



**ICOMOS - CIAV**  
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Monuments and Sites

Comité International d'Architecture Vernaculaire

# CIAV NEWSLETTER



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# Editorial

By Berenice Aguilar Prieto, CIAV Member since 2020

It is a great honor to have been given the opportunity to compile Volume 47 of the CIAV Newsletter. The handover of CIAV Newsletter editorial duties coincides with the transfer to the 2021/23 CIAV Bureau. CIAV members thank Valeria Prieto for her work in producing the newsletter since 2007. Her contribution is very appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

This last year has brought sad and tough moments worldwide and will remain in our memories, as well as the impact of the resulting seclusion on our daily lives and communities. Due to the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic to this day, there is a feeling that 2020 is not over yet, at least its social, economic and health calamities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we teach, learn, express our feelings and communicate as humans. We have realized the great extent to which we depend on social media, Zoom and the internet. However, we should not take these tools and web-available data for granted since these are so often unavailable to the vernacular settlements and communities that we study. The ongoing pandemic will surely increase the technological gap between indigenous communities and the intellectual elites, such as our Committee.

The world-wide safety measures implemented to prevent the spread of the virus have halted CIAV and our members from holding an in-person annual conference, traveling to international meetings, and will likely suspend VERNADOC workshops. Furthermore, the safety measures have interrupted our academic field work as professors of vernacular architecture.

In this issue of the CIAV Newsletter, we have gathered introductory articles from two new CIAV members, an article about social acceptance of heritage conservation in Quebec from CIAV Bureau 2018/2020 Vice-President Maria Inés Subercaseaux, and the promotion poster of the joint Lund & Malmo Conference scheduled to take place in August 2021. Included in this issue is an address letter from Secretary-General, Ivan Enev and farewell letters from the 2018/2020 Bureau as well as happy memories of the 2011 CIAV meeting arranged in a poster shared by Maria Ines. Finally, our former president, Gisle Jackhelln, kindly wrote a heartfelt obituary to the recently passed CIAV member Olga Sevan.

New CIAV member Süheyla Koç shares her experience at the restoration company she previously worked for in Turkey. She has highlighted three of the company's restoration projects that involved old houses with clear and differentiated features according to their region. Süheyla points out the lack of general criteria in Turkey to restore vernacular heritage houses and that maintenance on these properties depends upon

the owner's economic capabilities.

Based on critical architectonic observation and Michel Foucault's power structure theory, new CIAV member Mónica Alcindor makes a series of considerations on the refurbishment of vernacular heritage when rural gentrification is a driving factor to the process of rehabilitation. As a case study, Mónica presents insight on Catalonia's Empordanet town and its main vernacular features. She points out that when these features are removed from their original context and interpreted from the lens of a socially constructed notion of the vernacular - a notion conformed by discourses of regional identity - vernacular features remain as surface treatments.

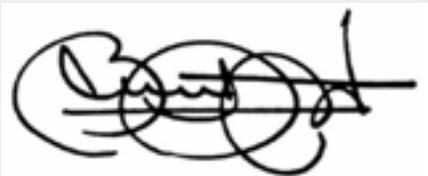
Maria Inés writes of social acceptance in heritage conservation, specifically in Québec, Canada. She touches on the development of heritage guidelines and policies and elaborates on the importance of public engagement and collaborative design strategies, including examples of successful projects in Montréal.

Malmö University and Kulturen Museum, under the patronage of ICOMOS Sweden, will host the international conference on "Earthen and wood vernacular heritage and climate change" at the end of August 2021. The conference will be a joint effort between four ICOMOS scientific committees and its organization has been led by CIAV Bureau 2021/2023 Co-Vice President Marwa Dabaieh. A link to the conference site and general program is included in the promotion poster.

The 2021/2023 Bureau has discussed the possibility of developing outlines for future CIAV newsletter contributions as well as creating an editorial committee. CIAV Bureau 2021/2023 Co-Vice President Shao Yong will furthermore serve as the editor of the CIAV Newsletter – please reach out to her or the Bureau with any suggestions.

Last but not least, I am grateful to Ivan Enev for his continuous support in the process of gathering this information and the many discussions we had regarding the contents of this newsletter. I am indebted to Erin Guerra for her generous and valuable help reviewing my English. I also thank the contributors for this issue, namely Süheyla Koç, Mónica Alcindor and Maria Inés Subercaseaux.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shao Yong', written over a white background.

Dear Fellow-Members and Friends,

While this should have been the last issue of our newsletter for 2020, marking a symbolic closing in a way, it now marks a new beginning, or rather — a meaningful continuation of a great tradition that has become truly inherent to CIAV. Established by our former Vice-President and Secretary-General, Mrs. Valeria Prieto, the newsletter has become our vernacular way of sharing ideas, news, headlines, and of simply staying in touch.

In 2020, Valeria decided to pass over the newsletter editing to the new Bureau as of 2021. In turn, one of CIAV's new Vice-Presidents, Ms. Shao Yong, was appointed as the new editor-in-chief for the current cycle. Our fellow-member Berenice Aguilar Prieto has kindly taken over the responsibility for compiling and editing the last issue, planned for 2020. For her stepping forward and for putting together a truly enjoyable reading, despite the challenging process of collecting publication material, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude.

The meaningful continuation of the CIAV newsletter is clearly among the strategic goals of the Bureau. Its scope was discussed thoroughly at the last Bureau meeting in December 2020. In light of this, it is important to point out that the Bureau members do not perceive the newsletter as an academic periodical, but rather as a platform for connecting, reaching out, sharing and communicating within the CIAV network. So, please do not shy away from sending through any news, ideas, comments, articles that you might want to share. We count on the active engagement of each and every one of you to keeping this worthwhile tradition vibrant, and to staying actively connected – now in more ways than ever.

To an extent, the uniqueness of the current issue also owes to its coincidence with the transition of the CIAV Bureau. In March 2020, following a successful online-based format for the Bureau elections in line with the new CIAV By-Laws, we welcomed our new Bureau members for the cycle 2021/23 — Hossam Mahdy (President, ICOMOS UK), Marwa Dabaieh (Vice-President, ICOMOS Sweden), Shao Yong (Vice-President, ICOMOS China), Ivan Enev (Secretary-General, ICOMOS Bulgaria). Later in December 2020, a new Emerging Professional Representative (EP-Rep) for CIAV at the EPWG (Emerging Professionals Working Group) was appointed — Ms. Erin Guerra (US ICOMOS), who will be working closely with both Shao Yong on the newsletter, and with the new Bureau on the topics, concerning EPs.

Many thanks to all authors and organisers for their energy and impetus.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy, fulfilling and inspiring 2021 on behalf of both the outgoing and the new CIAV Bureaus! We hope you'd enjoy this special issue and look forward to seeing you in person again soon.

Yours,  
*Ivan*

ISC ICOMOS CIAV Secretary-General 2021-2023



# THE RESIDENTIAL VERNACULAR HERITAGE OF KONYA AND CONSERVATION PROBLEMS

Süheyla Koç

In Turkey, there is a rich variety of research on Turkish houses, their plan typologies, and construction techniques. In keeping with a widely accepted theory (Kuban, 1982:45), the construction techniques vary according to the region. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the main types of regional techniques are as follows: masonry architecture in the Southeast Anatolia Region; masonry architecture supported with timber-beam in the East Anatolia Region; wooden frame architecture in the Eastern Black Sea Region; flat-roofed cubic stone architecture in both the Aegean and Mediterranean Regions; adobe architecture in the Central Anatolia; and masonry architecture in the east part of Central Anatolia. Apart from these, there is a common technique called “*hımış*” that is seen in almost every part of Turkey. It uses stone for the foundation work; the first floor is built as masonry and on the second floor, a wooden frame is constructed and filled with adobe, stone, gypsum, or brick.

	<b>Acknowledged Construction Technique</b>	<b>Available materials</b>
<b>Marmara Region</b>	Wooden frame with wooden boarding, <i>hımış</i> technique	Wood, stone A
<b>Aegean Region</b>	Flat-roofed cubic masonry architecture, <i>hımış</i> technique	Wood, stone M
<b>Mediterranean Region</b>	Flat-roofed cubic masonry architecture, <i>hımış</i> technique	Wood, stone S
<b>Southeastern Anatolia Region</b>	Masonry architecture	Stone, earth
<b>Eastern Anatolia Region</b>	Masonry architecture supported with timber-beams	Stone C
<b>Central Anatolia Region</b>	Adobe architecture, masonry architecture, <i>hımış</i> technique	Earth, stone, wood B
<b>Black Sea Region</b>	Wooden frame (characteristic to this region), <i>hımış</i> technique	Wood

Table 1. Construction techniques of vernacular residential heritage in Turkey according to the region



Figure 1. Construction techniques of the vernacular residential architecture in different regions of Turkey

Nevertheless, detailed local inventories usually reveal further aspects in terms of region specific details and additional factors affecting the preferences for certain construction techniques.

The present article is a result of selected projects, carried out by the companies I worked in. Three case studies are discussed in terms of architectural features and related ideas regarding the protection and the restoration of several prominent sites.

