C. Mileto, F. Vegas</i>	
Vernacular features in eclectic architecture from the tropics. An analysis by means of architectural survey	119
<i>M. Leserri, G. Rossi, M. Chaverra Suarez, S. Gómez Mejía</i>	
Configuring, building and inhabiting the house from a gender perspective	125
<i>M. Lidón de Miguel, C. Mileto, F. Vegas, A. Hueto-Escobar</i>	
Rediscovering tradition through representation: the vaulted house of the Amalfi Coast.....	133
<i>B. Messina, S. Morena, C. Ferreyra</i>	
Traditional dwellings and techniques of the First Indigenous Peoples of South Africa in the Eastern Cape.....	141
<i>M. Minguzzi, Y. Hernández Navarro, L. Vosloo</i>	
Rediscovered earth heritage becomes motor for local change The Guérande Peninsula (France)	149
<i>M. Miranda Santos, A. Hilton, P. Poullain, E. Hamard, C. Mouraud</i>	
Tradition and semantics: the case of Aeolian architecture.....	157
<i>S. Mollica</i>	
The Italian case of Leopoldine in Tuscany: methods and issues for the cataloguing of rural building heritage	165
<i>I. Nocerino</i>	
Highlighting the Heritage of Meseta Ibérica.....	173
<i>J. Pinto, A. Paiva, D. Almeida, S. Pereira, A. Antunes, R. Bento</i>	
A heritage to reveal and protect. Historical water-based paper mills and ironworks in Campania (Italy)	181
<i>S. Pollone</i>	
Architecture and Proto Industry. Watermills in the historic peri-urban landscape of Benevento (Italy).....	189
<i>L. Romano</i>	

An architectural catalogue for the study of traditional building features from their seismic behaviour in the 2016 Central Italy earthquake	197
<i>L. Sbrogiò, Y. Saretta, M. R. Valluzzi</i>	
Earthen vernacular architecture in flood-prone areas: characteristics and typologies in the Ebro basin.....	205
<i>F. Trizio, F.J. Torrijo Echarri, C. Mileto, F. Vegas</i>	
New studies for the knowledge of the vernacular characters of the ancient water mills in central Sicily	213
<i>A. Versaci, A. Cardaci, L. R. Fauzia, M. Russo</i>	
Identification and safeguarding of Central Sicily's forgotten vernacular heritage: elements of identity and memory	221
<i>A. Versaci, A. Cardaci</i>	
The particular ensemble of Mas d'en Segures: Functional and constructive analysis of a house and a barn in Tinença de Benifassà (Castellón, Spain).....	229
<i>J. Villasante Claramonte</i>	
In the shadow of Vesuvius. Sustainable and bioclimatic lessons from a vernacular heritage	237
<i>E. Vitagliano</i>	
URBAN STUDIES OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE	
The rural founding villages of the Italian Agrarian Reform in Basilicata (1950-1970): urban planning and 'modern' vernacular architecture to the test of contemporaneity. The case of Borgo Taccone (MT)	247
<i>C. Achille, S. Bortolotto, E. Ciocchini, M. C. Palo</i>	
Vernacular architecture and written sources: the case study of the Tronto Valley	255
<i>E. Facchi, A. Grimoldi, A. G. Landi</i>	
Urban vernacular architecture in the Middle Ages in Galicia, Spain.....	263
<i>A. Fernández Palicio</i>	
Binibeca Vell. Interpreting tradition	271
<i>J. J. Ferrer Forés</i>	
Mapping spatial social aspects of urban recovery in contested cities: a case of the historic commercial center of the ancient city of Aleppo	279
<i>S. Ibrahim</i>	
Contributions of the vernacular heritage in the current city. Case study: Santo Domingo Neighborhood, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico	287
<i>A. Parra Zebadúa, M. Genís Vinyals, L. Ocampo García, R. Villers Aispuro, M. A. Zenteno Hernández, L. F. Escamiroso Montalvo, S. N. Zebadúa Velasco</i>	
The town of Collodi: the vernacular heritage.....	293
<i>F. Pisani</i>	

Between landscape and fortified architecture: traces and memory of rural civilization in the territory of Pesche in Molise	301
<i>M. P. Testa</i>	
Light Touch on the land – continued conversations about architectural change, informality and sustainability.....	309
<i>D. Whelan</i>	
STUDIES OF TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS	
The stone as constant presence: vernacular structure of the cultural heritage of Porcuna (Andalusia, Spain).....	319
<i>S. Belmondo, P. Millán Millán</i>	
From natural to artificial: vernacular housing in the Spanish Caribbean	327
<i>B. del Cueto</i>	
Designing with water for climate change adaptation and cultural heritage preservation.....	335
<i>A. Elnokaly, W. Pittungnapoo</i>	
La Vera´s vernacular architecture. Structural design and climate protection in timber frame wall houses using constructive systems and local materials.....	341
<i>E. Franco Rodríguez, M. Bujalance</i>	
Traditional buildings for tobacco processing in Val Tiberina (Tuscany-Italy)	349
<i>F. Fratini, S. Rescic, M. Camaiti, M. Mattone</i>	
The parish church of San Michele Arcangelo in Metelliano: the path of knowledge of a vernacular architecture	357
<i>G. Ghelfi</i>	
Indoor air quality for sustainability, occupational health and classroom environments through the application of earth plaster	363
<i>M. I. Gomes, T. Miranda</i>	
The importance of water in traditional gypsum works.....	369
<i>B. González-Sánchez, W. Salazar Chuquimarca, J. R. Rosell Amigó, A. Navarro Ezquerria</i>	
State of conservation of half-timbered walls in Burgos (Spain): Quantitative analysis of material and structural degradation.....	377
<i>A. Hueto-Escobar, F. Vegas, C. Mileto, M. Lidón de Miguel</i>	
Adobe Constructions – Colonial Chilean House.....	385
<i>M. G. Jofré Troncoso</i>	
Favignana bio-calcarenite: technological culture, knowledge and recovery.....	393
<i>A. Mami, E. Caleca, E. Nicolini</i>	
Examination of earthen construction in archaeological sites of the Iberian Peninsula for risk analysis	401
<i>S. Manzano Fernández, C. Mileto, F. Vegas, V. Cristini</i>	

