

The Abandonment Of Rural Old Towns: Moratalla, Murcia

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ABSTRACT

The demographic problem is one of the most troubling issues in today's society. The tendency of human concentration in big cities promotes the continuing exodus of rural communities what, added to the deficit of services and amenities of our old towns, leads to a situation of progressive abandonment. The current need to provide our buildings with an environmental adaptation offers some advantages in traditional construction, since some lessons in sustainable Mediterranean architecture underlie it and these may lead to interventions of revitalization of these areas.

Palabras Clave: Casco Antiguo, Arquitectura Sostenible, abandono, demografía.

Key words: old town, sustainable architecture, abandonment, demography.

INTRODUCTION

This paper describes the demographic problem related to the question of the progressive abandonment of the old centre of a town in Murcia¹, Moratalla, and, at the same time, it shows how this problem affects vernacular architecture. This is one of the historic centres that remains less altered within its nearest environment², in the region of Murcia.

Moratalla has a rich history of civilizations and cultures from prehistoric times until these days. Having more water resources than the rest of the region, it is located on the northwest district³. The area in question is located on a hill of 685 metres of altitude above sea level, a settlement of medieval origin with a clearly strategic defensive nature⁴.

¹ Andrés Sarasa, José Luis; "El proceso desruralizador de la Región de Murcia: sus consecuencias". [file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPD134164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/Dial net-ElProcesoDesruralizadorDeLaRegionDeMurcia-1173552.pdf](file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPD134164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/Dial%20net-ElProcesoDesruralizadorDeLaRegionDeMurcia-1173552.pdf).

² Marcial García García: "Moratalla a través de los tiempos; historia de una Villa Santiaguista en el Reino de Murcia".

³ Atlas de los Paisajes de la Región de Murcia [http://massotti.carm.es/paisaje/publica/atlasmur/Atlas PaisajeRegionMurcia.pdf](http://massotti.carm.es/paisaje/publica/atlasmur/AtlasPaisajeRegionMurcia.pdf).

⁴ Indalencio Pozo: "El Castillo de Moratalla, una fortificación emblemática de la Orden de Santiago: Intervención Arqueológica en el Fuerte y Muros de la Villa". <https://books.google.es/books?id=1lfp9W3oa50C&pg=PA143&dq=Indalencio+Pozo+,+castillo+Moratalla&hl=es&sa=X&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAWoVChMIxtbVku2KyQIVQj4UCh0V1glZ#v=onepage&q=Indalencio%20Pozo%20%2C%20castillo%20Moratalla&f=false>.

The group of houses around an Islamic fortress on an early Neolithic settlement is characterized by mimicry and strong adaptation to the particular promontory topography.

