

**From
Vernacular
to World
Heritage**

edited by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	7
Vernacular and earthen architecture at the core of local knowledge research: a quality partnership with successful outcomes	8
Mariana Correia, Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca, Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas	
The challenges of vernacular architecture	12
Toshiyuki Kono	
A heritage of reconciliation and of linkage between nature and culture	14
Hubert Guillaud	
Vernacular architecture in the World Heritage list	18
Luis Fernando Guerrero Baca	
Living and virtual visiting European World Heritage: an overview	24
Mariana Correia	
Vernacular World Heritage. A discovery through 3 dimensions	31
Crossing dimensions and components in vernacular architecture research	32
Mariana Correia, Gilberto Duarte Carlos, José Vicente, Teresa Correia, Sandra Rocha e Sousa	
Discovering vernacular heritage and its tangible dimensions	38
Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Mariana Correia, Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca	
Understanding the dimension of historical evolution	44
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Maria Diodato, Juan María Songel González	
Valuing and codifying intangible knowledge	52
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Alicia Hueto, María Lidón	
Enhancing vernacular World Heritage through digital technology and multimedia tools	60
Alessandro Merlo, Gaia Lavoratti, Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca	
The importance of creativity in vernacular heritage	68
Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Mariana Correia, Emília Simão	
Communication and dissemination of vernacular heritage	74
Mariana Correia, Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca, José Vicente, Teresa Correia	
From Vernacular Heritage to World Heritage. 8 case studies	81
The traditional cultural landscape of Pico island and its vernacular architecture, Portugal	82
Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Mariana Correia, Goreti Sousa, Mónica Alcindor, Rui Florentino, Teresa Bermudez, Manuel P. R. S. Costa	

Historic walled town of Cuenca, Spain	98
Lidia García Soriano, Valentina Cristini, Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	
Historic centre of the city of Pienza, Italy	114
Alessandro Merlo, Gaia Lavoratti, Francesco Frullini, Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca	
Old Rauma, Finland	130
Matilde Caruso, Lidia García Soriano, Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas	
Villages with fortified churches in Transylvania, Romania	146
Valentina Cristini, Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Lidia García Soriano	
Historic centres of Berat and Gjirokastra, Albania	160
Letizia Dipasquale, Massimo Carta, Alessandro Merlo, Giorgio Verdiani	
Historic centre Chorá on the island of Pátmos, Greece	178
Letizia Dipasquale, Lucia Montoni, Alessandra Manzi, Saverio Mecca	
Vernacular architecture in Chazhashi settlement, Upper Svaneti, Georgia	194
Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Mariana Correia, Goreti Sousa, Mónica Alcindor, Teresa Bermudez	
Building the future of European Vernacular World Heritage	211
Conservation and maintenance practices	212
Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, José Luis Baró Zarzo, Yolanda Hernández Navarro	
Assessing and mitigating impacts of changes on cultural heritage	222
Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca, Lucia Montoni	
Protecting and valuing cultural heritage	230
Mariana Correia, Gilberto Duarte Carlos	



VERNACULAR AND EARTHEN ARCHITECTURE AT THE CORE OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE RESEARCH: A QUALITY PARTNERSHIP WITH SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

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Since 2006, Escola Superior Gallaecia (Portugal), University of Florence (Italy), and Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain), with partners as CRAterre-ENSAG (France), the University of Cagliari (Italy), and Ecole d'Avignon (France), have been working together, for the enhancement and protection of vernacular heritage and earthen architecture. As key-institutions in the area, they share high standards and common values, in order to address and achieve fundamental research, capacity building, learning experiences, relevant outcomes, contributing for a broader and deeper knowledge on vernacular heritage and earthen architecture.

Several projects were developed among the partners, throughout the years. This was just possible by running together for European Union funded research, and successfully achieving it, by undertaking relevant contribution to knowledge, as well as comprehensive scientific dissemination. This was the case of the following projects: *Terra Incognita* (2006-2008); *Earthen Domes & Habitat – A building tradition between East and West* (2008-2010); *Terra (in)cognita/Terra Europae* (2009-2011: culture-terra-incognita.org); *VerSus – From Vernacular Heritage to Sustainable Architecture* (2012-2014: esg.pt/versus); *3DPAST – Living and virtual visiting European World Heritage* (2016-2020: esg.pt/3dpast); and *VERSUS+ | Heritage for People* (2019-2023: esg.pt/versus-plus). Other key-projects have been also developed through National Funding Agencies for Science, Research and Technology as it was the case of: *Seismic-V – Local Seismic Culture in Portugal* (esg.pt/seismic-v); *PRIN – Scientific, experimental and tacit knowledge and conservation actions of Earthen Architectural Heritage in Southern Italy*; *ResTAPIA – Restoration of rammed earth in Iberia Peninsula* (www.restapia.es); *SOSTierra – Restoration and Rehabilitation of traditional earthen architecture in Iberia Peninsula* (sostierra.blogs.upv.es) and *RISK-Terra* (<https://riskterra.blogs.upv.es>); among others.

The focus of the distinct researches was to address: a state of the art of earthen architecture in Europe (both *Terra Incognita* projects); to define principles from vernacular heritage that contribute to sustainable architecture (*VerSus* project & *VERSUS+* project); to enhance the quality of vernacular architecture and its World Heritage character (*3DPAST*); to distinguish seismic retrofitting in vernacular architecture, in order to pro-actively strength dwellings facing earthquakes (*Seismic-V*); to

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Chorá of Pátmos
(© L. Dipasquale, 2015)

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**Abandoned tower cluster,
Murkmeli village, Ushguli,
Svaneti, Georgia**
(© G. Duarte Carlos, 2019)

contribute to identify, systematise and enhance tangible and intangible heritage represented by vernacular and earthen architecture - for its conservation, and the conception of new architecture and sustainable settlements (*PRIN, Coupoles & Habitat, ResTAPIA, SOSierra, and RISK-Terra*).

Due to globalisation, urban pressure, and now climate change, vernacular heritage and earthen architecture are under a real threat of disappearing, at a very accelerated rate. Urgent actions need to be undertaken to protect this fragile and undervalued heritage.

This will only be possible by developing strong partnerships and team work, among colleagues and institutions with shared values, which also believe in expanding research in this field of expertise, through coordinated actions, and strategic and critical thinking, in order to value and protect vernacular heritage and earthen architecture across Europe and the World.