Traditional mortars with chucum in Yucatan, Mexico, as biocultural heritage	409
<i>M. M. Martínez-Barreiro, L. F. Guerrero-Baca</i>	
Dry Stone Wall Relics as a Part of Cultural Landscapes: A Case Study from the Foot of Mt. Hira Region in Japan	417
<i>C. Ochiai, J. Wang</i>	
The paving of ancient paths, testimony of an ancient culture: recovery of a traditional route in Genoa (Liguria, Italy)	425
<i>D. Pittaluga, S. Rescic, F. Fratini</i>	
Constructive and earthquake-resistant aspects of modelled-earth, a technique in ancient Peru	433
<i>H. E. Torres Peceros</i>	
Research on technique “Banzhu” used in traditional dwellings in China from the perspective of formwork	441
<i>Q. Zhou</i>	
SUSTAINABILITY OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE	
Traditional Bukharian Houses and Mahallas: a shared vernacular heritage at risk.....	451
<i>N. Aituganova, O. Vileikis, S. Babaev, J. Ors Ausin</i>	
A look on the intrinsic sustainability of Aeolian vernacular architecture	459
<i>R. Caponetto, G. Giuffrida</i>	
The Z Free Home – inspired by vernacular architecture	467
<i>M. Dabaieh</i>	
Proposals for the sustainable recovery of dry stone buildings in Puglia, Italy.....	475
<i>S. Farina</i>	
Casa Nautilus Solar – Organic contemporary Architecture based on Vernacular Heritage.....	483
<i>P. Jebens-Zirkel Imm, A. J. Zirkel Zirkel</i>	
Making our Rural Landscape visible. A way to defend Anonymous Cultural Heritage.....	491
<i>A. Martínez Duran, M. Villaverde Rey</i>	
Shuar architecture as a model of sustainability	499
<i>D. E. Morocho-Jaramillo</i>	
Dry stone architecture: the survey as a tool to safeguard the risk of morphological or formal homologation	507
<i>G. Rossi, M. Leserri, A. Benitez Calle</i>	
At the roots of sustainability: Mediterranean vernacular architecture	513
<i>S. Talenti, A. Teodosio</i>	
Lessons from the past, architecture for the future. Coupling historic preservation with sustainable architecture	521
<i>P. Vitti</i>	

HERITAGE EDUCATION

RESEARCH IN HERITAGE EDUCATION

Community School Museums as a tool for education.....	537
<i>P. Alonso-Monasterio, L. Uixer Cotano</i>	
The interpretation of the vernacular in the modern work of Gherardo Bosio: the Albanian experience.....	545
<i>C. Castagnaro</i>	
“For sale: empty Spain” Raising awareness on abandoned buildings and depopulated villages	553
<i>V. Cristini, J. L. Baró Zarzo, C. Mileto, F. Vegas, M. Caruso, E. Tortajada Montalva</i>	
Qualitative, historical, spatial, stylistic, and social assessment of heritage buildings in Arequipa for Cultural Heritage teaching in Schools of Architecture	559
<i>T. B. Medina-Sánchez, D. L. Mayta-Ponce, D. Málaga-Montoya, S. Coll-Pla, F. A. Cuzziramos-Gutiérrez, A. Costa Jover</i>	
Vernacular architecture and art. The representation of traditional buildings in Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise in the Baptistery of Florence.....	567
<i>A. Merlo, G. Lavoratti</i>	
Defensive architecture and heritage education: analysis of the National Park Service and Parks Canada actions	575
<i>J. A. Mira Rico</i>	

HERITAGE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

<i>Gibellina and the identity of community. Brandi, Burri and the conservation of the 'ruins'</i>	585
<i>C. Accetta</i>	
The perceptive experience of the heritage landscape.....	593
<i>A. Barranco Donderis</i>	
The Role of University in Local Cultural Development Through Vernacular Architectural Conservation Education: The Case of Havran, Turkey.....	599
<i>D. U. Binan, H. İ. Alatli</i>	
The role of cultural heritage in urban reuse	607
<i>M. Domènech Rodríguez, D. López López, C. Cornadó Bardón</i>	
Involving society in the enhancement of old city centres	615
<i>A. Guardiola-Villora, L. Basset-Salom</i>	
3D Heritage as a catalyst for social participation in safeguarding cities in conflict. A Case study of Damascus in Syria	623
<i>S. Ibrahim</i>	

