

**THE TRADITIONAL COURTYARD HOUSE OF CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SARDINIA:  
METHODOLOGICAL HYPOTHESIS FOR THE TYPOLOGICAL AND PERFORMANCE RENOVATION OF  
"CASA DEMURTAS" IN ESCOLCA (CAGLIARI, SARDINIA)**

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The *genius loci* of vernacular architecture allows one to understand the intimate relationship which folk buildings establish with the site by responding to local environmental conditions<sup>1</sup>. In its numberless expressions, vernacular architecture is strongly characterized by *technical aspects*, related to the community's material culture and socio-cultural evolution, and *typological aspects*, which very diverse buildings share in relation to spatial and functional organization and dwelling patterns. It is widely agreed that, to understand vernacular architecture, one must not prescind from the understanding of traditional construction techniques and building materials, and analysis of typological features. Typology, in fact, responds to the environmental and climatic features of place, economy, culture, local availability of resources and construction techniques, which have developed within local craftsmanship (Kelbaugh, 1990).

The present need for preservation of architectural heritage calls for reflection on the dwelling opportunities that some vernacular rural building types could still provide. Once closely related to the agro-

pastoral life and economy, they may still be able to provide high-quality life standards.

By focusing on a case study of a "courtyard house" of Southern Sardinia, this paper attempts to test whether, and with which technological and typological adjustments, this typology can meet contemporary dwelling needs as well as current technical and environmental requirements.

The paper presents ongoing research which puts forward a hypothesis for the renovation of "Casa Demurtas", in Escolca, and proposes a methodology that considers construction and typology as possible keys to the reading of the building, in order to re-establish the lost connection between architectural making, materials manufacturing and building techniques development. The final goal is to assess the method's validity for its prospective application to other local contexts.

**Keywords:**

*Construction, Typology, Courtyard house, Environmental and technical performance renovation.*

<sup>1</sup> Norberg-Schulz, C., 2000. *Architecture: Presence*, i  
Dinro Milano: Skira.