

STRATEGIE DI VALORIZZAZIONE E RIUSO DEL PATRIMONIO RURALE: ESPERIENZE DELL'AREA METROPOLITANA MILANESE

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Abstract.

Rural heritage is a substantial inheritance even in heavily urbanized areas. An example is the Milan metropolitan area, where large public and private agricultural properties affect not only rural areas, but also urban and peri-urban areas (Laviscio, 2016 a). The only Municipality of Milan owns 61 farmhouses within its territory of competence; some of them are still surrounded by more or less extensive portions of agricultural landscape (Laviscio, 2018). Beyond the boundaries of the metropolis, and mainly in southern Milan, welfare organizations such as Curia Arcivescovile, Ospedale Maggiore, Golgi Redaelli Institute hold rural complexes immersed in an agricultural landscape rich in tangible and intangible historical permanencies. This is a complex heritage, where buildings are part of a large system consisting of smaller elements as water channels and artefacts, traditional agricultural techniques, which, together, give evidence of one of the most notable technical inventions of this area since the Middle Ages (Chiappa Mauri, 1990). At the same time, it is a heritage that is often in disuse and in a state of serious abandonment due to the changed needs of the agricultural activity, the inability to adapt the technological innovations required by agriculture to the characteristics of the historical buildings and their high maintenance costs. However, the growing interest of the population to "rurality", to nearby food growing, to enjoyment and recreation outside the city, and also to the rediscovery of its history and traditions (Lohrberg, 2016; Vidal & Fleury, 2009), has led to the activation of strategies and projects that, although sometimes debatable, have allowed a partial recovery of artefacts of great historical-cultural and landscape value. The paper illustrates some reuse experiences developed in urban and peri-urban Milan area, aiming to explore the main methods and tools used for the conservation and enhancement of this rural heritage, highlighting critical and successful factors and providing insights for further practices.

Keywords: *rural heritage, enhancement, agrarian parks, cultural district, Milan*