Heritage education as an effective approach to enhance community engagement: a model for classifying the level of engagement	631
<i>T. W. Lao</i>	
Preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage through University, public administration, and community engagement.....	639
<i>M. Mattone, N. Frullo</i>	
‘Acupuncture of Awareness’: a possible path for vernacular heritage preservation.....	647
<i>L. Rossato</i>	

HERITAGE COMMUNITIES

Overlooked heritage of Albania: chronicle of rescue, conservation and community involvement at Great Prespa Lake	657
<i>V. Cristini, B. Ludwig</i>	
The appropriation of traditional houses in Imbros/Gökçeada	663
<i>A. Dinççağ Kahveci</i>	
The SDGs as a useful tool in vernacular architecture management: The case of “17 objectives and a map”	671
<i>A. López Sabater, V. García López de Andújar, X. Laumain</i>	
An Odyssey to Heritage Education: The Inspiring Example of Bergama and Its Communities	679
<i>D. Ulusoy Binan, G. G. Okyay</i>	
The role of heritage communities in local development processes through the reuse of architectural heritage. Some examples in Italian rural areas	687
<i>C. Valiante, A. M. Oteri</i>	

CREATIVITY AND HERITAGE EDUCATION

Strategies for the recognition and the enhancement of the cultural heritage in Sant'Antioco	697
<i>M. Achenza, I. Blečić, L. Dipasquale, S. Mecca, A. Merlo</i>	
A collaborative Web App to foster a knowledge network on vernacular heritage, craftspeople, and sustainability	703
<i>J. Ammendola, L. Dipasquale, E. P. Ferrari, S. Mecca, L. Montoni, M. Zambelli</i>	
Cultural heritage: educating the next generation. Case study analysis of the Center of Preservation Research	711
<i>E. Vlahos</i>	

ARTISANS AND CRAFTS OF TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION

INTANGIBLE HERITAGE: THE MANAGEMENT OF KNOW-HOW AND LOCAL CONSTRUCTION CULTURE

The towns of the Popocateptl Volcano. Territorial symbolism, cultural identity and vernacular architecture	721
<i>B. Aguilar Prieto</i>	

Methodology for mapping Intangible Cultural Heritage through webGIS integral platforms. La Fontanalla neighbourhood as a case study	729
<i>F. Conejo-Arrabal, F. J. Chamizo-Nieto, N. Nebot-Gómez de Salazar, C. Rosa-Jiménez</i>	
The struggle for Stone-dry walling: the ambition to protect both processes and products.....	737
<i>M. M. Grisoni</i>	
From intangible to tangible. Artisan Skills and Traditional Crafts for Preserving Venice's Built Heritage	745
<i>A. Squassina</i>	
TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION CRAFTS	
The Craft of Stucco Mihrab carving in Oman in the 13th to 17th AD.....	755
<i>N. Benkari</i>	
From prototypes to monotypes. Neo-craftsmanship in architecture and design	763
<i>J. Bravo Bravo</i>	
PLANS AND EXPERIENCES FOR THE RECOVERY AND MAINTENANCE OF CONSTRUCTION CRAFTS	
Vernacular architecture and seismic risk. The case of Mugello in Tuscany	773
<i>P. Bordoni</i>	
Pinnettas de pedra: a guide for the valorisation of dry-stone artifacts	781
<i>S. N. Cappai, A. V. Sotgiu</i>	
Vernacular architecture and traditional trades. Social innovation and cultural heritage in rural Andalusia.....	789
<i>G. Carrera Díaz, B. Del Espino Hidalgo, A. Delgado Méndez</i>	
The role of craftsmanship in the conservation of Venice. State of the art and perspective.....	797
<i>F. Trovò, E. Vettore</i>	
CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE	
CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE	
Is there a future for marginal communities?	807
<i>M. Bocci</i>	
Restoration of the stained glass windows of the British Cemetery of Valencia	815
<i>C. Burguete Gil</i>	
Studies and projects for the archaeological park of the Nuraghe s'Urachi (Sardinia, Italy). From knowledge for heritage conservation to project for the community	823
<i>G. M. Chiri, F. Novelli</i>	
Vernacular heritage protection by the Superintendence of the Aosta Valley	831
<i>C. De La Pierre, D. Martinet, B. Scala</i>	

