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COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

Abstract

**The recovery of the village of Cantoncello in Valchiusella:
the educational site as a tool for reactivating the old
distillery**

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There are several strew rural centers in the valleys of the Alps, which create an agricultural and livestock economic system. Nowadays, they hardly reach their aim because of the slow decline of the agrarian activity in the mountain context.

However, the loss of their original function leads to the opportunity of new activities.

The aim of this dissertation is to project the rehabilitation of a rural center at high altitude: the “Borgo of Cantoncello” in high Valchiusella. The small village is facing a situation of serious degrade and it needs recovering and reinforcement.

Specifically, the main aim of this project is to reactivate the ancient gentian distillery, which is now a vestige, and to build a didactic construction site.

This choice has been taken according to the possibility of enrich the traditional building techniques and in order to recreate the sense of community which has characterize the small rural villages for ages.

Before practicing all the operations of the project, it has been fundamental to check all the dynamics and morphological characteristics of the valley. Different resources have been used to do that, such as the Piano Paesaggistico, Landscape Plan, of Piedmont; the data given by the Geoportale, geographic portal, of the region and the QGIS software. Thanks to these supports, it was possible to define all the natural aspects, such as the altimeter tape, the use of the soil, the exposition and the incline of the slopes which characterize the valley.

After this phase, a more detailed research has been dedicated to the architectonic patrimony of Cantoncello. The surveys on the small village have been centered of the definition of the different architectonic typologies and on the different compounds of the rural buildings.

Considering the instructions given by the “Piano di sviluppo locale –Gal Valli del Canavese”, a developing local plan, which aim to the building of new paths and to the rehabilitation of the historical patrimony, it has been decided to build new paths in order to improve the connection between Cantoncello and the rest of the valley.

Using QGIS, new excursion paths have been projected. They involved three of the main historical paths of the valley, two of them are full of prehistoric rock writings, and Cantoncello is a key point for all of them.

The dynamics and the characteristics of the didactic construction site are explained in the last chapters of the dissertation. After defining a new masterplan of the project, which deals with the creation of new structures in the village to host people, past cases employed in Italy have been studied.

Then, a manual of useful practices of rehabilitation has been written. Several building techniques for the process are developed in this work. In particular, rehabilitation techniques and specific interventions have been detailed. The first are employed to rehabilitate existing buildings using traditional materials such as wood and rock. The latter are focused on the employment of materials taken from hemp, which people from this valley used to use a lot in the past.

Building site operations are described in the last chapter, they aim to the creation of the new distillery.

This project of a construction building site inside the village allows to rehabilitate the building in a uniform way according to precise instruction. Moreover, rehabilitating the historical aspects, such as the distillery, with wood and innovative materials, still of local origin like in the case of hemp, allows to accomplish an architectural work which doesn't oppose the soul of the place and the Alps context.

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