Cultural heritage and enhancement for an Ecomuseum in Trecastagni (near Etna, Sicily).

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The building heritage represents the unitary character of a culture that takes advantage of different linguistic structures to fully express itself, yet all attributable to a single code of expression, in a world that changes every thinks. It also expresses the “conflict between oblivion and memory, between protection and abuse, between Viollet-le-Duc and Ruskin, between present and future, between tourism and museums, between economics and accuracy...”. Nowadays, all works addressing the building heritage acknowledge an overlapping of traces and testimonies that identify those buildings as assets to be protected, but also made available to the public. A tool is valorization.

Valorization means taking actions aimed at giving value. Its objectives focus by integrating the architectural heritage into contemporary life, by strengthening social development, as well as the economy, and defining its roots and identity. Today, valorization connects the past with the future and provides an occasion to highlight the tangible and intangible resources safeguarded by such heritage. For ordinary heritage the only possible strategy is represented by ecomuseums, through a systemic approach towards all tangible and intangible elements. The territory around Trecastagni, a small town near Catania, Sicily, Italy, at the foot of Mount Etna, a volcano declared a World Heritage Site, is considered a “cultural, natural and architectonical landscape” and
reflects the combined works of nature and humankind, where cultural heritage is located both in rural areas, both in center of town. The city has an interesting old town consisting of small palaces built almost all after the earthquake of 1693 and beautiful churches even older. There are beautiful woods and views. This research is aimed at retrieving the present architecture and landscape by using the existing structures to leave an indelible mark on renovation projects. The enhancement project guides the birth of the ecomuseum; it identifies, selects and recovers the existing building assets, proposing attractive and economically interesting functions. An action based on an ecomuseum helps breathing new life into a community and its heritage, promoting life, economy and tourism.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Fernanda Cantone, architect and PhD in Building and Environment Recovery, is Assistant Professor in Technology of Architecture at University of Catania. She teaches Building Recovery Technologies. She has held seminars at many Italian universities, also for PhD and Masters. She has been supervisor of more than 100 University and Sperimental Thesis. She is vice-president of the degree course in Architecture. She has received numerous awards for thesis and the gold medal at the International Domus Restoration Award. She is a member of the Italian Society of Architecture Technology (Sitda) and is partecipant of clusters Recovery and Maintenance and Architectural Heritage. She is Coordinator of the Scientific Technical Committee for Riviera dei Ciclopi Ecomuseum, Catania, Sicily, is a full Member of Green Lines Institute (Barcelos, Portugal), is director of the Editorial Series "Project and Sustainable Construction" Gangemi Editore Rome. She has participated in numerous international conferences. He has published several monographs and essays on the issues of building and urban recovery, on building redevelopment, on urban regeneration and valorization. He has provided scientific advice to numerous projects of recovery and building and urban redevelopment. She has been on the scientific committee of numerous national and international conferences.