Of earth, stone and wood: the restoration and conservation of a Buddhist temple in Ladakh, Indian Himalayas.....	839
<i>E. P. Ferrari</i>	
The <i>hórreos</i> in Riaño Mountain, León, Spain. Vernacular architecture between conservation and musealisation.....	847
<i>M. P. García Cuetos</i>	
Restoration project of vernacular architecture affected for ground subsidence: A case study in Juslibol Church (Zaragoza, Spain)	855
<i>A. Gracia, F. J. Torrijo, M. A. Pérez</i>	
Farmhouse interior restoration in bioconstruction	863
<i>V. Li-Puma Sforazzini</i>	
After the earthquake. Design processes for intervention on vernacular heritage in Central Italy.....	871
<i>G. Loffredo, F. Recla, N. Suraci, C. Tosco</i>	
Implementing the lesson of early 20th century traditional buildings for a real sustainability. The examples of Corviale (Rome) and ZEN (Palermo) districts.....	879
<i>E. M. Mazzola</i>	
From rural house to “villa of delights”: knowledge and conservation of Villa Murat in the Sorrento peninsula.....	889
<i>A. Pane, R. Catuogno, M. Parente</i>	
Vernacular earthen architecture. Construction techniques and restoration. From the international setting to some specific Italian regional cases	897
<i>E. Petrucci, R. Mancini, M. G. Putzu</i>	
Rigour, methodology and use, success in heritage conservation: the tower of the St. Mary Magdalene’s church.....	905
<i>P. Rodríguez Cantalapiedra</i>	
Strategies to value the dispersed heritage of rural Andalusia. Lagares, paseros and vineyards: the architecture of the raisin	913
<i>L. Royo Naranjo</i>	
Guidelines for the conservation of the ancient hydraulic mills of the Valle Sabbia, Brescia (Italy).....	921
<i>B. Scala, L. Aliverti</i>	
Bazaars between documentation and conservation. Case studies in Albania and Macedonia.....	929
<i>A. Trematerra, E. Mirra</i>	
Perspectives for the small historical centres at risk of abandonment. A pilot project for the Granfonte district in Leonforte (Italy).....	937
<i>M. R. Vitale, C. Circo, D. Sanzaro, S. Sebastián Franco, I. Cacciatore, M. Massimino</i>	
Repair grants for historic farm buildings in Dartmoor National Park.....	945
<i>N. White</i>	

MATERIALS AND INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES FOR VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Syrian earthen villages: recovery of construction crafts to revive dome houses.....	955
<i>H. Asslan</i>	
Historic tuff masonry in Naples: different approaches to its conservation	963
<i>B. Balbi, R. Bosso, G. Russo Krauss</i>	
Vernacular architecture on archaeological remains. Conservation and enhancement of the “Villa San Limato” in Cellole	971
<i>L. Cappelli</i>	
Conservation and restoration of timber architecture in the Czech Republic.....	979
<i>M. Cernansky</i>	
Effects of the use of plant mucilage on the physico-mechanical properties of raw earth structures	987
<i>O. M. Medina Lorente, B. Carrascosa Moliner, L. Osete Cortina</i>	
Vernacular architecture and archaeological remains. Direct links in the Phlegraean Fields in Campania (Italy).....	995
<i>R. Picone</i>	

DIFFICULTIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF USING TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN CONSERVATION

Impediments to Sustenance and Revival of Vernacular Architecture in Rural Madhya Pradesh, India.....	1005
<i>A. Tamhankar, V. Gupta</i>	

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Ghadames, Libya. A traditional earthen settlement, resilient to crises and environmental challenges.....	1015
<i>S. Abdulac</i>	
Architectural Heritage and seismic vulnerability: mapping the available knowledge to reduce damage during an emergency	1023
<i>E. Brusa, C. Chesi, S. Della Torre</i>	
Analysis and regeneration strategies for the abandoned villages of the Santerno valley in Tuscany	1031
<i>M. Coppola, L. Dipasquale, L. Mannucci, L. Rovero</i>	
Learning from the past. The loss of vernacular heritage in the interest of hydropower development in Spain.....	1039
<i>N. Fernández García</i>	
Post seismic intervention strategies over the last fifty years in Italy (1968 – 2016). Initial observations about the vernacular architecture’s conservation	1047
<i>V. Macca</i>	

Close to the volcan. Knowledge, conservation and enhancement of a Vesuvian vernacular heritage.....	1055
<i>B. G. Marino, A. Ragosta</i>	
Heritage and community centre in Matta Sur, Chile.....	1063
<i>A. Rivera Vidal, C. Gómez Maestro</i>	
Local materials and traditions in the conservation of vernacular buildings.....	1071
<i>C. Rodrigues</i>	
Vernacular earthen architectures. Institutionalisation and management models for its conservation in northern Argentina.....	1077
<i>J. Tomasi, J. Barada</i>	
Protection and reuse of a forgotten heritage: the Parmesan cheese buildings. Notes for a widespread museum in the lower Reggio Emilia plain	1085
<i>S. Varvaro</i>	

AUTHORS INDEX

A look on the intrinsic sustainability of Aeolian vernacular architecture

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Abstract

The vernacular architecture of the Aeolian Islands can be seen as the result of a stratification of empirical knowledge, linked to socio-economic, cultural, and environmental needs of local communities. This homogeneous and specific heritage is characterised by a constructive code which is the direct expression of the necessities dictated by the geo-morphological context, the environmental conditions and the availability of local resources. These constraints have strongly influenced the local "modus aedificandi", characterised by an intrinsic sustainability. In particular, adaptation to local orography and climate, and to main wind directions, has promoted the adoption of several bioclimatic strategies (as the use of massive walls and roofs, cross ventilation and shading systems provided by verandas/porches) and of resources reuse (like rainwater collection). The smart use of traditional and locally available natural building materials for the realisation of the main constructive elements is another manifestation of this heritage sustainability. But the arrival of "modernity" (closely linked to industrialisation) has often compromised these aspects, neglecting the concept of continuous maintenance, choosing new, synthetic and (quite often) not compatible materials for recovery interventions, repurposing spaces and substituting and/or altering original uses. This contribution highlights the sustainability of Aeolian architecture and the traditional technical solutions used in this peculiar archipelago composed by volcanic islands. It also reports some "bad practices" introduced in the 60s and 70s to refurbish traditional buildings. Finally, a programmatic and more conscious approach to the recovery of Aeolian architecture, by the use of more compatible and sustainable interventions, is proposed. This choice is fundamental to respect the memory of vernacular heritage in general and, in particular, of Aeolian one, included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list since 2000.