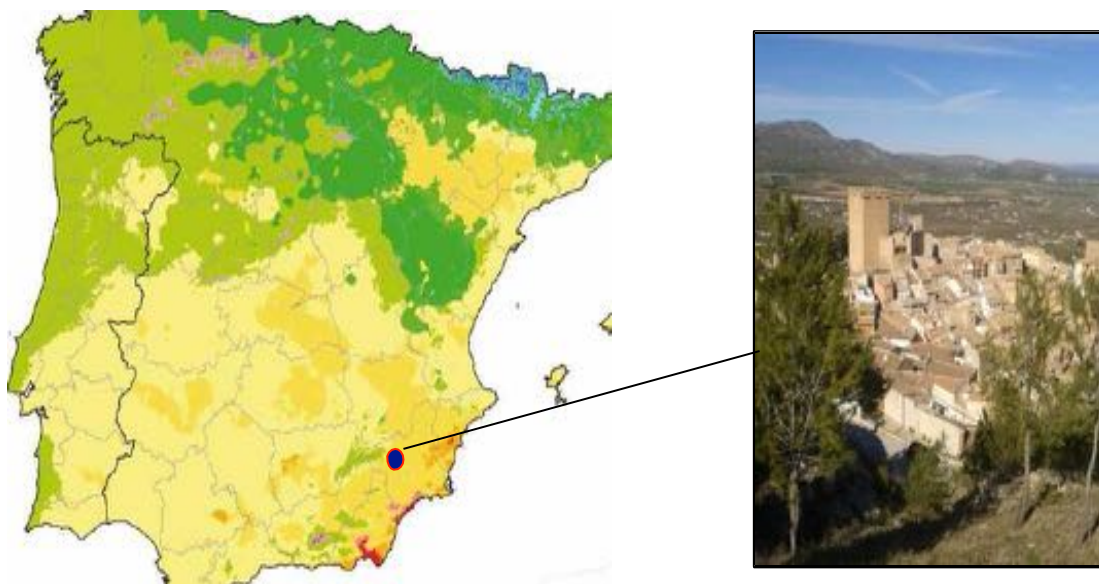


Figure 1. Location of Moratalla, Murcia

Its old town was delimited and classified for the first time in the last quarter of the twentieth century, coinciding with the modernization process of the Spanish political structures⁵, when actions were starting to be regulated and standardized with a certain degree of protection.

The old town occupies an area of about 135,000 m², with winding streets, most of them being pedestrian, with significant slopes in many cases, what leads to stairs and buildings in different heights that take advantage of the steep gradient. It was originally domain of a few hundred inhabitants until accommodating inside its more than ten thousand people in its most flourishing stage⁶.

However, nowadays occupation of the old town has fallen sharply (50% inhabited), being in a phase of decline of its built heritage. Most part of its buildings (265 under study) is residential, responding to a typology of vernacular construction since they were executed without prior layout and built by master builders. Hereinafter the level of abandonment and deterioration of the site will be studied, its causes and consequences as well as some suggestions to improve the described situation.

⁵ Muñoz Cosme, Alfonso: "Patrimonio Cultural de España: Arquitectura Tradicional".file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPDI34164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/14725.pdf.

⁶Francisco Chacón Jiménez, José Luis González Ortiz: " Bases para el estudio del comportamiento demográfico de Cehegín, Moratalla y Caravaca en la larga duración (1468-1930)". Pag.82.;<https://digitum.um.es/xmlui/bitstream/10201/21919/1/05%20Bases%20para%20el%20estudio%20delcomportamiento%20demografico%20de%20Cehegin%20Caravaca%20y%20Moratalla.pdf>.

It is thought that 80% of the world population shall live in few years in large cities. To articulate this situation, public organisms are arranging regional polycentric developments⁷, which seek to compensate with more investment medium and small cities, generating areas that are more diversified and able to respond adequately to this phenomenon.

On the other hand, local architecture loses inherited techniques and modes in favour of a uniform and industrialized style⁸. By speaking about historical centres, the opportunity to recover those issues that are most environmentally friendly is given and this question may be an example of “green” actions related to culture and local tradition.

State Of The Art

The continued increase in the Spanish population since the nineteenth century has generated a continued increase in housing demand in Spain for a very long period that, in addition, was increased by countryside depopulation from the fifties of the last century and concentration of population in the centre and in sea areas⁹.