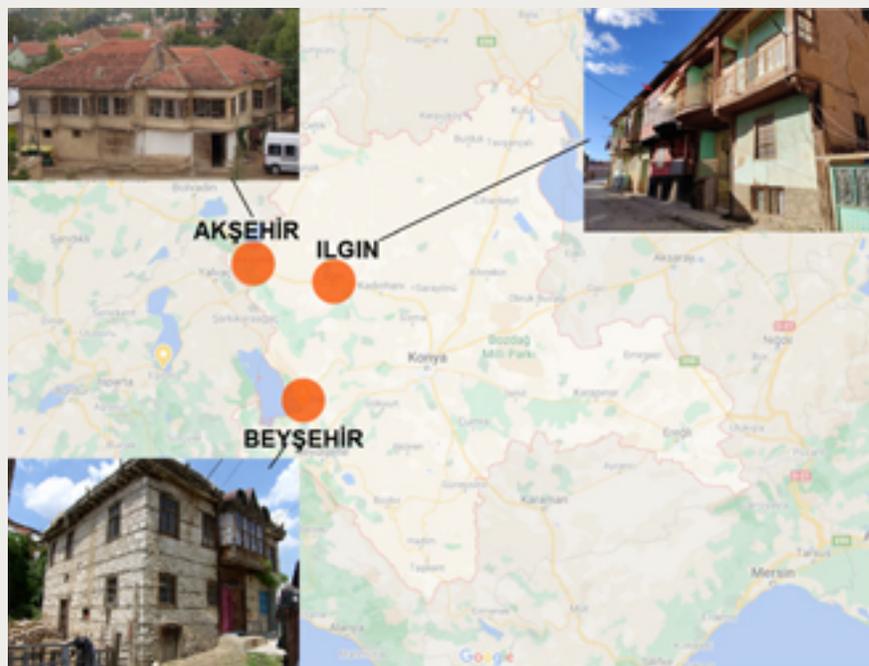


Figure 2. Construction techniques of the vernacular residential architecture in different regions of Turkey

The case studies are three residential vernacular heritage sites, located in different regions of Konya city. Konya is the largest city in Turkey in terms of area. The common construction system of the Konya houses is the adobe brick system. The case studies are from different districts of Konya - Ilgın, Beyşehir Yeşildağ, and Akşehir Karahöyük. These districts are located in the west part of Konya, at a distance of 40 to 100 km from each other. However, both the construction techniques and the architectural styles of these dwellings vary, as shown in Figure 2. The houses in Ilgın are located in the district center. While Yeşildağ is a town in Beyşehir district, Karahöyük is the village of Akşehir. The case studies were chosen to represent different levels of urbanization of the environment in order to reveal whether the location, be it central or peripheral, has an impact on the preferences on the construction style.

The first case study is from Ilgın, a historical settlement of Konya. Most of the vernacular houses here date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two types of houses exist in the region - the local traditional type, and the "foreign" houses. They both exist along the same street - on the one side are the traditional adobe brick houses with bay windows (bay windows on the first floor), and on the opposite side are the wooden frame structure houses with balconies and entrances, lifted above the street level (Figure 3). The reason for the difference is attributed to the fact that Armenians used to live in the *foreign* houses and they brought their building technique from Istanbul. However, in Istanbul, this technique was used by both Turks and foreigners due to the metropolitan character of the city during the Ottoman period. There was a lively exchange of cultures and techniques at that time.



Figure 3. Ilgın houses; traditional houses on the left, foreign houses on the right (CERAY Architecture, 2010)

Throughout Anatolia, the influence of the lifestyle on the buildings can be observed in both the typology and the construction techniques. As in other examples, the traditional houses interact with the street only through their bay windows. The rest of the house is kept closed to the outside, designed to be more introverted. Tradi-

tionally, the façades would have limited openings due to the cold climate (Figure 4). The *foreign* houses were built more open towards the street with both a bay window and a balcony. While traditional houses were built detached, which allows having four distinct façades and a garden/courtyard in the background, the *foreign* houses were built adjacently (Figure 5-6). When Turkish people started adopting the *foreign* typology, the gardens in the backyard were equipped with tall walls for privacy, and built in adobe. The preference for certain materials was connected to the economic situation of the landlord. While adobe was easily available and cheap, both wood and metal elements were expensive and had to be imported. And so, this street gained importance in terms of showcasing the co-living of different cultures.



Figure 4. Traditional Houses in Ilgın (CERAY Architecture, 2010)



Figure 5. Foreign houses in Ilgın (CERAY Architecture, 2010)



Figure 6. The construction system of the foreign houses (CERAY Architecture, 2010)

In 2010, a street rehabilitation project was prepared with the scope of improving the physical condition of the sites. The project, it was focused on restoration of original features, lost during previous interventions by the landlords, and on strengthening and reconstruction of the dilapidated houses. Following this project, in 2016, the municipality decided to expropriate the houses, both local traditional and *foreign* ones, and use them as guest houses. The loss of function in vernacular houses due to economic problems of the owner is a widespread issue. In most cases, the municipalities expropriate or buy the buildings and give them a commercial function such as cafés, hotels, restaurants, etc. In this case, some problems occurred in the process of expropriation and the project could not be implemented. As a result, the state of conservation of the street had not been improved in the last ten years, which has caused an increase in the deterioration (Figure 7).



Figure 7. The current state of the foreign houses (Arslantaş, 2020)

The second case study is Durmuş Ali Güzel House, located in the town of Yeşildağ, in the Beyşehir district of Konya. This dwelling is an example of an outstanding traditional housing style of this region - the house with towers (*kuleli ev*) (Figure 8). Locals call the bay windows “*kule* (tower)” and all the examples of this style have such windows, sharing similar features (Figure 9). In this house, the pediment of the bay window consists of one triangular shape in the middle and two semi-circle shapes on the sides with ornamentation typical of the period. In this structural style, masonry is used in combination with wooden girders, built in at an interval of about 70 cm. Furthermore, there are short wooden girders placed in the transversal direction of the wall. The roof is built as a flat earthen roof system. The reason for using wooden beams and girders with frequent intervals might be linked to the seismic activity of the region.



Figure 8. Durmuş Ali Güzel House in Beyşehir Yeşildağ (CERAY Architecture, 2010)



Figure 9. The other houses in the region (CERAY Architecture, 2010)

This building has no major structural problems; however, the roof system and the bay window at the rear had deteriorated. Thus, the restoration project gives priority to the restoration of the roof system. The original flat earthen roof needs regular maintenance - after every rain, yearly. For this reason, the owner had requested a change to a tiled hipped roof for ease of maintenance. The request was approved by the Conservation Council.

The last case study is from Karahüyük village of Akşehir district. Karahüyük houses were heritage-listed due to their construction techniques. They were thought to have been built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, a detailed investigation and series of interviews with the residents of the village revealed that these houses were built in the 1950s, following a 19<sup>th</sup> century-technique. The tradition of this technique was kept alive until the 1980s, as there were enough traditional materials and qualified master-builders, familiarized with the traditional details. Although both the plan and the façade typologies may vary, the construction techniques are the same (Figure 10).

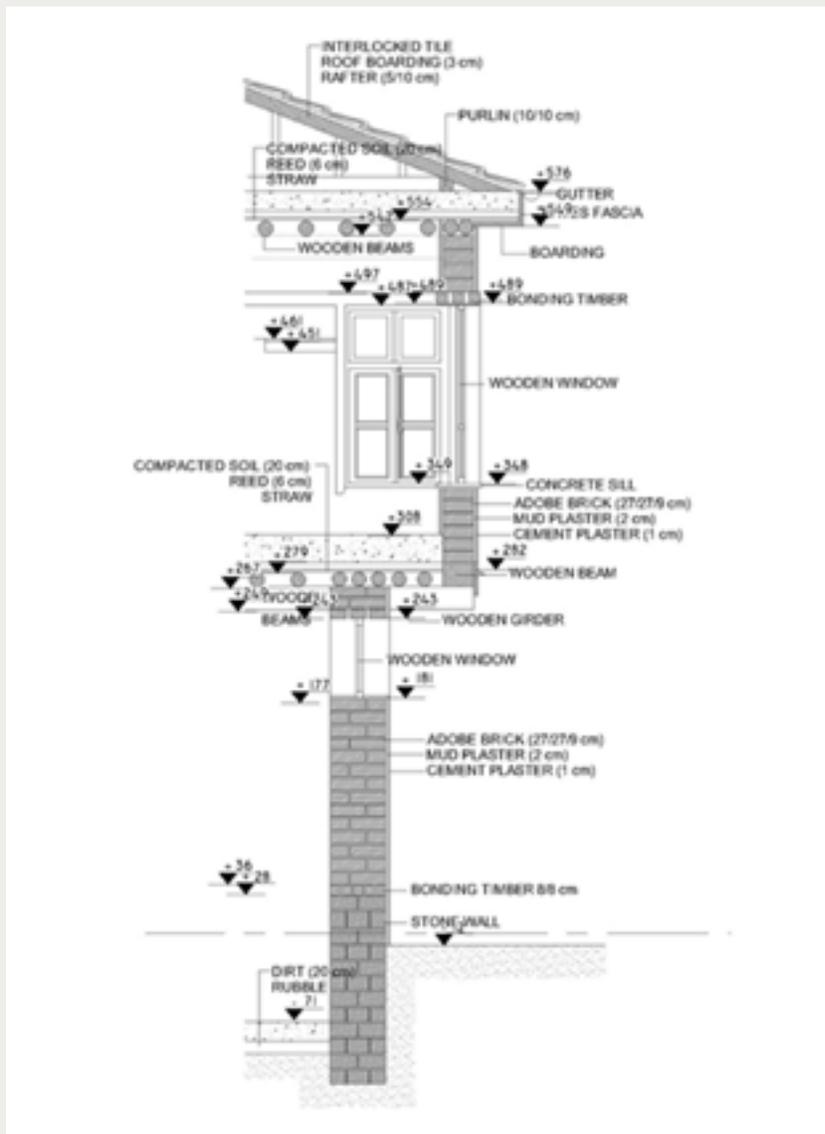


Figure 10. Construction details of the Karahüyük houses (Koç, 2019:527)

Korkmaz House is an outstanding example of this building typology (Figure 11). The building was originally constructed resembling similar examples. The poplars, used for the construction of the house had been planted for this very purpose in advance. The earth for the adobe bricks was retrieved from the fields called *zıva* (plaster earth). The straw was provided from local barns, while rush mat and reed were brought from Doğrugöz village. The stone, the tiles and the concrete materials were also purchased in Akşehir. The master carpenters, famous for their craftsmanship, came from Doğrugöz village, located only some 6 km away. The whole building process, from the material supply to the maintenance following the construction, was thus sustainable.

