

The “Via dei Teit” (“Hamlets’ way”) in Valle Grande of Vernante: a research, a reminiscence and a project of a museum course

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This study is about a signalled course situated on the left hydrographic slope of Valle Grande. This course covers an extension of 16 km, from 900 to 1500 meters of altitude, and it touches eleven hamlets inhabited over the last forty years in suggestive landscapes.

The research is divided into several topics, and it's aimed at collecting data in order to create a complete relationship with the sites located along the ancient course: a direct inquiry of all the sites; interviews with the natives to know their relationship with the past life in the mountains; an historical and territorial inquiry integrated by map analysis; the research of the etymological meaning of several occitani words and their translation.

Moreover, the study of the strategic location of the Tenda Pass, that was the most important link with France in the past, and his development are of great importance to best define inhurbament processes in Valle Grande.

We studied some significant buildings of each hamlet in order to prepare a form with graphic and descriptive information and structural, typological and functional characteristics. For example, buildings were built with **straw roof** and a particular **truss** realised with **naturally curved wood**.

The location of this bordering area upon the Park of Alpi Marittime and the fact that the surrounding areas are safeguarded zone are peculiar aspects too.

The project idea proposes the **path** as the **guiding thread** of the composition. It turns into a natural walkway near the hamlets, or into a living architecture in the wood. This theme is used to underline the strong connection between the landscape and the hamlets through some stops along the course: the majestic barn, that is the meeting place for the hike starting; the three points of view that are visual links between the hamlets; the hamlets and the experimental laboratory that really could get you close to old traditions.

Two restored buildings are prepared with simple equipment, interactive and multimedia systems, with the aim to create an alternative way to eco-museum projects, that we call here the “widespread museum”.

The core of the project idea is the experimental yard that could become a practical instrument to run a cooperation between institutions (administrations, schools, university, local subjects etc.) interested in a new and concrete possibility to establish a real return to the mountains. Therefore, it's possible to suppose an integrated study between ancient e modern knowledge in construction methods and tools, in order to value traditional languages. Some of these are proposed in a modern key (straw roofs etc.) by this study.

In our opinion this kind of researches could be a possible strategy in mountain planning methods and politics. Perhaps it could be a way to give contemporary architecture the frankness of archaic architecture.



n.1 - The hamlets' way: itinerary by architecture



n.2 - The hamlets' way: the guiding thread.



n.3 - The widespread museum: some structural solutions.

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