Keywords: Aeolian islands; vernacular architecture; sustainability.

1. Introduction

Vernacular architecture represents the physical and cultural result of the long process of trial and error adopted by local communities to design their life-spaces, in close relationship with the morphologies of places, local available resources, climate conditions, environmental constraints and socio-economic contexts (Oliver, 2006). In a world conscious of globalisation, industrialisation and cultural (and architectural) homogenisation negative outcomes, the vernacular architecture has been interpreted as a huge database (Rashid & Ara, 2015) of environmental,

architectural and technological solutions with strong features of sustainability. As a matter of fact, in the last years (Nguyen et al., 2019) vernacular architecture has become a topic which is investigated all over the world at an increasing rate because it is believed to be an important resource from which programmatic and specific principles for contemporary sustainable architecture (Correia et al., 2014) can be derived from. Local building cultures offer a catalogue of solutions which can be addressed in terms of environmental, socio-cultural, and socio-economic sustainability (Dipasquale & Mecca, 2016). As clearly exposed by these authors, environmental

sustainability refers to the ability of vernacular settlements to be integrated in the environments without inducing negative impacts (as changes in the climate or in the landscapes, production of pollution or waste materials) thus benefitting from natural or climatic resources available on site and protecting communities from the risks intrinsically connected to territories. Concerning socio-cultural sustainability, vernacular architecture embodies building cultures as a fundamental aspect of identity, for the entrenched local knowledge and know-how, care of personal and community welfare and social cohesion, reflecting a certain ensemble of intangible values. Finally, concerning socio-economic sustainability, the authors highlight the capacity of vernacular architecture of producing an added value in a certain region to guarantee social welfare, as well as favouring autonomy, promoting local activity and employment and saving resources.

It is interesting to note that transformations can occur over time, especially from a social and economic point of view, leading to an obsolescence of the tangible heritage even more than the intangible one (see, in this regard, the issue of the abandoned villages). In order to avoid the abandonment that could follow obsolescence, it is necessary to intervene by rediscovering tradition, recognising its vocation and potential.

Vernacular building and landscape solutions can be assumed as the ground from which contemporary sustainable architecture can root and derive its methods and techniques, enhancing them through contemporary know-how and technologies, to answer the social and environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Sicilian territories are constellated with vernacular architectures that have intelligently and wisely responded to the characteristics of places and times.

Our research group had previously carried out a study on the constructive characteristics of Aeolian architecture. Technical elements were classified according to the technological system

scheme indicated by the Standard UNI 0051, and the durability of the units belonging to the load-bearing structure and to the envelope was investigated. To this end, inspections, photographic and technical-constructive surveys and graphic representations were carried out.

By means of statistical surveys, the presumed average durability of each technological element (traditional or "modern") was assessed, specifying the most recurrent pathologies and indicating the causes that produced them. A representative sample of professionals from the building sector (technical offices, building firms, professionals) was involved in this process.

In the following contribution we propose a reflection on the intrinsic sustainability of Aeolian vernacular architecture, focusing on the peculiarity of the geo-morphological context in which it is built and the resources it make use of. Finally, considerations are made on possible safeguarding strategies of its distinctive features, which were "betrayed" by disrespectful interventions in the 60s and 70s.

2. Sustainability of Aeolian architecture

Aeolian architecture denotes a homogeneous and specific housing style, which is intrinsically linked to local culture. It is characterised by a construction code, which is direct expression of necessities linked to environmental conditions, historical genesis and locally available resources. The geomorphological characteristics of volcanic places, the climatic factors (high degree of solar radiation, minimum temperature range, low amount of rain) and the limited quantity of available economical and material resources have strongly influenced the traditional constructive technology (Todesco, 1995). The archipelago is included in the catalogue of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: in 2000, UNESCO placed the Aeolian Archipelago among the 691 sites in the world protected by virtue of their "environmental and/or cultural characteristics" (World Heritage List).

Traditional Aeolian architecture was strongly influenced by the architecture of the sixteenth century of Campania region, which was grafted onto a previously Greek-Roman and Islamic architecture. Before that, the first settlements occurred as far back as the Neolithic age between 5500 and 4000 BC. During the following centuries, the archipelago was populated by Etruscans, Carthaginians, Greeks and Romans, then by Arabs, Normans and Spaniards; nevertheless, most of the current villages were built in the nineteenth century (Todesco, 1995).

The original element of the typical architecture is a single cubic or parallelepiped shaped box, with only one entrance door and two windows, generally round (Caponetto et al., 2003). Inside the house, the kitchenette was located on a side, and the beds on the other. The building had the function to defend the inhabitants from possible external attacks.

Today, it is possible to identify two possible different building types in the Aeolian archipelago: the vertical one (in steep areas) and, most frequently, the horizontal one (in flat areas). Both types are generated using a box - type construction, through the superimposition or combination of cubic elements (rooms), and have similar building characteristics. The other vernacular buildings are a combination of these two types.