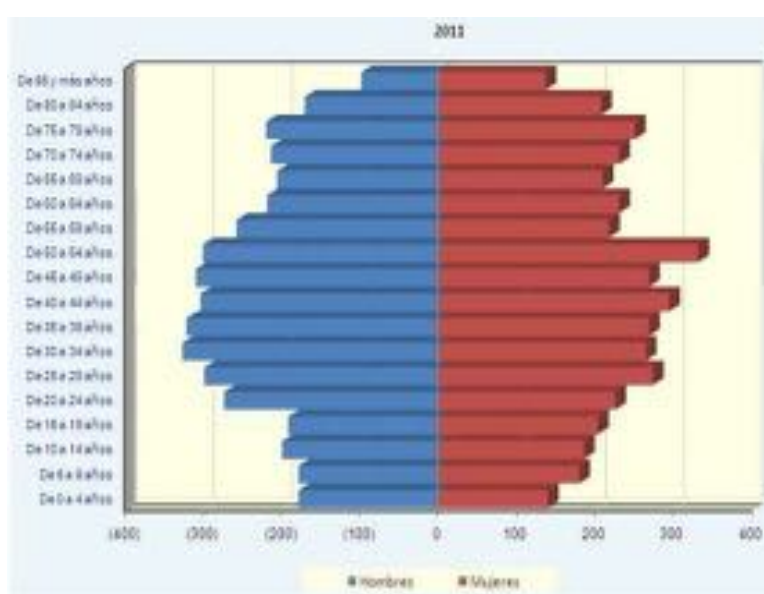


Figure 2¹⁰. Population pyramid in 2011 (Moratalla)

However, occupation of new land in Moratalla is not a direct result of substantial increase in population; from 1940, a cycle of significant decline began, from having 14,500 inhabitants to about half of them, around 8,000 inhabitants in 2014.

⁷ Consejería de Obras Públicas y Ordenación del Territorio : "Directrices y Plan de Ordenación Territorial de la Comarca del Noroeste de la Región de Murcia, pag.93. <https://www.google.es/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=seg%C3%BAn+las+Directrices+y+Plan+de+Ordenaci%C3%B3n+Territorial+de+la+Comarca+del+Noroeste+de+la+Regi%C3%B3n+de+Murcia%2C+pag.+93>.

⁸ Marcial García García, José Ludeña López, José Jesús Sánchez Martínez: "Murcia Recupera, ¿...somos?... ¿qué fuimos?: Moratalla". Fundación Centro de Estudios Históricos e Investigaciones Locales de la Región de Murcia. Editora Regional CajaMurcia. ISBN:84-921128-4-0.

⁹ <http://habitat.aq.upm.es/lbl/a-lbl.es.pdf>

¹⁰ [file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPDI34164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/90103-MORATALLA-Informe%20Municipal%202012%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPDI34164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/90103-MORATALLA-Informe%20Municipal%202012%20(1).pdf)

MUNICIPIO	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970
Fuente-Alamo	9.969	10.879	11.303	8.772	9.270	9.769	9.506	8.914
Fortuna	5.615	6.502	6.131	6.442	5.831	5.888	5.630	5.564
Lorca	69.836	70.807	74.696	60.300	69.639	70.998	58.641	60.609
							(6)	
Moratalla	12.689	13.500	13.412	13.692	14.536	14.117	14.029	10.549
Ojós	1.277	1.323	1.228	1.190	1.346	1.151	1.159	894
Ricote	2.597	2.999	2.789	2.956	2.874	2.915	2.726	2.304

Figure 3. Basis for the study of demographic behaviour¹¹

Regarding “pedanías” (dependant villages), the process of population decline is similar:

PEDANÍA (DEPENDANT VILLAGE)	POPULATION IN 1950	POPULATION IN 1991
ARENAL	589	1
BÉJAR	285	131
BENÁMOR	116	1
BENIZAR	1.2	1.0
CAÑADA DE LA CRUZ	1.002	297
COBATILLAS	547	60
INAZARES	28	78
RIO SEGURA	463	38
ROBLE	501	75
ROGATIVA	316	17
S. BARTOLOME	1.112	807
S. JUAN	871	383

Figure 4¹². Population data of “pedanías” (dependant villages) in Moratalla

Territory is a finite and non-renewable resource, hard to be recycled when urbanized and built, hardly recoverable for any other use once it has been devoted to housing. Developmentalism provided models of territorial, urban and constructive development, scarcely involved in environmental integration and with high consumption of resources.

One of the serious problems of our country is to solve the management of real estate heritage, in many cases, low quality, inefficiently used and quite oversized.