However, popularisation of concrete, new lifestyles, desire for contemporary comfort, and migration of many locals to the cities have led to the general neglect of these buildings. Korkmaz House was once inhabited by a family with seven children, and the house provided a room for each child to inhabit along with their future partner. Today, only one old couple lives here, using a single room.



Figure 11. Korkmaz House in Akşehir Karahüyük (Koç, 2011)

The main purpose of the restoration project is to protect the building without compromising its authenticity, and to accommodate the necessary amenities, corresponding with the comfort of modern life. The continuous use of the building could ensure its lasting protection. The removal of accretions and the reconstruction of the roof system with the right details are the priorities of the project. Spatial rearrangements, considering the needs of the users, are suggested. For the modern comfort, the necessary wet spaces are separated from the rooms by a new drywall construction with gypsum boards in order to protect the adobe elements, and to prevent overloading of the structure.

## Evaluation and Discussion

The three neighboring districts of Konya have preserved examples of the Marmara Region (Ilgın), the Central Anatolia Region (Karahöyük), and the Eastern Anatolia Region (Yeşildağ) traditional dwelling styles. Thus, the case studies were also evaluated in terms of the factors informing the preference of the discussed construction techniques. According to Table 2, the seismic activity, the available materials and the origin of the master-builders have influenced the construction techniques stronger than the geographic location, the construction time, and the type of location – central or peripheral. The cultural background of the landlord affects both the façade typology and the construction technique. The economic situation has an impact on the size of the building as well as its façade features.

	<b>Ilgın Houses Traditional</b>	<b>Ilgın Houses Foreign</b>	<b>Yeşildağ Houses</b>	<b>Karahöyük Houses C</b>
<b>Construction technique</b>	Adobe brick	Wooden frame, lath and plaster	Masonry supported with timber-beam	Adobe brick C
<b>Construction time</b>	19th century	19th century	19th century	20th century
<b>Region</b>	Central Anatolia	Central Anatolia	Central Anatolia	Central Anatolia
<b>Urban level</b>	District center	District center	Town	Village
<b>Available materials</b>	Earth	Earth	Stone and wood	Earth
<b>Earthquake zone</b>	1	1	3	1
<b>Features of the landlord (Culture, religion, etc)</b>	Turk, Muslim	Armenian, Christian	Turk, Muslim	Turk, Muslim
<b>The economic situation of the landlord</b>	Medium	Rich	Medium	Poor
<b>Master/carpenter</b>	Local	Istanbul	Local	Local

Table 2. The comparison of the prevalent factors of the different construction techniques in the same region

The discussed restoration projects share a common approach to keeping original features and as much as possible original material, removing inadequate accretions, returning the structure to its original state, and providing modern comfort without drastic changes. In the case of İlgin, due to the problems in the expropriation process, the project could not be implemented as planned. In the case of Durmuş Ali Güzel House, there was no major structural deformation, which resulted in the withdrawal of government subsidy so that the landlord could only afford the general maintenance of the roof instead of its reconstruction as designed in the project. Implementations took place only in the Korkmaz House, to an extent with the help of the government subsidy.

In Turkey, both the ownership and the party, responsible for the restoration work, depend on the heritage typology. In the case of vernacular residential houses, the buildings mostly belong either to the citizen or to the municipality. However, the municipality or the Directorate of the Surveying and Monuments are in charge of overseeing the restoration works. Each year, there are around 20% government subsidies made available for a limited number of projects. Korkmaz House was eligible to receive this grant but the owner still had to cover the expenses in part. This only allowed for the repair of the existing roof and restoration of the windows and plasters. The removal of accretions, the rebuilding of the roof as planned, the additions for the wet spaces could not be covered by the budget.

Another problem was whether to keep the original wooden windows with single-glazing or to replace them again with wooden windows with double-glazing, causing an alteration of the original window detail.

Retaining authenticity and satisfying modern comfort desires were placed on a scale. Furthermore, the original window of the only inhabited room in the house had already been replaced a PVC one. Thus, following the approval of the Conservation Council, it was decided to introduce wooden windows with double-glazing.

Finding the right carpenter, familiar with the original details posed another challenge to this project. There were carpenters, with whom the Directorate of the Surveying and Monuments usually worked, but they were not experienced in this region. And so, the carpenters from Doğrugöz, entrusted with the restoration works, proved to be the best choice for the task, as their ancestors had built the dwelling in the first place.

Along with the similarities in terms of the conservation approach, the above projects shared one common problem, linked to copyrights. Ten years ago, the copyright of a restoration project belonged to the architect who prepared the project and if a need for changing the project during the implementation phase occurred, it was not possible to go ahead without the approval of the initial architect. Recently, in the case of urgent actions, this rule is being interpreted as time and money-wasting, esp. in the context of tender bids, and the copyright is to be transferred mandatorily to the

responsible organization. This however deprives the architects, authors of the original designs, from the opportunity to supervise the restoration works on-site, and leaves them uninformed on the project amendments. In this line of thought, the Ilgın Houses Street Rehabilitation Project started with the aim of rehabilitating the street with original features and functions, but this concept was changed in 2016 and sought to convert the buildings into guest houses – an alteration, which entailed the design of a new project to deal with the adaptive reuse of the houses. Even though these projects could not be implemented due to the problems on the expropriation process, the successive projects that followed meant investing even more time and money.

In sum, the overall problems of the restoration of vernacular heritage are not so different from the general problems of the conservation of the cultural heritage in Turkey, namely - the management system, which delegates the whole responsibility to the owner; the lack of regular control; the tender bidding system, which favours both projects and companies with the cheapest proposal; the different stakeholders (owner, municipality, Conservation Council, etc. ) operate from too different points of view; the need for community participation and transparency of the processes; the availability of qualified master-builders, familiar with the traditional techniques; and so on. The economic aspect as well has a great impact on the restoration works. The rates of the government subsidies and some alternative financial mechanisms, such as forms of public-private partnership for restoration project, for instance, should be reconsidered. The change of function for the sake of tourism alone poses another threat to this type of heritage. However, with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, only the local people can currently benefit from this heritage and have the responsibility to look after it. Thus, the need for changing both the perception of vernacular heritage and the means for its management should be reconsidered, without disregarding its values.

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# **REFURBISHMENT, VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE, AND INVENTED TRADITIONS: THE CASE OF THE EMPORDANET (CATALONIA)**

Mónica Alcindor

## **Introduction**

Rural areas have been broadly affected by the migration of new social groups. Until the 1990s, those processes were mainly observed in English-speaking countries (Phillips 1998a and 1998b). However, since the 2000s, there has been increasing evidence of this phenomenon in broader territorial contexts, with Spain among them (Solana 2010; Alonso González 2017). Processes of rural migration are frequently associated with touristic development and class issues. Thus, the new settlers have frequently been depicted as creative, middle-class urbanites (Cloke et al. 1995).

Additionally, rural urbanization is closely related to the vindication of heritage and with the refurbishment of the existing stock of historical buildings (Phillips 1993; Alonso González 2017). Heritage, particularly in the case of vernacular architecture, is a complex issue that has material elements as well as strong discursive features (Tuñçoku et al. 2015; Donovan and Gkartzios 2014). In discursive terms, three main elements must be highlighted: tradition, identity, and, in some cases, nationalism (Turkun-Erendil and Ulusoy 2002; McNeill and Tewdwr-Jones 2003). Those elements are changing, and disputed issues have experienced slow but deep transformations in terms of erosion, invention, and hybridisation (Barke and Parks 2016; Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983; Jones 2006 and 2009; Maudlin 2010).

Such discursive devices are related to agents' behaviours. There is a wide variety of agents involved in contemporary building processes: traditional builders, architects, regulators, final clients, and the like. Governmentality understands agents' behaviours as a result of the confluence of multiple processes, particularly, the visibilisation and invisibilisation of certain facts and dynamics, the social construction of knowledge, the unequal distribution of discursive capabilities, and 'the conduct of the conduct'. In this way, the concept of governmentality allows a contradictory issue to be approached. On the one hand, agents enjoy high levels of autonomy. On the other hand, they undergo complex processes of social modelling (Dean 1999; Foucault 2000; Jessop

2007).

In such a way, rehabilitation can be regarded as the invention of architectural forms by autonomous and widely modelled agents in the context of the asymmetrical distribution of power. In this context, the objective of this article is to analyse the role of the rehabilitation of vernacular architecture in a Catalan peri-urban region (the *Empordanet*), inquiring into the relationship between rehabilitation, heritage, tradition, and identity as well as insisting on agents' behaviour and governmentality. The main purpose of this article is to contribute to the deconstruction of the changes in architectural practices and the materiality of the processes of rehabilitation of vernacular architecture. Thus, this article can be included in the wider academic literature about heritage, tradition, and vernacular architecture while providing a more focused view on strictly architectural factors, such as materials and construction techniques (Alonso González 2017; Barke and Parks 2017).