Figure 1 shows the combination of cubic elements for the “horizontal type”: originally, only a single cubic box and a terrace composed the house. Subsequently, another “box” was put beside the first, in place of the patio. This one rotated and adapted to the needs of everyday life by the use of several functional elements. Typical elements of the traditional building are:

- The *bagghiu*, a large terrace placed at the front of the building.
- The *bisòlo*, small masonry walls which delineate the terrace, at times adorned with colourful majolica tiles.
- The *loggia*, the roof of the terrace, composed by a trellis of wooden beams covered by canes. This element had the important function to create a filter shaded space between

indoor and outdoor, protecting the terrace floor from direct solar radiation thus ensuring a reduction of temperature during the warmest summer days.

- The *princu*, a washbasin made of stone that lies on the *pila*, an outdoor tub employed to do the laundry.
- The *furnu*, a domeshaped oven positioned at the side of the terrace, which lies on a base where firewood is stored.
- The *astricu*, the horizontal roof. This element has two important function: as massive element of the envelope, it dampens the effects of the cold winters and the warm summers; as functional roof element, it collects rainwater thanks to the raised edge of the terrace (element which is called *petto di palumba* - dove’s breast -), and conveys it to an underground tank.
- The *occhi di ventilazione* (ventilation eyes), located in the upper part of the walls and used to convey outside the heat stored inside the building box during the warm summer days.

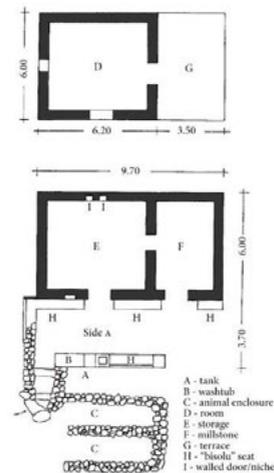


Fig. 1. Example of horizontal type house (Source: Todesco, 1995)

As mentioned above, the typical architecture of Aeolian Islands is strictly linked to the environmental conditions and to the locally available resources. The geomorphological characteristics of the locations and the climatic factors have strongly limited the local *modus aedificandi*. Architectural and technological choices delivered unique places and cultural facts of the Mediterranean area (Sapienza et al., 2021).

Footings are made of lava stone, with lime and pumice mortar. They are very shallow: the height is less than 40 cm for a single-storey house and less than 70 cm for a multi-storey one.

Walls were usually built with shapeless stone (quarried in the islands) and mortar (rich in lime and pumice, a coarse lava lapillus locally called *rupiddu*). Subsequently to the Messina earthquake (1908), rough-hewn stone masonry was used, with horizontal mortar layers (spaced vertically every 70 cm). For the internal walls, either tuff or lava stones were often used. The solid ground floor was made of lime and pumice stone (sometimes with a crawl space).

The traditional intermediate floor was made of timber beams, with a main and a secondary order or unhewn chestnut trunks, on which a canes mat was laid. On the top of the mat, a special conglomerate, composed by volcanic lapilli, lime mortar and fine pumice, was then casted. The *astricu* flat roof was usually 12 -15 cm thick. It was realised similarly to the intermediate floor, by installing beams made with local chestnut trunks, on which was placed a canes mat, a layer of broken stones whose flat side rested on the canes mat and finally, the conglomerate for the screed (realised with volcanic lapilli, lime mortar and fine pumice).

A careful ramming of the surface layer was performed when it was still fresh, to completely saturate the voids and therefore reduce porosity, thus ensuring the water tightness of the terrace.

The *astricu* had the important function to collect the meteoric waters, which were channeled and thus transported into the cistern, generally located under the house, through the drainpipes realised with *terracotta* elements.

The external staircases, connecting the ground floor with the first floor, generally consisted of solid basalt steps laid on a rampant masonry arch; inside, wooden stairs were used for all the floors. The traditional plaster, applied in two layers, was made with a lime-based mortar with very fine lapilli aggregate. Lapilli, used in both plaster and *astricu* mixtures, were readily available in the volcanic archipelago and reduced capillary water absorption. A lime-based painting was used until the 1970s, to protect plasters and to sanitize walls: indeed lime is known to have caustic properties (it eliminates mould and prevents its reappearance) and hygroscopic behaviour (it allows walls to breathe). As regards the floor, for interior and exterior spaces coloured ceramic tiles (coming from the town of S. Stefano di Camastra, in Messina province) or pressed cement tiles (sometimes decorated with marble flakes) were used. The external floors (for storage spaces and terraces) were often made of lime and pumice. Traditional frames of doors and windows were made of chestnut wood and coloured with oil paints.

Over time, several factors have influenced and modified the building process. This has led to a progressive technological transformation extraneous to the local culture, which will be discussed in the following paragraph.



Fig. 2. Elements of Aeolian vernacular architectures (Source: the Authors and <https://scirockko.it/> and <https://it.wikipedia.org/>)

3. The betrayal of modernity

As abovementioned, local building procedures were influenced by various factors: the exhaustion of several natural resources; the closure of stone quarries and the consequent introduction of new (and industrial) building materials imported from Sicily and southern Italy in general; the higher cost of building materials arriving by maritime transport; the low availability of experienced workers; new building procedures considered appropriate for a rapid execution of the work, but not thought for a long-lasting maintenance of the technological units' performances.

All these factors have radically transformed the Aeolian built environment. Building technologies and typological models foreign to the local culture, have sometimes been passively imported, determining a relevant and diffused technological and environmental decay.