¹¹ Francisco Chacón Jiménez, José Luis González Ortiz; *Bases para el estudio del comportamiento demográfico de Cehegín, Moratalla y Caravaca en la larga duración (1468-1930)*, Pag.82.

<https://digitum.um.es/xmlui/bitstream/10201/21919/1/05%20Bases%20para%20el%20estudio%20delcomportamiento%20demografico%20de%20Cehegin%20Caravaca%20y%20Moratalla.pdf>

¹² file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPDI34164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/90103-MORATALLA-Informe%20Municipal%202012%20(1).pdf.

Traditional architecture in our country has a long history of study that can be traced back to its origins in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries¹³, although the really detailed one appeared in the eighteenth century to the present day.

- First, the Royal Decree-Law of 1926¹⁴ appears with special reference to the Second Title of “Protection and conservation of historical and artistic architectural riches of Spain and typical character of towns and cities,” where obligation to protect buildings or sets of constructions is established, with reference to the term (now discarded) “typical” or “picturesque”, which would accommodate the conservation of the aforementioned buildings.
- Second, we should mention the Law for the “Defence, conservation and enhancement of national artistic heritage” of 1933 (valid until 1985)¹⁵, whose Article 33 refers to the declaration of historic areas, not only in urban centres but also in rural ones, considering everything or parts of them.
- Third, we can find the Law on Land Use and Urban Planning of 1956¹⁶, promoted by architect Pedro Bidagor, whose Article 60 suggests the need and possibility of recovering buildings of special value, referring as well to the concept of tradition.
- Fourth, Order of November 20th, 1964¹⁷ for the “Regulation of the Historical and Artistic sites” with special reference to interest representing these sites from the point of view of tourism (art. 5), to which it is recommended to keep traditional systems (art. 7).

We see therefore the growing interest that these architectures acquire from the cultural point of view and their contribution as a true activity worthy of being preserved.

- Fifth, we find Decree 449/1973 of February 22nd¹⁸, establishing the protection of “hórreos” or “cabazos” (granaries) in Asturias and Galicia over 100 years.
- Next, with the establishment of democracy in Spain, in the 1970s, the terms “typical” and “picturesque” were definitively abandoned to strengthen cultural values, contextualizing great monuments and recreating spaces that imply a monumental heritage.
- From those times, we can mention, on the one hand, the Declaration of Amsterdam of 1975¹⁹ (21-25 October), enhancing and expanding the concept of heritage, what means the homogeneity of style and the imprint of a human group; and, on the other hand, the

¹³ Agricultura Genera 1513, Gabriel Alonso de Herrera (1470-1539); o *Acerca de los secretos de Agricultura, casa de campo y pastori 1617*, Fray Miguel Agustín (1570-1630).

¹⁴ *Real Decreto-Ley relativo al Tesoro Artístico Arqueológico Nacional* <https://www.google.es/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=real+decreto+ley+de+1926%2C+Porteci%3%B3n%2C+Conservaci%3%B3n+y+acrecentamiento+de+la+riqueza+art%3%ADstica>

¹⁵ *Ley de 13 de mayo de 1933 sobre Defensa, Conservación y Acrecentamiento del Patrimonio Artístico Nacional*

¹⁶ *Ley del Suelo de 12 de Mayo de 1956* <https://www.google.es/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=Ley+del+Suelo+de+12+de+mayo+de+1956>

¹⁷ *Orden de 20 de Noviembre de 1964* http://www.e-coac.org/normativa/_nmt/Gen/E329.Pdf

¹⁸ *Decreto 449/1973 de 22 de Febrero* http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-1973-361

¹⁹ *Declaración de Ámsterdam de 1975* http://ipce.mcu.es/pdfs/1975_Declaracion_Amsterdam.pdf

Convention for the Protection of Architectural Heritage of Europe²⁰ (Granada, October 3rd, 1985), recognizing in both cases vernacular architecture as cultural heritage.