In this sense, we try to answer questions such as the following: Does the refurbishment of singular buildings maintain some pristine architectural traditions and forms? Or, on the contrary, does it have to be understood as the result of the erosion, invention, and hybridisation of various traditional and modern elements? Has the vernacular architecture of the *Empordanet* been colonised by global expert knowledge and building practices? Does the refurbishment of the *Empordanet's* vernacular architecture contribute to the generation of a new and socially differentiated space? Are local agents empowered as a result of the rehabilitation processes? Is traditional knowledge recovered, and, if so, who recovers and controls this knowledge?

The case of the *Empordanet* is especially well-suited to the analysis of these issues for two main reasons. On the one hand, it is an area with a relevant and distinctive architectural tradition, associated with specific architectural forms, such as the *masía*. Such dwellings are also related to a certain idea of the Catalan identity and nationalism (Martí 1990). On the other hand, in recent years, the *Empordanet* has undergone an intense process of urban migration linked with the rehabilitation of the existing stock of buildings (Solana 2010).

This article will be organised as follows. In the next section, it will present the theoretical framework that focuses on the interactions between tradition, heritage, and identity in the broader context of governmentality. In the third section, the specific features of the area of study will be exposed. In the fourth section, the methodology used in the research, which is based on a pluralistic approach supported by dialogue between distinct kinds of research techniques, will be explained. The fifth section will focus on the analysis of a case study of the *Empordanet*, presenting the structure, functionality, construction processes, and materials associated with traditional buildings in their original context. In the sixth section, the processes of the rehabilitation of vernacular housing in the *Empordanet* will be analysed, with a special focus on changes in materials and construction processes. Finally, in the seventh section, the main conclusions will be presented.

## Urbanisation, rurality, and the social construction of tradition

In recent years, rural areas have experienced significant migratory processes, which have significantly transformed their distinctive features. Initially, these phenomena were observed in English-speaking countries and were associated with a pastoralist vision that emphasised the environmental, anti-urban, and community-related elements associated with the idea of the rural idyll (Bell 2006). Thus, rural areas were presented as bastions of heritage and tradition and considered more authentic, natural, innocent spaces (Lagerqvist 2014; Shucksmith 2018). Afterwards, these processes were expanded to other spatial environments observed in such diverse contexts as continental Europe, Turkey, Russia, and Latin America (Mamonova and Sutherland 2015; Cardoso 2013). In any case, these processes featured a strong class component, with new rural immigrants typically urban and middle-class in origin and included in the so-called creative classes (Cloke et al. 1995).

In rural areas, heritage is strongly associated with the conservation of vernacular architecture (Selman 2010; Donovan and Gkartzios 2014). Such representations are related to perceptions of vernacular architecture as an original expression of ancestral, naturalised values (Jones 2006). Architecture is, therefore, considered an essential element of the landscape. It is also socially constructed as the manifestation of a common cultural legacy expressed in a set of traditions. Thus, architectural forms are often seen as the mode in which these traditions are embodied as a set of pristine and immanent elements (Handler and Linnekin 1984; Sağıroğlu 2017).

However, traditions tend to assume increasingly fluid forms, adopting new elements slowly but continuously (Briggs 1996). In this sense, processes of hybridization between tradition and modernity can occur from various starting positions. There may be a relatively egalitarian dialogue between traditional and expert (modern) knowledge. In this case, some 'traditional' agents may become socially recognized and empowered (Agrawal 1995; García-Esparza 2015). On the contrary, there can also be a strong preponderance of the modern component that tends to maintain only some formal aspects of traditions, generating processes of colonization and instrumentalisation of heritage (Spivak 1988; Lagerqvist 2016). In both cases, but quite differently, agents' actions can promote some processes of the invention of tradition, which are often influenced by identity issues and even by nationalism (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Turkun-Erendil et al. 2002).

Governmentality insists that such processes cannot be approached without considering a wide set of agents' behaviours. Governmentality stresses that agents have high levels of autonomy. Thus, the conservation of vernacular architecture is considered the result of a broad set of autonomous decisions made by various agents as homeowners, regulators, architects, masons, local artisans, developers, and so on. However, governmentality simultaneously emphasises that agents' behaviours are also deeply modelled by social features related to the micro-social distribution of power (Dean

1999; Foucault 2000).

Such features are expressed in various ways. Firstly, there is the visibilisation and invisibilisation of specific events and processes. For instance, some forms of tradition are reinforced and others neglected, or there may be a social dispute over their meaning (Apaydin 2017). Secondly, discourses about 'authentic' traditions and the meaning of the vernacular are produced. Some of them become prevalent and are socially validated, turning into 'authorized heritage discourses' (Smith 2006). Consequently, they may be reflected in various texts, like laws and regulations, for instance (Del Mármol 2017; Dines 2018). Sometimes they are also closely connected with the social construction of (national) identities (Jones 2006; McNeill and Tewdwr-Jones 2003). Finally, 'authorized heritage discourses' have a prevalent role in the processes of agents' self-limitation, that is, in the so-called 'conduct of the conduct'. Agents limit themselves for various reasons, some of which include components of conviction or self-interest, often in an effort to avoid possible social sanctions. Therefore, in the expressions of agents' self-limitation, there are relevant, but not exclusive, ethical factors. Such a process of modelling of the agents' actions can generate various architectural practices (Graham et al. 2000; Smith 2006).

In this context of a growing claim to tradition and heritage associated with the dynamics of governmentality, the phenomenon of rural gentrification has become particularly intense in the recent past (Solana 2010; Mamonova and Sutherland 2015). Gentrification is a concept with a broad genealogy that has mainly been applied to urban environments but also has a long tradition in rural contexts (Phillips 1993). Gentrification is understood in multiple ways. However, in the debate about gentrification, there is an increasing emphasis on the relationship between socio-economic processes (such as class dynamics and uneven circulation of capital) along with elements of aesthetic and physical changes in the stock of housing, transformation of the national heritage, searches for specific lifestyles, identity creation, and even affective and emotional issues (Phillips 2014). Thus, the meaning of the term is far from univocal, having been generated by variegated geographies of gentrification (Martin 2004; Lees 2012).

The Spanish state has been strongly affected by the processes of rural gentrification. However, rural restructuring has taken on some distinctive features in Spain. On the one hand, the modernization of the Spanish economy during the 20th century started much later than in other European countries. Even in 1959, Spain was still an essentially agrarian country, with the majority of its population living in rural areas (Barciela and Lopez 2003). From 1960-80, it underwent a process of massive agrarian modernization, industrial development, and rural-urban migration (Naredo 2004). Consequently, many areas became depopulated (Hoggart and Paniagua 2001). Thus, there was a large stock of rural dwellings without any economic function. On the other hand, alternatives to agriculture were generally poorly developed in rural settings, at least until the mid-1990s. Therefore, ideas such as the rural idyll were quite unrelated to the Spanish rural context (Hoggart and Paniagua 2001). Rather, the problem was the opposite: how to conserve a huge stock of buildings with obvious cultural value in

which few people seemed interested (Agudo 1999). In any case, this is a general description, with strong regional differences existing inside Spain. In the case of Catalonia, for example, there was more development of non-agrarian activities in rural environments, resulting in enhanced levels of social diversity (Hoggart and Paniagua 2001).

In any case, the situation in Spain changed radically from the mid-1990s onwards for three main reasons. First, there was hypertrophy of the real estate sector, especially before the burst of the housing bubble and the financial crisis of 2007. The real estate bubble was so intense that it affected a large part of the rural territories, often allowing the valorisation of the existing stock of underutilized or poorly maintained rural properties. Second, there was a massive investment in infrastructure that was strongly associated with the quantitative increase in, and increasing complexity of, mobility patterns (Marquet and Miralles-Guasch 2017). Third, there has been a growing trend in tourism to bypass the traditional model of 'sun and beach', which has spread its effects over much of the territory (Cuadrado-Ciuraneta et al. 2017).

The idea of the rural idyll in Spain has been related to active strategies of real estate valorisation associated with a context of partial and selective migration from the city to the countryside as well as the intense development of tourism (Paniagua 2002). Catalonia, as a territory included within the Spanish state, shares these dynamics, and, in some cases, such as that of tourism, it reflects them in an especially pronounced way (Cuadrado-Ciuraneta et al. 2017). The existence, since the 19th century, of a discourse associated with the '*Renaixença*' movement has also contributed to the idea that rural environments should be considered the best custodians of ancestral Catalan culture based on the idea of a typified, idealised village (Sala 2016). The *Empordanet's* case must be considered in this socio-territorial context.

### **Area of study and socio-economic features of the refurbishment clients**

The area of study is in what is locally known as the *Empordanet*: that is, municipalities located in the northern part of the Baix Empordà. Specifically, the municipalities included in this work do not exceed 1,500 inhabitants: Albons, Bellcaire d'Empordà, Colomers, Corça, Cruïlles, Monells, Sant Sadurní de l'Heura, Foixà, Fontanilles, Forallac, Garrigoles, Gualta, Jafre, Palau-sator, Parlavà, La Pera, Regencós, Rupjà, Serra de Darò, Tallada d'Empordà, Torrent, Ullastret, Ullà, Ultramort, Verges, and Vilopriu i Vall-llobrega.

The Baix Empordà is one of the regions of Old Catalonia (*Catalunya Vella*), characterised since the Middle Ages by a strong distribution of land ownership. In turn, this fact has been associated with the prevalence of smaller buildings. The emergence of the first hints of Catalan nationalism in the 19th century led to the identification of these elements with the essential values of a tradition understood in a pristine sense (Ripoll 1983; Camps i Arboix 1969). These were good conditions for the valorisation of heritage because of the confluence of tradition, identity, and a pristine, idealized concept of the nation. The *Empordanet* is a highly humanised area in which landscapes are stron-

gly related to cultural elements and are particularly associated with vernacular architecture. Thus, the landscape is considered a scenario in which aesthetics, picturesque views, and romantic perceptions of nature play an essential role. For this reason, it has become very attractive to tourists and those looking to buy second homes in the recent past (Solana 2010).