For instance, starting from the 1920s, the *pomicemento* blocks (for loadbearing walls and partitions) made of pumice and cement mixtures, were produced in Lipari Island and exported. The *pomicemento* blocks did not resist well to shocks, and they also showed durability issues when left unplastered: in this case the blocks experienced chalking phenomena.

In the 1960s, the reinforced concrete conglomerate (cast in place) was introduced for the realisation of loadbearing frames (with hollow bricks infill) and for hollow block floors. This technology was soon abandoned as concrete reinforcements were severely damaged by the marine environment.

Floors made of lightening bricks (*pignatte*) and reinforced cast concrete were used between the 60s and 70s but were abandoned due to the insufficient expertise of the workers (especially with regard to the execution of the conglomerate casting). Today, this type of floor is being replaced. From 1970 onwards, the floors have been made of prefabricated joists and lightening bricks.

For the exterior surfaces, from 1970s a plaster made of marble powders with a new finishing in lime paste and white cement was used. In the last decades the "Terranova" plaster (a premix plaster composed of lime, a small amount of cement, selected silica and quartz sands, solid inorganic pigments) began to be used, but its high cost hindered its diffusion. Since the mid-1980s and up to the early 1990s, coloured plastic paintings (whose use is absolutely not recommendable from a restauration point of view) were introduced onto the Islands. This type of paintings immediately showed widespread exfoliation linked to their poor breathability, which, together with moisture present in the wall, led to the formation of bubbles that then cracked; its use ceased in the early 90s. Another "modern" plaster used is the *buc-ciardato*, it is realised in three layers with finishing in cement, lime and marble flakes and it has a better performance (in terms of durability) compared to other new plasters. Nonetheless, this type of plaster is also less breathable and sustainable, both in environmental terms (due to the presence of cement) and in economic terms (due to higher installation costs).



Fig. 3. Examples of inappropriate interventions on vernacular Aeolian architectures (Source: the Authors)

The durability of the *astricu* relies on that of the floor below: if this element undergoes slight deflections, cracks are caused in the waterproofing layer. Cracks can also be caused by thermal excursions. In the past, lime mortar and pumice were periodically (every 1-2 years) injected into the cracks (in dialect, *ciacche*) to carry out the necessary maintenance of the extrados, to avoid water infiltration and damages of the layers. In recent decades, the use of asphaltic and bituminous sheats to waterproof the external surfaces of flat roofs began. Waterproofing sheats have little durability (when not protected by pavings) and they are totally incompatible with the aesthetic properties of traditional buildings: Aeolian houses roofs contribute significantly to characterise the local landscape and should not be transfigured by such visually impactful technologies.

Another solution, recently introduced, for waterproofing roofs, consists of two-component elastic cementitious mortars. This intervention in itself may not be inappropriate, but it is often accompanied by the closure of underground cisterns, which being walled up, do not longer perform the function of collecting rainwater.

Traditional windows and doors realised in chestnut wood, were usually recovered every two years by using paints with waxy products to soften the wood essence. Some of them have been substituted with PVC and aluminium framings which present deformations, due to high temperatures, chromatic alteration, due to solar radiation, and diffuse corrosion due to marine aerosols.

4. A new environmental awareness

In addition to the unappropriated interventions on the historical built heritage of the 60s – 70s, the Aeolian islands have also witnessed a phenomenon of unrestrained urbanisation in the same years, with a proliferation of interventions (at urban, landscape and naturalistic scales) that posed a risk to the environment. Indeed, from the second postwar, the Islands were introduced in a wider circuit of mass tourism, which determined

a heavy anthropic pressure on their fragile environmental system, especially in summer seasons. After the inclusion of Aeolian archipelago in the UNESCO Heritage List in 2000, the need to safeguard and sustainably develop the territory became more pressing. For this reason, in 2001 a Landscape Territorial Plan of the Aeolian archipelago was approved (*Piano Territoriale Paesaggistico*, 2001) which led to the imposition of various protection regimes on the territory. In 2007 was designed the management entity of the National Park of the Aeolian Islands (2007), and in 2012 was published The Unesco Aeolian Islands Management Plan (Angelini, 2012). The Management plan offered a program of actions for the knowledge, protection, and valorisation of the heritage, and a plan of action for social, cultural and economic growth, aiming at creating differentiated offers from the territory, and wishing to regulate the tourist flow.

It is important to highlight that there are Islands (as Lipari or Vulcano) that have suffered more than others the advent of modernity. Today, the Islands are under greater observation as the Landscape Territorial plan of the Aeolian archipelago requires all Aeolian municipalities to adopt a suitable urban planning instrument (regulatory plan) before any tranformation activity can be authorised in the area. At a building scale, the possible interventions today are limited to the renovation of existing buildings, without extensions, changes in type or intended use (also in the case of ruins). Residential or tourist activities are considered incompatible if not carried out in existing structures. Buildings and artefacts of architectural, environmental, cultural, historical and testimonial value are subject to building recovery with focus on cultural and productive re-functionalisation.

At a glance, Aeolian Islands are still in an embryonic state of environmental sustainability. It is worth to mention that the recommendations of the Landscape plan found important oppositions from Island's property owners, who perceived

them more as an obstacle to satisfy a general demand for building growth than as an adequate response to the enhancement of the area's specific resources.