- Then, the Law of 16/85 of Spanish Historical Heritage²¹, which represents a basic document to guide the different regional laws where regulation to be followed is set in historic sites, regarding treatment of surroundings, uses and definition of areas of restoration. Specifically article 21 refers to the preservation of its urban pattern and regards intervention only in case of danger by degradation. Particularly sections II and IV refer to ethnographic heritage, movable and immovable, considering traditional architecture not only for its cultural value but because of acquired, rooted and transmitted knowledge (art. 47), traditionally used by a community, being this reflected in community laws, such as the one of the region of Murcia.

- The autonomic law 4/2007, called the Law of Cultural Heritage of the Autonomous Community of Murcia²², refers to the concept of “ethnographic” and, specifically in Chapter II, art. 37, the protection regime to be established in protected areas prevails over urban planning and actions shall take place exclusively under the tutelage of the corresponding general direction.

In art. 44, we can find the special protection regime of a special Plan of Area Protection to be written by each local government, whose main objective is to preserve and facilitate the study and enjoyment for both current and future generations.

In art. 61. mandatory and executive plans are established, and title V, art. 66. mentions specifically the consideration of traditional culture and own ways of life.

- Law 45/2007 of Sustainable Development of Rural Environment²³ mentions in art. 33 the reuse and restoration of houses and buildings preserving rural architecture, catalogues to be developed for that purpose.

- Law 4/1990 of Measures of Historical Heritage Development of the Region of Murcia, where 1% cultural appears in works of some entity to be devoted to issues of cultural interest.

- In the Legislative Decree 1/2005, restated text of the Land Law of the Region of Murcia²⁴, updated and revised real estate catalogues are cited, three degrees of protection being established: roughly, level 1 or integral protection, level 2, referred to minor works without compromising space or structure and level 3, that allows a higher degree of modification.

Thus, in Murcia there are nine officially declared Historical Sites, standing out from the point of view of traditional architecture the one in Aledo (R.D. 964/1988), although in terms of environmental uniformity the case of Moratalla is remarkable.

²⁰ *Convenio para la Salvaguarda del Patrimonio Arquitectónico de Europa*
http://ipce.mcu.es/pdfs/1985_Convencion_Granada.pdf

²¹ *Ley de 16/85 de Patrimonio Histórico Español* <http://ipce.mcu.es/pdfs/ley16-1985.pdf>

²² *Ley 4/2007 denominada Ley de Patrimonio Cultural de la Comunit Autónoma de Murcia*
<http://museoarqua.mcu.es/web/uploads/ficheros/ley4-2007.pdf>

²³ *Ley 45/2007 de Desarrollo Sostenible del Medio Rural*
<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/12/14/pdfs/A51339-51349.pdf>

²⁴ *Ley 13/2015, de 30 de Marzo, de ordenación territorial y urbanística de la Región de Murcia*
<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/05/01/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-4790.pdf>

METHODOLOGY

These data have been drawn from a study of the old town of Moratalla, where an exhaustive analysis of configuring elements of vernacular architecture is done, as well as, as associated item, the current level of occupation and habitability or abandonment.

It has been carried out a check by means of field records (265)²⁵ and details of configuring solutions of the urban landscape (100), as well as a search in the archives and municipal agencies, such as cadastre service²⁶.




Nº Ficha: 01/01 Fecha: Mayo 2013.		Longitud de calle: Medios de calles largas y anchuras adaptadas a las curvas de nivel próximas a sus extremos. Calle de 40 m.	
Localización: 0°34'30" N, 1°00'00" W.		Observaciones: Fachada: Fachada principal orientada a Calle.	
Dimensiones: Zona del Castillo a 100 m. S/N.		N° Haces: 9 ud.	Dimensiones: De 60 m. a 220 m.
Fotografías:		Situación:	Plano:
			
Medios: Utilización de formas constructivas actuales en el tratamiento de sus alzados.			
Zonificación: Centro Antiguo.		Calle: Principal.	Ancho: 20 m. aprox.
Propiedad: Privada.		Área: 5 m.	Perimetros: Adosado.
Nº Alhace: 01.		Características Arquitectónicas sostenibles:	
Tipo de ocupación: Abandonada.		Manteo de piedra de gran tamaño.	
Descripción calle: Longitudinal Sur-Oeste.		Manteo de piedra de gran tamaño.	
Otras indicaciones:		Manteo de piedra de gran tamaño.	