Map 1. Location of the Baix Empordà in Catalonia/Spain and detailed map of the area of study (Empordanet)

In contrast to the coastal areas, in the interior of the Baix Empordà (which corresponds to the *Empordanet*), the type of vernacular building associated with traditional landscapes has been maintained (Cuadrado-Ciuraneta et al. 2017). A strong authorized heritage discourse has become embodied in specific legislation that has significantly aided in containing the effects of peri-urbanisation. Territorial planning is mainly a consequence of the regional administration that has been developed through Catalonia's 2005 Urbanism Law (*Llei d'Urbanisme de Catalunya*). This law requires that each municipality have an Urban Development Plan that defines all the actions that may take place within its territorial limits. These plans must be approved by the regional administration. At present, many of these plans have not been definitively approved. Therefore, the approval of rehabilitation and new buildings on undeveloped land (which are not in a catalogue of farmhouses and rural houses) is subject to reports from various administrative agencies (Gifreu 2012). As will be seen below, this regulation and its associated discursive constructs are the foundation of a micro-power game between multiple agents (developers, architects, homeowners, and so on) in the broader context of governmentality (Dean 1999). In particular, legal requirements lengthen the process and make licensing difficult, preventing dramatic transformations of the landscape. Therefore, a specific institutional design is observed that responds to authorized heritage discourses and that tends to activate the 'heritage machine' in specific ways (Smith 2006; Alonso González 2015).

The urban pressure on the *Empordanet* has been particularly intense due to its proxi-

mity to Barcelona (approximately 115 km), which, like other Mediterranean cities, has undergone strong processes of peri-urban expansion in recent years (Catalán et al. 2008; Chorianopoulos et al. 2010). The massive building of infrastructure (motorways, suburban trains, the Gerona- Barcelona high-speed train) has contributed to such processes, which have substantially modified the patterns of mobility and residence around Barcelona (Marquet and Miralles- Guasch 2017).

An indicator of the attractiveness of the *Empordanet* is the average price of the houses, refurbished or not. Old buildings, and even ruins, situated on plots of undeveloped land can reach prices ranging from 1,000 euros/m<sup>2</sup> to 1,200 euros/m<sup>2</sup>. If, according to the current comfort parameters, the houses are finished and ready to be inhabited, their average price is approximately 2,500 euros/m<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, a refurbished house of approximately 100 m<sup>2</sup> has an average value of approximately 250,000 euros. These prices are well beyond the local purchasing power, particularly that of young people. The average personal annual income in the *Empordanet* was 13,400 euros in 2014, according to the Statistical Catalan Institute. Therefore, one of the consequences of the increase in housing prices is that many of the local young people have been forced to live in nearby municipalities with less aesthetic and scenic appeal. Thus, there are, in the *Empordanet's* case, relevant class features that could be associated with processes of rural gentrification (Solana, 2010).

## Methodology

In the present research, an architectural-social integrated approach has been used, in which a dialogue has been established between various quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The quantitative part of the analysis is supported by a compilation and statistical analysis of the projects approved by the College of Architects between 1997 and 2012. A total of 732 rehabilitation projects were identified, of which 623 were for single-family housing and 57 for hotel uses, mainly rural tourism. Subsequently, 44 of those 732 cases were selected for analysis, specifically of the following types of documentation: descriptive memories, construction reports, measurements, and construction drawings. Graphic information and descriptive reports provided information about the previous state of buildings and the solutions proposed for their recovery.

The qualitative phase was based on three main elements. On the one hand, 63 semi-structured interviews with relevant agents in the context of refurbishment were conducted, specifically with 28 architects, 21 builders, and 14 materials distributors, masons, and other professionals. The criterion for conducting the interviews was the saturation of the sample. In other words, we conducted interviews until the answers became repetitive. As will be described, the greatest variability of responses occurred among the architects. In this sense, they proved to be a fundamental type of agent in the definition of the content of the projects.



Figure 1. Examples of the houses before and during the intervention (Empordanet) (Alcindor)



Figure 2. Examples of refurbished houses (Empordanet) (Alcindor)

On the other hand, in situ observation of projects (some of which had been completed and others that were in the process of execution) has been another essential part of the qualitative phase. This is another mode of documentary analysis with a relevant architectonic element in which the object of analysis is the building itself. Finally, the relevance of participant observations made as a result of the professional career as an architect of one of the authors of this article must be highlighted. In this capacity, she has participated in the management of 25 rehabilitation projects. This professional experience has provided her with an intimate knowledge of the activities of agents, such

as local developers and masons. This experience has also allowed a deeper investigation of the complexity of the construction solutions commonly used in rehabilitation.

In any case, the complementarity of the various research techniques used must be stressed. In this sense, the search for connections between the agents' speeches, the architects' designs, and the reality that can be seen in the finished works and the ensemble of constructive processes that explains those results has been of central importance.

## **Uses, structures, and materials in the vernacular architecture of the Empordanet**

### ***The traditional structure of vernacular housing in the Empordanet***

The traditional architecture of the Empordanet must be framed in a socio-economic context based on the exploitation of the local natural resources, mainly through agricultural and livestock-raising activities. In this sense, both in country houses (*masías*) and houses located in population centres, the ground floor was used for agricultural or livestock-raising activities, frequently as a stable. In the case of *masías*, the ground floor was organised around a large but underutilised hall in the central bay, at the end of which was a staircase that connected to the first floor. The rooms dedicated to the family residence used to be located on this floor. The lower deck was used for food storage and allowed the isolation of the main floor from external conditions during the winter. Similarly, it acted as an air chamber that prevented the house from overheating in the summer.

Therefore, the traditional structure of the *masía* is characterized by two elements of limited utility at present. On the one hand, a large portion of the space was destined for agricultural and storage activities. On the other hand, the actual residential space was relatively small. Additionally, '...as far as the *masía* is concerned, one of the factors that make it even more difficult to establish its typology is, at the same time, one of its main characteristics: its capacity for growth' (Martí 1990 p. 515). Thus, as in many types of vernacular construction, such houses could be enlarged according to the productive needs of the neighbouring lands. Therefore, such structures must be understood as temporary and open to change.

### ***The original materials of the vernacular architecture of the Empordanet***

The vernacular house of the *Empordanet* is directly associated with the materials used in its construction, among which three are particularly relevant: stone, lime, and wood. The walls of such vernacular buildings were built using ordinary masonry with stones from the surrounding area. Such stones were normally of low quality.

*'Every municipality or place has a stone... the stone that was not so good was used to make masonry.'*

Stones did not have a specific aesthetic meaning in the past. For this reason, it was common to coat them. Only a lack of means or maintenance prevented this procedure from being carried out. In this sense, covering the walls with an outer layer ensured greater durability because it protected the stones from weathering processes and it ensured greater interior impermeability of buildings. As can be seen below, the presence of dampness is one of the main characteristics of such buildings.



Figure 3. Wall enclosures (Alcindor)

Lime was an essential material for coating surfaces; thus, the architecture of the Empordanet was like the predominant style in other Mediterranean areas. Lime could be manufactured at any point because of the abundance of raw material (limestone) and the ease of construction of furnaces in the area. Normally, furnaces were situated to take advantage of the unevenness of the surrounding terrain, fed by the fire produced by the branches of the low forest at a relatively low temperature (900°C). The limestone of this area generates an impure form of lime.



Figure 4. Lime coating (Alcindor)

Finally, wood also played a key role. It was mainly used for structural purposes in the beams of the intermediate slabs as well as in the roofs. It was also used for non-structural elements, such as interior joinery and exterior finishing. In the case of wood with structural functions, the species used were white and black poplar (*Populus alba* and *Populus niger*). Both species grow close to a river in the immediate environment; however, they differ in many respects. White poplar growth is significantly slower than that of black, but it has greater resistance. However, many vernacular buildings were subject to budget constraints at the time of their construction, and builders had to use the materials that were available without much regard for the relatively less favourable characteristics of black poplar.



Figure 5. Wood structure

### ***Dominant construction practices in traditional vernacular architecture***

The traditional uses of the buildings, their structures, and their materials explain the set of existing construction practices. For instance, this type of building is associated with a model of slow construction, which allowed the land to gradually acclimate to mass stresses. Thus, the movements made during construction had no serious consequences because they were slowly assimilated into the environment. In the words of a local developer, *'good wine needs quietness.'*

On the other hand, the rise of the water by capillary action was not prevented. Consequently, continuous humidity was generated because the foundations were mere extensions of the walls, with a little widening of the base. However, at the time, this was not a problem due to the agricultural and livestock-related uses of the ground floor. In this respect, the absence of rough plastering favoured ventilation and evaporation of the water from the walls, preventing high levels of dampness.

The construction of the walls also required high levels of skill, as their stability was

based on the ability of masons to accurately place their pieces. Technically, it was a question of achieving a homogeneous transmission of the forces through the wall and, thus, of avoiding the concentration of local tensions that could split the pieces. This was particularly complex because the stone-bonding material was made using clay mortars (with little binding capacity) or, occasionally, lime mortars. In the latter case, the wall had to be stable enough to stand on its own until the mortar strengthened. Therefore, this was a model based on wisdom and local knowledge, mainly that of artisans and masons.