In the 2017 Legambiente report it is affirmed that the minor Italian islands are an ideal laboratory for sustainability. The major challenges which must be there addressed regard innovative and economically sustainable solutions on energy and water, on circular economy and sustainable mobility (Legambiente, 2017). Regarding energy, Legambiente report suggests a system based at 100% on the use of renewable resources (as sun, wind, tides, water and earth). Contemporary Islands energy system relies on obsolete and contaminating energy plants, powered by diesel or fuel oil, with supplies arriving via tankers at high costs. Yet, in the Aeolian context, the installation of plants for the production of energy from renewable sources (such as photovoltaic, solar thermal, wind power) seems to be incompatible with the need to preserve the landscape, while the hypothesis of geothermal energy does not seem to be feasible due to the costs and the nature of the soil.

As a matter of fact, an essential objective for changing the energy model on the islands concerns the push to energy efficiency interventions, i.e. those which could reduce the need for electrical and thermal energy, for instance in buildings. These interventions pass through a recovery of historical building techniques (with appropriate processes and materials), attentive to thermal insulation and rainwater recovery, to be integrated with efficient technologies for the energy distribution from renewable sources, even if produced off-shore. Attention to sustainability must start from a recognition of the intrinsic qualities of the built environment, from a focus on reproposing and preserving traditional expedients aimed at limiting resources consumption. A virtuous management model is intended to be achieved for water resources as most of these Islands nowadays rely on barges and desalination plants (Legambiente, 2017). At the same time, reduction of con-

sumptions and recovery of water are not even addressed (whereas they were in the past, as testified by the abovementioned rainwater collection system). Similarly, waste represents an emergency on the Islands: the strategy in this case is the push towards waste sorting, recovery of organic waste for production of compost, which must be accompanied by adequate informative campaigns and collecting protocols (Legambiente, 2017). In fact, these strategies represent a return to a sustainable approach intrinsic in traditional culture: in the past, living on an island meant regimenting the consumption of raw materials and minimising waste, facilitating recycling. Finally, access on the islands to vehicles of non-residents should be limited if not outright banned, especially during the tourist season. This limitation is already present in many Aeolian islands (Legambiente, 2017). Sustainable mobility on islands should also aim to the creation of a public mobility alternative, and to the diffusion of lighter forms of mobility.

5. Conclusions

This work focused on the sustainability of Aeolian vernacular architecture. As all types of vernacular heritage, Aeolian architecture represents the result of a stratification of empirical knowledge, linked to socio-economic, cultural, and environmental needs of local communities. Traditionally, local communities were in charge of maintaining their own traditional constructive processes or system of knowledges.

During the 60s and 70s, Aeolian vernacular architectures have experienced strong and inappropriate modifications, due to the increased housing pressure caused by the advent of mass tourism. This caused a crisis of cultural and constructive knowledges' system, which is fragile and sensitive to social, economic and environmental changes. The effects of globalisation and industrialisation on vernacular architectures have brought to cultural homogenisation and adoption of standardised project solutions which can imply

high resources consumption and inappropriate material choices. The main risks of interventions on vernacular buildings are due to the replacement of existing materials and to the contrast between industrial and craft production.

The adoption of correct management tools, encouraged by the UNESCO, for a wise and sustainable use of local environmental, natural and built resources is a first step towards the safeguard of traditional constructive processes or system of knowledges. These can be seen as key elements for the sustainable development of our built environments as well as expressions of social diversity and sources of practical and technological culture connected to places. The new sustainability must be rooted in tradition, culture and history of the places. The new way of living must, on the one hand, take into account the renewed needs and, on the other, rediscover the sustainability of the *modus aedificandi* and the *modus vivendi* of the past. It is necessary to minimize energy and resources consumptions by reusing waste (both in everyday life and in construction), in a circular economy approach. Today, Aeolian islands live an important transition towards more sustainable forms of living, being energy, water, waste and mobility management the sectors where more control is needed. Due to the connection that vernacular buildings have with these sectors, it is important to define new valorisation strategies which can, at the same time, preserve the identity of the architectures and improve their environmental performances. As regards the cultural built heritage, it is necessary to realise the necessary interventions (as those aiming at decreasing energy needs and improving envelope's performances), thus avoiding the mutation of peculiar characteristics and materiality of these architectures, also by adopting sustainable building materials and compatible processes. A precarious balance between tradition and innovation, fragile and dynamic, which must focus on the preservation of the past through its enhancement in the future.

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HERITAGE 2022 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
VERNACULAR HERITAGE:
CULTURE, PEOPLE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Eds. C. Mileto, F. Vegas, V. Cristini, L. García-Soriano

Vernacular architecture, tangible and intangible heritage of great importance to European and global culture, represents the response of a society culturally linked to its territory, in terms of climate and landscape. Its construction features are born from the practical experience of the inhabitants, making use of local materials, taking into consideration geographical conditions and cultural, social and constructive traditions, based on the conditions of the surrounding nature and habitat. Above all, it plays an essential role in contemporary society as it is able to teach us important principles and lessons for a respectful sustainable architecture.

Vernacular Heritage: Culture, People and Sustainability will be a valuable source of information for academics and professionals in the fields of Environmental Science, Civil Engineering, Construction and Building Engineering and Architecture.