Figure 5. Field records of case study (own photo)











		DESCRIPCIÓN: Sistema de mampostería. 1. Mampostería gruesa con sillares de mampostería. 2. Mampostería con sillares de mampostería. 3. Mampostería con sillares de mampostería. 4. Mampostería con sillares de mampostería. 5. Mampostería con sillares de mampostería.
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Figure 6. Description of urban landscape (own photo)

²⁵ Pascual A. López Sánchez, Fco. José Sánchez Medrano: "Impacto de sostenibilidad en la arquitectura tradicional: el caso de Moratalla, Murcia <http://aulagreencities.coamalaga.es/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/39.-ARQUITECTURA-TRADICIONAL.pdf>http://www.coatmu.es/descargas/articulo_Pascual_Lopez_Arquitectura_sostenible.pdf

²⁶ Ayuntamiento de Moratalla: <http://www.ayuntamientomoratalla.com/>

DATA ANALYSIS

We should point out an index of dilapidated, abandoned or uninhabited buildings, showing an overview of the issue. Also, we highlight the absence of facilities, services or traffic problems that involve a comparative disadvantage with the expansion areas of the town.

In ruins, with official declaration, we find the following buildings in the old town of Moratalla, corresponding to the following locations:



Figure 7. Image of dilapidated edification (own photo)

C/ Luengo Alto -----	1 unit
C/ Soledad-----	1 unit
C/ Curato-----	1 unit
C/ Torre del Homenaje-----	1 unit
C/ Collado-----	1 unit
Barrio de las Eras -----	2 units
C/ Palomar bajo -----	1 unit
Callejón del Hospicio -----	1 unit
C/ Santa Ana-----	1 unit
C/ Hospital Alto -----	1 unit
C/ Trapería Alta-----	1 unit
C/ Cebullana Alta-----	2 units
Total-----	14 units

On the other hand, in a situation of lack of registered residents in buildings, the following ones can be found:



Figure 8. Images of buildings with no registered residents (own photo)

C/ Soledad;	9 units.
C/ Cebullana Alta;	23 units.
C/ Cebullana Baja;	22 units.
C/ Empedrado;	16 units.
C/ Travesía Empedrado;	3 units.
C/ Trapería Alta;	7 units.
C/ Trapería Baja;	8 units.
C/ Trapería Alta;	17 units.
C/ Luengo Alto;	12 units.
C/ Luengo Bajo;	12 units.
C/ Rueda;	27 units.
C/ Travesía Rueda;	6 units.
C/ Peligro;	9 units.
C/ San Antonio;	7 units.
C/ Bancales;	23 units.



Figure 9. Out-dated edifications (own photo)

C/Huertos; -----	9 units.
C/Curato;-----	12 units.
C/Castillo; -----	4 units.
C/Castellar;-----	4 units.
C/Parra;-----	22 units.
C/Barrio Eras;-----	23 units.
C/ Collado;-----	6 units.
C/ García Aguilera;-----	5 units.
C/Caño; -----	3 units.
C/Fuente;-----	4 units.
C/Padre Julián;-----	8 units.
C/Mayor; -----	28 units.
C/Palomar Bajo;-----	25 units.
C/Inocencio Rodríguez;-----	28 units.
C/Padre Rodríguez;-----	25 units.
C/Espín; -----	4 units.
C/Pez; -----	7 units.
C/Herradura;-----	1 unit.
C/Manuel Vélez;-----	2 units.
C/Santa Ana;-----	4 units.
C/ Patio del Convento.-----	1 unit.
C/Artesanos Tamboristas;-----	12 units.
C/Hospital Alto;-----	10 units.
C/Hospital Bajo;-----	9 units.
C/Patio de los Guillenes;-----	2 units.
C/Doctor Más;-----	19 units.
C/Morerica; -----	14 units.
C/Oliverica; -----	12 units.
C/Cantón; -----	63 units.
C/ Baquero Alto;-----	19 units.
C/Baquero Bajo;-----	19 units.
C/Prim; -----	17 units.
C/Pisión; -----	23 units.
C/Almendros;-----	7 units.
C/Secano; -----	9 units.
C/Carmen Conde;-----	8 units.
C/Tomás Aguilera;-----	6 units.
Total-----	685 units.