## **Uses, structures, and materials in the rehabilitation of the vernacular architecture of the *Empordanet***

### ***Transformations in structure: From farmers' houses to second homes for urban families***

In the current context, vernacular buildings must often be adapted to a rather different environment, characterised by new economic activities, new forms of social organisation, and the growing relevance of the technical standards and criteria frequently introduced in legal texts and regulations. In other words, there are prevalent new rules and discourses that orient agents' actions in new directions. The first consequence is that the ground floors, which were originally intended to be used as storage or animal barns, must become habitable. This has several effects on the design and structure of buildings. It also implies an improvement in the finishing work, such as the use of cement washes (or those made of another highly impermeable material) or interior paving that includes a concrete bed and airproof cloth. Therefore, the structure, materials, and functionality of the ground floors have been modified in a demonstration of erosion of knowledge and invention of tradition.

Such changes have the undesirable effect of reducing the volume of ventilation, which is also worsened by changes in the surrounding urban environment. Thus, all streets in the *Empordanet* are now paved, whereas before many of them were dirt roads, which were associated with greater surface sealing. This means that the outlet points of water are concentrated almost exclusively on the ground-floor walls. This leads to the paradox that, in the presence of more elaborate finishing work, there is simultaneously an increase in the interior humidity of buildings. Therefore, controlling dampness has become a central impediment to achieving housing comfort.

Such new structures are more adapted to the idea of the rural idyll because they produce spaces oriented towards the enjoyment of moments of family leisure and repose. This element of family and intimacy, particularly in a community context, is also associated with tradition. Undoubtedly, it is an 'invented' tradition, since the historical agrarian family worked, as has been pointed out in the previous epigraph in a very different way. Finally, it is also justified by socio-economic transformations. In this sense, it is demanded by homeowners because it allows for an increase in the space and monetary value of the properties. Thus, in the game of micro-powers that characteri-

ses the actual operation of such refurbishment, the demands of the final clients have an important capacity to influence the results.

### ***Adaptation or radical transformation of materials?***

Rehabilitation also promotes major modifications in the building materials. This affects the three main materials used in the vernacular architecture of the *Empordanet*: stone, lime, and wood.

#### *Stones become great travellers*

There has been a sharp decline in the use of local stones because most local producers cannot afford the costs of commercialisation, considering their small local markets. Therefore, 'masonry stone is very difficult to find'; namely, it is no longer accessible in commercial circuits. The basaltic rocks extracted from two specific quarries located in Foixà and Castefollit de la Roca provide an example. In these cases, the characteristics of the rocks are different from each other. In the first case, the rocks had relatively low levels of quality (in particular, high levels of weathering) so they could hardly compete commercially. Production was also relatively small in scale and was usually reserved for the refurbishment of the rural houses in the area.

There has been a different reality in the case of Castefollit. The quality of the rock is higher, and the quantities extracted are larger. Consequently, commercialization has been relatively easy, making it possible to cover larger markets and, therefore, to ensure economic viability. However, the stone traditionally used in native vernacular buildings has characteristics in terms of textures, colours, and so on that do not always allow its substitution with Castefollit stones. In rehabilitation projects, considering the dominant discourses, the prevalence of expert knowledge, and the processes of agents' 'conduct of the conduct' (particularly strong in this case among architects, public employees, and homeowners), it is often important to respect the chromatic and textural conditions of the original stones. In such cases, a frequent solution is the use of stones from remote places, usually through the dominant marketing circuits.

Thus, the maintenance of the local character of the stone is more a projected image than a reality, and heritage is becoming a global machine supported by global suppliers. In many cases, foreign stones with similar chromatic or textural characteristics are used. In other cases, a limited range of local stones (coming from Castefollit) is used, which have also become industrially produced and which serve markets far outside the local area. Stone is not only becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, it is also becoming socially valued in a very positive way. Therefore, the exhibition of such stones has become a prestigious sign that denotes the nobility of buildings. Simultaneously, this preference for stone is closely related to the disappearance of the traditional practice of covering outer walls with lime.

#### *Lime is dressed up*

Additionally, lime can be difficult to incorporate into new construction models. Despite the preference for stone, most of the interiors are still roughly plastered. However, cement has generally replaced lime. This is associated with several problems that have arisen over time:

- The stiffness of the mortar pastes has increased, which has led to the emergence of increasing incompatibilities with other existing materials. This has also induced an accelerated deterioration of the rough plastering because of reactions with sulphates.
- There are sometimes evident chromatic dissonances between restored houses and untouched vernacular buildings. In contrast to the historically dominant earthy colours, a type of finishing with a steel texture and greyish colour, typical of cement washes, is becoming increasingly common.
- The problem of dampness inside such houses has worsened, since the cement restrains the transpiration of the walls.

Therefore, the substitution of lime for cement has produced a series of effects that has distanced the rehabilitation of vernacular heritage from the techniques of traditional architecture. It is unsurprising that these practices have become invisibilised because such distancing is against the philosophy of refurbishment. Namely, new forms of knowledge have been generated in a superficial attempt to traditionalise the modern materials associated with modern construction techniques. Thus, new surface materials such as 'yellow lime' have appeared. Its masking element can be seen even in its name. Even though it is popularly known as lime, it is not truly lime (calcium oxide), but the raw material from which lime is obtained (calcium carbonate). In other words, it has not been subjected to the cooking process at 900°C that is necessary to obtain lime, and it does not have any binding function. Its sole purpose is to act as a colouring agent for the pastes obtained from cement, surrounding the cement particles and providing the traditional earthy colour of the local construction. The search for chromatic affinity is a way of re-personalising and avoiding the de-anchoring caused by the homogenisation of the materials.

#### *Industrialized wood is laminated*

Finally, wood has also undergone significant changes in its use as a building material. The traditional nearby trees, white and black poplars, are no longer used in construction for three main reasons. The first is related to the reduced availability of nearby trees that cannot be regularly harvested because of their scarcity and new environmental regulations. The second and third reasons are eminently technical. For example, it is difficult to optimise their trunks because their twisting is difficult to deal with mechanically. Specific knowledge is needed to maximise the exploitation of their material. Informants have also described the difficulty of ensuring the correct drying of the wood and an increase in the risk of pathologies. Additionally, Spanish regulations consider black poplar unsuitable for structural use, and it is not currently used in the

beams of the top slabs of buildings. What kind of dialogue between traditional and modern knowledge could be asserted in this case?

Therefore, it is very difficult to rehabilitate structures using local woods. The commercially supplied wood comes from the wetlands of Northern Europe, which are better adapted to existing technology for efficient cutting. In this sense, various agents (distributors, carpenters, and architects) share the opinion that, when there is not enough recycled wood from their own refurbished buildings, the best option is to purchase laminated wood – that is, wood cut into small pieces of homogeneous length and joined with resins. They cite its higher reliability as the reason for its use. They also believe that the possibility of suffering pathologies caused by hygroscopic movements and the risk of suffering biotic attacks are substantially lower.

In summary, there is a clear preference for standardised materials of industrial origin in both binders and wood, in contradiction to the overall rehabilitation discourse. In the same way, local stones frequently are not commercially available. The trends above can also be discussed from the broader perspective of governmentality. In the three cases, there is a process of invisibilisation of the basic elements of vernacular architecture, prioritizing an 'aesthetic' approach. The case of lime is especially suggestive in this regard. In turn, such an invisibilisation has been facilitated by the prevalence of 'authorized heritage discourses' that have favoured a strong modification of the building materials. Finally, these changes cannot be understood without considering a series of transformations in the agents' 'conduct of the conduct', as will be analysed in the next section.

### ***Expert knowledge and dominant construction practices in the rehabilitation of vernacular architecture***

There are two kinds of agents with particularly important micro-powers in the building practices associated with vernacular architecture. On the one hand, the role of architects must be highlighted, which, in turn, is strongly conditioned by the prevailing academic conception of refurbishment. Although architects have some degree of autonomy in proposing building solutions, in most cases, there is a predominance of naturalisation of the use of materials and codes generated by expert systems associated with their profession. As a result, architects have enhanced their bargaining power, and many refurbished buildings are mostly regarded as the result of the creative genius of selected authors. In this way, in most cases, many traditional solutions are left behind. Some traditional knowledge related to artisan ways of understanding construction also becomes strongly eroded, weakening the role of some traditional agents. For instance, traditional carpenters are no longer employed in the production of the beams of the slabs because of the prevalence of laminated and industrialized wood. In this context, as the building processes of rehabilitation also have an important discursive dimension, the possibilities of proposing alternatives outside the limits established by the dominant discourse are limited (Foucault 2000; Jones 2006).

The transformation of the knowledge and practices of masons, construction managers, and developers, who also have relevant micro-powers, is no less significant. These agents have also shown a strong preference for the use of industrial materials and building methods that are considered not only more reliable but easier to work with. Additionally, there is often resistance to a return to traditional forms of construction that require much more concentration and are considered more laborious. Namely, considering the present micro-power distribution and its associated monetary income, it is unattractive to be trained in a collection of traditional techniques that, indeed, are not sufficiently recognized in labour markets. For instance, there is a slow but continuous process of substitution of traditional masons using strong artisanal methods with modern masons more adapted to using industrial building techniques who can change their occupation in increasingly flexible labour markets. This phenomenon also has a strong generational component.

*'The youth of today, just like you (the architects), are little prepared...'*

In conclusion, the internalisation of the use of expert systems is produced by a slow process of sedimentation that distorts the original structural behaviour of materials and the local and traditional knowledge associated with vernacular building practices. In this way, it also prioritises the use of remote and decontextualised materials in a highly global way. However, simultaneously, rehabilitation promotes recognition of the value of local building traditions. The result is a confusing pattern of ignorance/recognition of the cultural logic associated with the native conception of vernacular architecture.

