

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Master of Science in Architecture Construction City
Honors theses

TITLE DAIRY ARCHITECTURE: DESIGN OF AN EDUCATIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL MOUNTAIN PASTURE IN VALLE VARAITA

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In partnership with: AGENFORM e Slow Food

The main intent of the thesis is to demonstrate how it is possible to reconcile the tradition of an ancient craft as that of the shepherd with techniques, materials and modern manufacturing systems, while paying particular attention to the current sanitary regulations, implemented according to the rules drawn up by the European community.

The decision to focus the design work on the subject educational comes from the desire to encourage the transmission of the dairy traditions and to help the assertion of an environmental culture linked to the mountain area, which was once transmitted from father to son through the tradition, but the mind of globalized man has removed.

Through the eyes of the architect, these proposals can be implemented with the study of historical buildings as a base to a recovery intervention, by relating to structures often considered provisional, but instead come from a feature closely related to the activity of transhumance.



Main building of the whole of analyzed huts - Meira Raie, Sampeyre (CN), Italy

The permanent settlement of the populations in the Alps over the centuries has led to the development of mountain pastures along the route of ascent of herds, due to the need to a continuous movement that takes place simultaneously with the availability of a greater amount of fresh grass to an altitude increasing with the advance of the summer season. Transhumance is closely tied to the natural cycles of the seasons and have to submit to the times imposed by the environment, making this process rooted in the mountain ecosystem.

The pasture may be defined as a strategic element for the economic development of the Alps, especially for his role in the safeguard and in the defense of the mountain territory.



The authors of the thesis during the process of transhumance (monticazione) - Balma l'Olmo, Sampeyre (CN), Italy

Behind the project is the belief that the restoration of a building wise should also be accompanied by the return of the original use, to preserve at least a part of the Alpine heritage. The choice of the recovery is also the solution more in line with the environment and territory, and it offers the ability to transform an inactive system of huts while keeping the purposes for which it was originally appointed.

The main aim is to design an alpine pasture in which you can organize professional courses for sector operators, but also practical classes aimed at raising awareness of a wider audience, more and more careful to the quality of the food on the table.

The final structure of the whole project has been designed based on the opinion of experts in the food sector, consulted in order to assign a specific function for each of the three buildings available and to make the whole pasture a single interconnected system.

In addition to the educational function, carried out in a special room of cheese making, the structure provides a shelter for the herd, a dwelling for a shepherd and a completely self-manageable guesthouse that can be able to accommodate groups of about twenty people in addition to the teachers.

The limitations due to the location at high altitude does not allow the connection to the main energy sources normally available. For this reason, the purpose was to provide a self-supporting structure, characterized by a significantly reduced environmental impact.



Rendering of the assumed restoration of the main building - Meira Raie, Sampeyre (CN), Italy

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