On the other hand, we see how commercial facilities have moved outside the old town, occupying areas with better road traffic, sharing this area with the population that has had the opportunity to move, representing an important proportion.

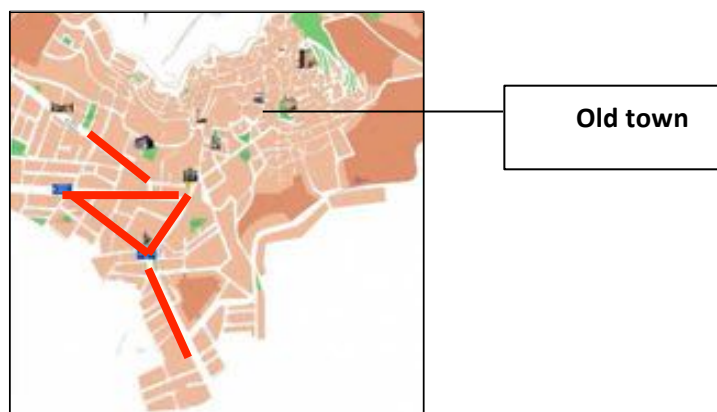



Figure 10. Exemplification of roads () grouping commercial establishments (municipal source)²⁷

The old town, despite concentrating the “traditional” facilities (Local Council, Library, Trieta Theatre, Civil Guard Barracks, Santa María de la Asunción Church and Convent of San Francisco), highlights for the lack of other centres that provide most demanded services by today’s society: health and public services, leisure, professional offices, etc.

The most important activity of this part is currently focused on local festivities: Easter, running of bulls on the occasion of local holidays, being underused the rest of the year. At a residential level, occupancy is around 50%, reflecting the limited attractiveness that it represents, but which in turn offers a scenario of opportunities for intervention.

We find an old town able to accommodate a huge number of population, little altered by industrializing processes and decaying by movements of moving to more spacious and comfortable areas. These are new sites that have other deficits: loss of identity, building of less sustainable features, reduction in social relations, etc.

This situation provides an opportunity to inventory, document and preserve a built heritage rich in nuances, full of tradition, popular culture and environmental and landscape values that have been taken up as the essence of the ability to use natural resources. Restoration would serve as a mechanism of recovery of these anonymous architectures in their different scales, where special importance is given to planning instruments related to sustainability.

²⁷ *file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/48416647.ARQPDI34164/Mis%20documentos/Downloads/MORATALLA-Informe%20Municipal%202012%20(1).pdf*



Figure 11. Restored building in the old town of Moratalla (own photo)

The treatment of roads, provision of parking spaces, of loading and unloading areas, and the possibility of access by vehicles, to facilitate the occupation by child and elderly population, should be subject to a particularized analysis, which encourages a rational integration of communications, as it has happened in old urban towns of similar characteristics (such as the case of Cehegín), removing the first obstacle that represents the current limitation of transportation.



Figure 12. Vehicular access to the old town of Moratalla (own photo)

As it is shown in the graphic diagram in figure 12, the roads that allow vehicular access to the old town are very rare, circulation by vehicles being limited, practically with no parking space, for residents or visitors, what has generated in users a determining factor for its abandonment. This issue also affects negatively when attracting people as a tourist or landscape reference.



