



Rural house types of the Mountainous area of the Balkans: Villages of the Bijelo Polje Region, Polimlje, Montenegro

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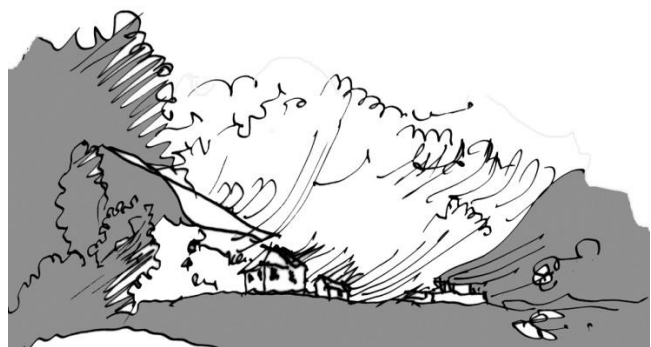
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With the rapid development of urbanization in the Balkans after the Second World War, more and more new buildings are being constructed in the urban, but also in the rural areas. Some of these structures follow original modes of construction, or at least those processes that have persevered for centuries, and certainly deserve attention. Even more, inhabited structures, which may still be called traditional, possess modifications that have altered their original form. On the other hand, the land resources available are not managed well and are becoming quite limited. Residential development initiated conflict between man and land. The majority of land resources in the studied area of the Villages of the Bijelo Polje Region (923 km²), Polimlje, Montenegro are in the form of mountains or hills. In this specific moment, people who are living in the city centres, after the period of the transition of industry has to consider on how to develop mountainous areas to increase the living space, taking the advantage of the upcoming governments and donors strategic investments in the mountainous rural areas.



However, in the process of building mountainous residential buildings, the protection of land and environmental resources is often neglected due to the pursuit of the maximization of commodity interests and the large demolition and construction of land resources in mountainous areas, which result in the loss of land resources and the occurrence of various consequent natural disasters.

The main goal of this research is to present the basic designs of the traditional architecture of the Mountainous area and its traditional setup of the rural household, using it as a model that survived through the time as sustainable model for this region. The objective is to present the analysis of the so called local traditional architecture and construction systems in order to contribute to the future restoration of this rural architectural heritage. The study is based on the two periods of research: 1995-2011 of the general Physical-Geographical research of the Polimlje region; and the period 2018-2020, which included field visits with the detailed photographic recording, transformation of drawn information into descriptions of construction work of some traditional buildings in villages of the Bijelo Polje Region that is a part of the wider area of the Polimlje Region in Montenegro (2200 km²) and Serbia.

Concepts of function and form are central to the study of traditional buildings. We started from the statement that the “form follows function” with the idea to identify the discrepancies Using the snowball technique, a total of 77 farmers were interviewed using various methods, including semi-structured interviews and key person interviews, which included opportunities for free listing. After the work on the field and in studio, conclusions concerning the typology and forms, but also the construction techniques are drawn.



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