



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR THE RESTORATION  
AND PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE

*Abstract*

**Terraces of the Val Grande National Park.  
Census and enhancement of the traditional rural heritage**

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The thesis work is part of a process, commissioned by the Val Grande National Park, undertaken as a result of the Third World Meeting sponsored by the Alliance for Terraced Landscapes, entitled "Terraced Landscapes: choices for the future."

In the face of such a meeting the Val Grande National Park has chosen to carry out a census of the terraced areas present within the park and the surrounding areas. Census was needed because of the lack of information about them. Specifically, twelve municipalities have been involved, eleven of which have part of their territory within the National Park.

In the territories of the Val Grande these terraced areas, since the end of World War II, have been gradually abandoned by the population, and in a short time have been invaded by the forest, and turn out to be no longer visible. Today the risk of losing them is significantly high, so the knowledge and management of this heritage is fundamental for the preservation of the traditional rural landscape.

The thesis work has two main objectives: the location of the terraces and the enhancement of the latter.

In order to achieve the first objective, which is essential for planning future strategies of intervention on a large scale, this was divided into two phases: the first one defined expeditious mapping and the second one more punctual relief field. The two passages have proven to ensuring a significant saving in terms of time and resources: the area under consideration is 31000 hectares, thus was essential to narrow the intervention field. For the achievement of these goals I chose to use a tool: GIS, more precisely, the open source software Quantum GIS.

For the expeditious mapping part, the Val Grande National Park Authority commissioned Gister Geomatics, a company based in Verbania. I cooperated with this company drafting the census in order to refine the method used and then carry out a survey. Starting from the identification of particles with a high probability of terracing through the expeditious mapping, I proceeded with the verification on the field. The test was performed using a GPS conjugated to a real-time display of maps, Location Based Services, which allowed me to characterize the relief, by differentiating the terraced land particles according to their current condition: abandon or fruition; and choosing also to find information about the preservation state of rubble walls present in the terraces of the Val Grande.

This was a very important result for a more complete knowledge of the heritage and for a subsequent enhancement project.

Once succeeded the first objective, through the census of terraced areas, I tried to answer the question that naturally ensued: how to exploit this wealth? The next objective was therefore to find a tool that would be a suitable modality of the terraced estate management.

The instrument identified was the Ecomuseum, which wants to be an opportunity to enhance the terraced areas, based on an aware management, participatory and active from the local community.

Picturing the Ecomuseum as the set of many ecomuseum cells scattered throughout the territory in which each stands out for its own characteristics, I have chosen, to deepen one which might just be a ecomuseum cell.

To enhance the terraced heritage, I decided to take Caprezzo as starting point for the recovery of such assets.

To achieve this, I have identified three big macro interventions: The recovery of the trail network; The recovery of terraced areas and the restoration of a building inside the village which will to be the center of the ecomuseum cell of Caprezzo.



*Picture 1 - Abandoned terracing*



*Picture 2 - Used terracing*

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