## **Conclusions**

The *Empordanet's* case is an example of the strength of rural gentrification in Spain. These processes can also be observed in other Spanish regions (Alonso González 2015 and 2017; Barke and Parks 2016). In this sense, the *Empordanet's* case shows that the search for specific forms of rural idyll is closely associated with factors like the rehabilitation of traditional vernacular architecture, the effect of new (architectural, territorial, and environmental) regulations, the area's proximity and easy access to Barcelona, and the increasing mobility of, and strong socio-economic pressure from, high-income groups (Solana 2010; Mamonova and Sutherland 2015). Thus, the idea of the rural idyll has generated a strong demand for refurbished buildings, affecting specific features of them, like the actual structure of the dwellings, the construction methods and materials used, and so on.

Such changes are essential for generating a stock of building assets that are increasingly valued in real estate markets. In this sense, the ownership of vernacular (but refurbished) dwellings constitutes a relevant element of distinction. It is also functional in the context of the economic, social, and cultural capital accumulation of certain privileged social groups (Bourdieu 1984; McNeill and Tewdwr-Jones 2003; Jones 2006). For this reason, despite the complicated real estate situation in Catalonia and

the whole of the Spanish state in recent years, refurbished houses have been protected from depreciation. Thus, as in other cases in Spain, investing in rural vernacular houses has proven to be an effective means of protecting monetary assets in times of widespread depreciation (Alonso González 2015).

The relationships between tradition, heritage, identity, and even nationalism are also relevant to achieving an understanding the *Empordanet's* case. Although tradition has been a central element in this case, it is far from a pristine or static one, derived from the idea of a rural idyll and some forms of nationalism (Handler and Linnekin 1984; Lagerqvist 2014). Tradition is also a complex issue with several dimensions. On the one hand, this phenomenon can be easily observed, as many of the old building traditions and practices have not only become eroded and hybridised but also partially colonized by modern pressures. Over a period of approximately 50 years, the main elements of the area's vernacular architecture have been substantially modified: namely, the structure and functionality of the dwellings, the materials used, the prevailing building practices, and how architectural knowledge is generated. On the other hand, in the effort to avoid a loss of identity, peripheral solutions focused on visual harmony and material contextualization have prevailed.

However, the *Empordanet's* vernacular architecture retains a differentiated identity that is simultaneously maintained and transformed. In this sense, the strength of the association between vernacular architecture and tradition has not been weakened in the collective imagination. This ductility of tradition is essential to the processes of capital accumulation. In other words, the vernacular is a category that is strongly constructed from a social perspective, and it synthesises many tensions and makes compromises between them. To understand such tensions, applying the governmentality approach is particularly useful. Governmentality has several relevant dimensions. Firstly, significant processes of visibilisation and invisibilisation of some of the typical elements of vernacular architecture can be observed. For instance, aspects like the practical disappearance of the practices of slow construction and the sharp reduction in the use of local materials essentially become invisible. Secondly, a range of 'authorized heritage discourses' has been generated concerning different aspects, many of them essentially formalistic, like the chromatic and textural conditions of the original stones, for instance. Simultaneously, relevant processes of creation can also be observed, along with the destruction of knowledge. The loss of artisanal methods and standardisation of masons' knowledge is an example of this phenomenon.

Finally, there have been important processes in agents' 'conduct of the conduct'. Agents' modelling processes can be observed particularly in the activities of architects, regulators, and masons. The architects' role is particularly relevant, as they have increasing legitimacy as objectifiers who can reject and dissolve 'traditional' alternatives in many aspects of building processes (Alcindor 2019). In any case, consideration of the changing relationships between agents is essential to any attempt to influence the dynamics of refurbishment and rural gentrification. For this reason, we must give deeper ethnographic attention to how rehabilitation policies are realized in practice

and how they frequently overlook essential features of heritage because of the prevalence of neoliberal forms of subjectivity.

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[\(To see the complete list of references click here\)](#)

## Social Acceptance in Heritage Conservation in Québec, Canada: A model of how to work together on projects that are important in the heart of people's memory

The main rules in heritage conservation, as understood by all groups in heritage conservation around the world, are:

1. People must be able to maintain their heritage buildings based on the minimum intervention;
2. When regular maintenance has not been done, repairs are encouraged on sectors of the building that have started to fail;
3. When regular repairs have not been done or failures continue to appear, restoration is encouraged. Interventions should be based on a good inspection, scientific information, historical research, and an appropriate intervention plan prepared by heritage professionals in collaboration with heritage artisans.

The ***Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*** were developed in 2003 (revised several times) in collaboration with federal, provincial, and territorial groups working in the maintenance of Canada's historic places. This document helps anyone that has a heritage building and is willing to follow the guidelines, to encourage sound decision-making when planning interventions in a heritage building. Therefore, several municipalities have adopted these guidelines, which can be found [here](#).

In Montréal, the extent of demolition of heritage properties beginning in the 1970s inspired a community-led effort to create a municipal heritage policy. As a result, the *Conseil du Patrimoine de Montréal* (Montréal Heritage Council) was established in 2002 and the ***Heritage Policy*** adopted in 2005. The Council also created a guide for the evaluation of the heritage value of a site or building, which can be found [here](#).

This evaluation guide has three parts: **values**, **principals**, and **boîte à outils** (how and when to prepare an intervention). In the evaluation of a building or a site, the value that people associate to an old building or empty site (i.e., **social acceptance**) is considered. Based on the significance for that group, a proposed action on that sector is reviewed and the group is consulted for the intervention/option that they prefer.

For the last fifteen years, the Municipality of Montréal has been encouraged to include at least two people that represent the public in their Heritage and Toponymy Group. When important projects are presented, these two people bring the voice of the general population and they could, in several cases, suggest having a public consultation on that type of intervention or to work together in a public/private design intervention. This is the case when a street becomes pedestrian-only on certain days of the week or at certain times of the day. When an old building, school, or abandoned factory is listed for demolition, public consultation should be required.

There are architects who work directly with co-operatives in the recycling of old buildings for housing. These collaborative-design initiatives are becoming more and more common. Previously, public consultation was reserved for large, new projects. Public resistance to demolitions of old buildings, daily and/or weekly changes in automobile or pedestrian-only zones, and public protest and opposition pushed the city to look for alternative ways to respond to public needs. The process of design and modifications to the urban landscape and re-use of old buildings was adjusted. As a result of working with the local people of a site, there is now less resistance to new interventions in old and historic areas of the city.

Examples of projects are:

1. *Les ruelles vertes de Montréal* (service streets at the rear of housing buildings)  
Since 1846, these service streets have been used for the collection of garbage. Over the last 10 years, these streets have been transformed into common, green spaces shared by the community, as determined by the users with a majority vote. New uses have included areas for planting vegetables and trees that are cared for and shared by the community, green spaces to relax, play music, or arrange film viewings in the summer, etc. Collective designs on the surrounding walls, in collaboration with artists' assistance and paid by the city, have also been added. The city coordinates the required machinery and plants while the community contributes the work and maintenance. Presently, Montréal has over 450 kilometers of green service streets. More information and examples can be found [here](#).



Photo: Nayan.ca

2. *Collaborative-design* (people's implication in the design process)  
Because the City of Montréal considers what is significant for the population, there is an integration of public consultation at three main stages of some projects: pre-design (local needs), design alternatives (response to the local needs) and final design. Then, the result is welcomed by the public (social acceptance). A recently completed example is a pilot project of the Safe Active Transportation Circuit that temporarily converted a portion of Gouin Boulevard East, an old boulevard with a mix of historic houses and small commercial buildings in the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough, into a one-way street to create more space for pedestrians and cyclists. Public consultation took place throughout the fall of 2019 and final approval was granted in January 2020. The added street markings and colors indicate to the users when and in what direction it is possible to circulate, creating a promenade

shared between commerce, car traffic, and pedestrians. During the summer of 2020, over 300 kilometers of similar temporary and permanent pedestrian and bike paths were added to the 900-kilometer system that already existed throughout the city.



As result of this model to share ideas, several projects involving the recycling of old buildings, old churches, schools, industrial buildings, and historic landscapes have been completed. The importance of citizen participation in the design process and the significance of intangible values in heritage buildings is evident.

Further reading:

[www.montreal.ca/actualites/projet-fort-lorette-la-population](http://www.montreal.ca/actualites/projet-fort-lorette-la-population)

[www.oldportofmontreal.com](http://www.oldportofmontreal.com)

[www.parcs-nature.com/public/en/ile-de-la-visitation](http://www.parcs-nature.com/public/en/ile-de-la-visitation)

[www.fr.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction\\_Review-g182166-d4364224](http://www.fr.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction_Review-g182166-d4364224)