Figure 13. Panoramic view of the old town of Moratalla (own photo)

Achieving a revitalization of the old town would mean taking advantage of the indications of protectionist measures (for example, the ICOMOS Charter of 1999²⁸ which states: “The Vernacular built Heritage is the natural and traditional way in which communities have produced their own habitat. It is part of a continuing process, including necessary changes and a continuous adaptation as a response to social and environmental requirements”). It will also be a true commitment to sustainability regarding the exploitation of the urban services that have been implemented for decades (paving roads, water, energy and communications supply, evacuation, lighting, etc.), as well as their own constructions provided with a set of passive measures and efficiency highly recognized nowadays: thermal inertia of walls, roofs, eaves, size and treatment gaps, etc.

Promoting its conservation and maintenance shall contribute to enhance sustainability in the whole town, reinforcing the idea of compact Mediterranean town against dispersed urban developments.

CONCLUSIONS

Anonymous vernacular architecture may have a natural continuity in evolution towards a sustainable way of living. Such continuity demonstrates an adaptation and survival capacity necessary in any aspect of our society.

An intervention based on respect for environment could lead to the necessary activation lever of the old towns that are victims of a process of abandonment.

Restoration against new construction may be promoted, providing a type of architecture coinciding better with the environment and climate of the area, versus the use of formal standardized parameters, profitability through income and not capital gains and energy savings compared to the waste of resources. In the State Housing Plan of 2009-2012, the word “restoration” appears for the first time in line with the Leipzig Charter where underprivileged areas deserve special attention, and where energy efficiency, accessibility and use of renewable energy are highlighted.

²⁸ *Carta del Patrimonio Vernáculo Construido (1999)* http://www.icomos.org/charters/vernacular_sp.pdf



Figure 14. Image of start of roof deterioration in the old town (own photo)

In the Regional Plan for the same period major restoration aids are established, what has been accompanied by successive normative towards this new direction for the development of the sector.

The Land Law 8/2007 faced the necessary modification, its explanatory memorandum explaining that it was essential to adopt a new model in which the environmental value of rural land would be weighed. The demographic decline accusing our country (to which the collapse of net migration following the recent crisis is linked) offers an unprecedented opportunity to overcome the dogma of growth where urbanism, construction and real estate business have been settled in Spain so far.

Recently, it is stated in the Housing Law 6/2015²⁹, of March, 24, of the Region of Murcia that: "Sustainable and energy-efficient housing shall be ensured by environmental order, and the promotion of water conservation and use of renewable energy, as well as achieving a balanced urban development, acting in the restoration of the existing built park, as an instrument for the revitalization of our cities."

It is not in vain that in the White Paper of Construction³⁰ of the Region of Murcia, (intended for 2015-2025), these ideas of conservation and restoration are alluded, being committed to sustainable developments that balance the inequality between cities and towns.

The European Territorial Agenda 2020³¹ "Towards an integrating, intelligent and sustainable Europe of diverse regions" develops the European strategy and sets priorities, among which the following ones can be highlighted:

- Promoting a polycentric and balanced territorial development.
- Fostering an integrated development of cities and rural and specific regions.
- Managing and connecting environmental, landscape and cultural values of regions.

²⁹ <http://www.borm.es/borm/documento?obj=anu&id=728216>

³⁰ <http://famdif.org/tag/libro-blanco-de-la-construccion/>

³¹ http://www.cescanarias.org/documentos/atlantico/10_me_2011_agenda_territorial_europea_2020.pdf

- Specifically, the Landscape Strategy of the Region of Murcia is also implemented where the following objectives are set:
 - Awareness, training and education of society.
 - Characterization and classification of landscapes.
 - Recognition of landscape potential as an economic resource.
 - Coordination between agents and stakeholders and tracking of the transformations.

In this respect, we demand from here the need to implement the wide proposed legislation to undertake the necessary restoration of the old town.

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