

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture for Sustainability
Honors theses

**Project of preservation and sustainability in the alpine cultural landscape.
Locality “Bouisounà” in Val Chisone and Germanasca**

by Erica Depetris

Tutor: Monica Naretto

Co-tutor: Marco Simonetti

There is an increasing awareness in alpine regions of the need to give value to both the local landscape and its architectural heritage, comprising rural buildings that display a surprising balance between climate, form, and materials used. This has led to a fashion for restoring old buildings and making them functional once again in their settings. The key theme of this renovation project is centred around the delicate rapport between conservation and transformation. This inevitably means having to choose between preserving the building’s original function, or making a break from the past in order to give the building an entirely new lease of life. This case study, the locality *Le Bouisounà*, in the municipality of Pramollo, concerns two buildings dating to the early 1800s, situated in a woodland area of terraces and fields that were used during summer pastures.



Photography existing buildings

Only when these buildings have an interesting enough past to justify restoration is this carried out, given that now, provocatively speaking, they are nothing more than stone boxes. In this project, the traces man has left on the landscape, such as the terraces for the cultivation of buckwheat (ideal at these altitudes) and the flat threshing floor, are so strong as to underline the connection with the landscape and convey information, thus making it necessary to restore the building to its original form.

When such traces do not exist, or are not as conclusive as to justify this kind of intervention, it is far better to opt for something more innovative, given that even the bioclimatic balance upon which these buildings were originally made would today no longer be put forward or even acceptable.

The projects carried out in this work will therefore have these two different characteristics, yet the buildings will be able to continue to depend on each other, exactly as happened in the past, while also blending in with the environment and surrounding nature.

I have come up with the solutions proposed following a careful analysis of the morphology of the environment and of the architectural language typical of such buildings.

The conservation of the lower building will include the main office of the buckwheat ecomuseum. This will not alter the external appearance and structure of the existing building. Inside, the exhibition will have a section on alpine living in which key areas of the house will be given a new lease of life. The other rooms will be converted into exhibition spaces and workshops designed to give visitors a hands-on experience. The innovative project higher up will be converted into a museum for the manager of the ecomuseum, and a small hostel for tourists and hikers. Design challenges include modifying small spaces so that they are in line with building regulations, and the maintenance of the load-bearing stone structure, adjusted to provide warmth and comfort inside. Lastly, in order to make the buildings self-sufficient, an estimation of thermal and electricity needs will be made coupled with an evaluation of the performance of the various systems.



Simulations rooms ecomuseum



Fotorender and simulations room small hostel

For further information, e-mail:
Erica Depetris: ericadepe@gmail.com

Maintained by:
CISDA - HypArc, e-mail: hyparc@polito.it