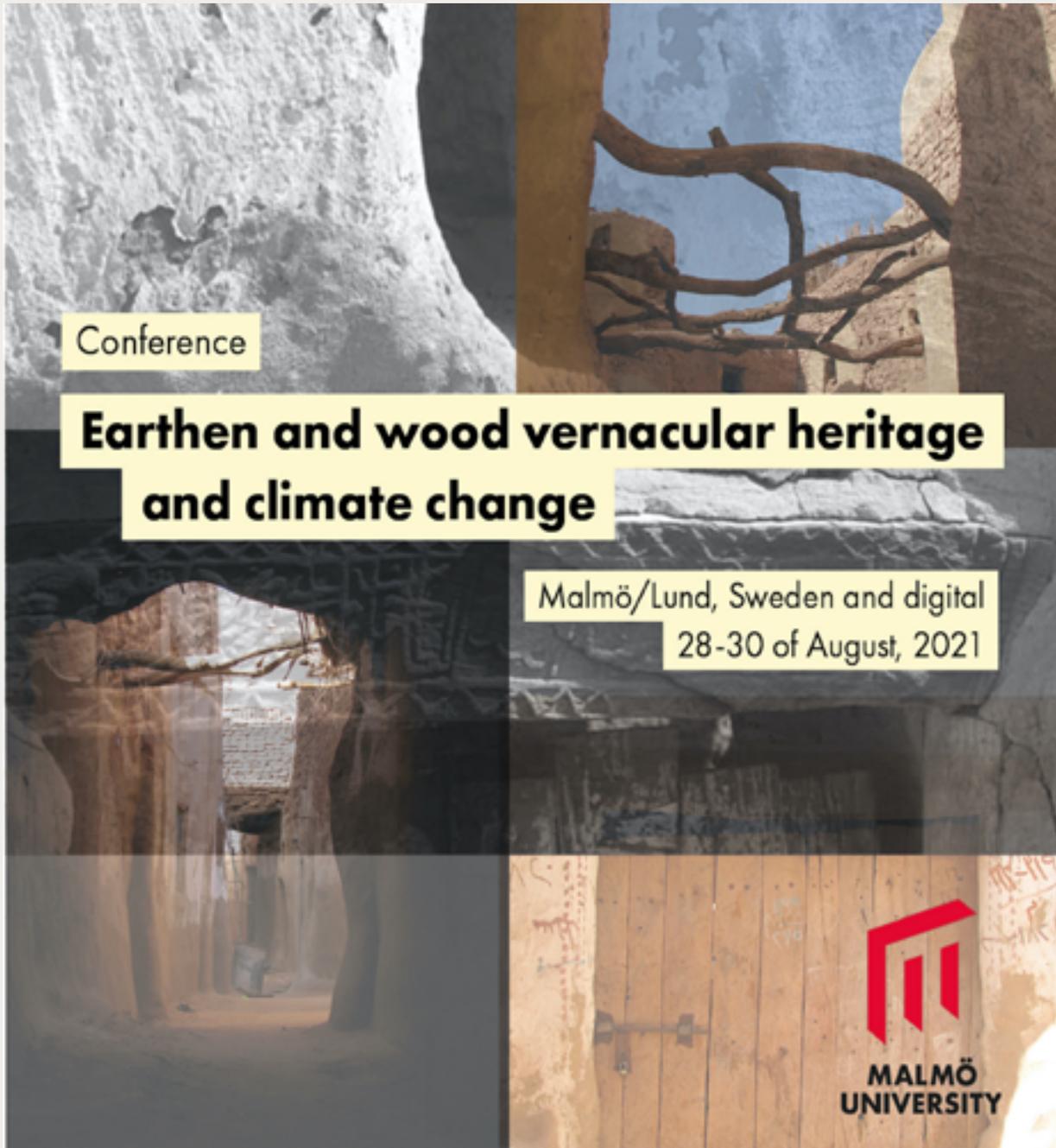
[www.patrimoine.ville.montreal.qc.ca/inventaire/protection.php](http://www.patrimoine.ville.montreal.qc.ca/inventaire/protection.php)

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?\\_pageid=8757,129587576&\\_dad=](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=8757,129587576&_dad=)

[www.lapresse.ca/maison/immobilier/projets-immobiliers/](http://www.lapresse.ca/maison/immobilier/projets-immobiliers/)

[www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/silo-5-redevelopment-old](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/silo-5-redevelopment-old)

# Malmö/Lund Joint Conference on Earthen and wood vernacular heritage and climate change



[Official Website](#)

Contact: Ms. Marwa Dabaieh,  
mdabaieh@yahoo.co.uk

Dear colleagues and friends,

During the time I was Vice-President and then Secretary-General of the CIAV I had several pleasant experiences, among others, getting to know the new candidates to become members of the committee. I enjoyed the opportunity to review their professional background on built vernacular heritage.

I keep very nice memories of the trips we took to hold committee meetings, it was always a time of the year I enjoyed thoroughly. On those trips we met both as colleagues and as friends.

Producing the CIAV Newsletter meant gathering the spirit of the group as a way to keep it together, informed and connected.

Working on the CIAV Newsletter was a great satisfaction for me because it was the opportunity to get in direct contact with many CIAV colleagues. It is the product of our collaboration as a comitee. I am glad the next members of the Bureau will continue this tradition.

I thank Gisle, Maria Ines, Hossam and Ivan for their kind support. I'm sure that the new members of the CIAV Committee Bureau will do an excellent job. I wish you all good luck.

Sincerely,

Valeria Prieto.

January 30, 2021.

Dear CIAV Members,

I would like to thank the former members of the Bureau, including the young Ivan, who was the first younger member of the former Bureau, for their great contribution.

At the same time, I would like to welcome the new and younger board and to wish them a lot of success during their new mandate.

On behalf of all former members, I would like to share a poster, put together in 2011, to signify the work done until that date with a great sense of humour. You will find it attached in the following page.

Best regards,

María Inés Subercaseaux Ex CIAV Vice-President

10.01.2021

Charter



Case Study



Documents



Le patrimoine bâti vernaculaire suscite à juste titre la fierté de tous les peuples. Reconnu comme une création caractéristique et pittoresque de la société, il se manifeste de façon informelle, et pourtant organisée; utilitaire, il possède néanmoins un intérêt et une beauté. C'est à la fois un reflet de la vie contemporaine et un témoin de l'histoire de la société. Bien qu'il soit oeuvre humaine, il est aussi le produit du temps. Il serait indigne de l'héritage de l'humanité de ne pas chercher à conserver et à promouvoir ces harmonies traditionnelles qui sont au cœur même de son existence et de son avenir.

The built vernacular heritage is the fundamental expression of the culture of a community, of its relationship with its territory and, at the same time, the expression of the world's cultural diversity. Examples of the vernacular may be recognised by a manner of building shared by the community; by a recognisable local or regional character responsive to the environment; by coherence of style, form and appearance, or by the use of traditionally established building types; by traditional expertise in design and construction which is transmitted informally; by an effective response to functional, social and environmental constraints; the effective application of traditional construction systems and crafts.



**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES**  
**VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE**  
**CIAV 2011**  
**VERNACULAIRE**

# Greetings from the Outgoing President

## CIAV Newsletter #47/2021

While writing this note in January 2021, I am now your Past President, having been in office for nine years, 2012-2020.

During the first six years, the CIAV Bureau consisted of the following members, aside from the President: Hossam Mahmoud Mahdy (Vice President), Maria Inés Subercaseaux (Vice President) and Valeria Prieto (Secretary General). During the last cycle, the officers were: Valeria Prieto (Vice President), Maria Inés Subercaseaux (Vice President) and Ivan Enev (Secretary General).

Looking back at all these years, I am grateful for the positive and active cooperation between the members of the Bureau. I have deeply appreciated both the company and the friendly attitude that we were sharing, along with the common goal to developing our scientific committee further.

This positive attitude was shared by all our fellow-members as well – aimed at strengthening the knowledge and the necessity to looking after the built vernacular heritage. All CIAV members are heavily engaged in the task of protecting this heritage and of nurturing a better understanding for it within the society, within political cycles, and within the scientific world.

The necessity to involving complementary professions into the world of vernacular heritage became apparent at the joint scientific conferences, organized by CIAV in collaboration with ISCEAH (ISC on Earthen Architectural Heritage) in 2013 and 2019 and ICTC (International Cultural Tourism Committee) in 2015. In 2021 our next joint scientific conference will be held together with ISCES+CC (International Committee on Energy and Sustainability + Climate Change), IIWC (International Wood Committee) and ISCEAH (Earthen Architectural Heritage).

The publication of members' articles in our newsletter is an important channel for exchanging scientific points of view about our field of work. I am glad that this practise will be continued under the leadership of the new Bureau.

The work within the CIAV Bureau has been based on openness and transparency. I am convinced, that this has made both the work within the Bureau and with the rest of the members of CIAV easier, and has stimulated us all to get involved more readily.

To me, the work within CIAV has broadened my scientific knowledge, has given me a deeper understanding of other cultures, and has allowed me to develop personal friendship with many CIAV members.

The last year has made both meetings and the exchange of thoughts through informal in-person-discussions quite difficult. Nevertheless, our annual meetings and scientific conferences remain very important in this regard. Thus, I truly hope that it will be possible for many of us to meet in person in Lund, Sweden, in August 2021!

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The members of the new CIAV Bureau are all highly qualified for running the Bureau. I readily offer the new team my full support and wish all the best for the years to come!

Gisle  
13th January 2021

## *Olga Sevan Obituary by Gisle Jakhelln*

I met Olga the first time during our CIAV conference in Finnskogen, Norway, in 2010. Olga had a deep interest in the wooden architecture of Northern Russia and in particular the open-air museum in Arkhangelsk. She took part in the discussions within CIAV and presented articles to our Newsletter, as I have summed up below:

- “Wooden architecture in Russia: research, diversity and modern situation”. Newsletter 34 – September 2015
- “Actual problems of study and preservation of the architectural and urban heritage of historic settlement.” Newsletter 36 – August 2016
- “Report on the work Dr. Olga Sevan.” Newsletter 43 - January 2019
- In 2012 Olga presented her work «Malye Korely. Arkhangelsk museum of wooden architecture. History of creating, methodology of the projecting, modern condition». As she writes: “The monograph «Malye Korely» Arkhangelsk museum of wooden architecture” is dedicated to the author’s vision and approach towards the history of creating, methodology of projecting and modern condition of one of the biggest open-air museum in our country “Malye Korely” near Arkhangelsk, ranging with European museums of such type.”
- In 2016 Olga presented her work “Different types and social & cultural aspects of historical settlements, monuments and landscapes: challenges of modernity”

Olga was within CIAV our contact with Russian culture. She had a very friendly atmosphere and was very engaged in the vernacular built heritage. We shall miss Olga.



Olga when in Kizhi in July 2014