IDENTITY AND MEMORY
VILLAGE TOURISM IN BEMPOSTA

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Abstract
This article was drafted from a wider research that coincided with my master's thesis, held at Lusíada University of Porto, under the theme "Identidade e Memória - Turismo de Aldeia para Bemposta", guided by Professor Alexandra Maria Saraiva, in 2013|2014.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the importance that Memory and Human Heritage represent to the identity of places and how Man feels the need to seek the identity of its people, from which Man has been separated from.

The study developed sets base on an exploratory research method, culminating in a case study in Bemposta, a village located in a Portuguese municipality, Mogadouro.

This study is indicative to the widespread desire to return to the origins, and Tourism reveals to be positive in this search for the human nature and its roots, as long as linked to small rural and natural areas, as is the touristic aspect that shows more respect to the preservation of sites.

The case study points to the development of an Integrated Village Tourism Network nationwide, recommending its extension to the European scale, with the project for thirteen houses.

Keywords: Memory, Heritage, Village Tourism

Introduction
Rural areas are considered to be the ones which better define Man and his deepest roots, and that is the reason why they should be privileged. Contrarily to what was expectable, the rural world is languishing and reaching the point of no return.

With the growing conscience of the importance which identity of places and cultural identity currently assume, it urges to preserve the rural world, being indispensable to assure its ethnography and grant its future for the next generations. The preservation has to provide economical independence, therefore assuring auto sustainability in these territories. From our point of view, tourism can help to reach such auto sustainability, even though it has to be organized and planned, so that it can accomplish the referred purpose and not to aggravate it.

The case study points to the development of an Integrated Village Tourism Network nationwide, which recommends an extension to the European scale.

Bemposta is a Portuguese village and the object of experimentation that supports the theories displayed in this article. A SWOT analysis is performed for this territory, leading us to a diagnose that identifies the territory pathologies, allowing an informed intervention project. This project starts with a draft of some cultural routes and the planning of several touristic activities, which were studied for a long period of time, therefore assuring that they were appropriate for this particular territory. The second part of this project is the Village Tourism, where the routes help to select the buildings that reveal to be the better examples of the traditional Portuguese architecture to integrate the touristic project, allying the restoration of the traditional architecture through traditional techniques. The claim on the traditional architecture and traditional construction methods arises from the need to maintain the identity and heritage of a nation or a region that build up the Collective Memory.

At the strategic level, the project to be developed will focus itself throughout the parish of Bemposta. On the other hand, operative part will be developed in the highest and oldest area of the village, where is located the medieval wall (which has great historical and cultural value). The occurrence of ancient cultural and social practices is part of rural areas.

The first purpose of this research involves the appreciation of the Rural Heritage and its preservation. The second purpose focuses on understanding the importance that tourism can play in rural areas as an engine for development of abandoned and underused areas.

Identity and Memory
Memory

This research aims to investigate the importance that Memory and Heritage represent to the identity of places, as well as the need Man feels about his own identity as a nation of a region or a country.

The memories of a community, a tradition, a language, food, etc., can be essential in many situations and a very important tool. The Mexican

architect Luis Barragán speaks of a memory that is triggered when a fountain in buildings designed by him recalls the serenity of other fountains encountered throughout his life: "A fountain brings us peace, joy and restful sensuality and reaches the epitomy of its very essence when by its power to bewitch it will stir dreams of distant worlds. While awake or when sleeping, the sweet memories of marvellous fountains have accompanied me throughout my life. In the gardens and homes designed by me I have always endeavoured to allow for the interior placid murmur of silence, and in my fountains, silence sings." (*apud* BURRI, 2000)

Heritage - Cultural and Rural Heritage

Heritage is such a broad, controversial, and already widely discussed subject that we will only explore Cultural Heritage and Rural Heritage so we can narrow it down.

As a legacy left by our ancestors, Heritage can be material or immaterial, and its importance lies in the hardware that supports Memory. Without such hardware, Memory and Identity depend on the fragility of the verbal transmission, the software.

Pedro Santana Lopes, a Portuguese politician, argues that the importance of Cultural Heritage lies on the perpetuation of people, because in Cultural Heritage people see their past, as well as realise their reality and are assured of their future continuity. (*apud* COELHO, 1993)

Understanding that Rural Heritage is the set of goods that witness the relationship which a community establishes in the course of History with the territory in which it operates (rural localities), is understanding that it is made of various elements, such as agriculture, landscapes, folklore and regional dances, memories and testimonies, myths and legends, superstitions, the music or the local repertoire, the sayings and popular expressions, clothing, traditional games, gastronomy, architecture, traditions and livelihoods, cultural and artistic assets, human and community values, among others, march on behalf of this legacy. All these elements form an identity and build up a memory.

Still on the heritage theme, Chart 1 was very important to the investigation, as it gives the guidelines to be adopted in the preservation process of Rural Heritage. Without these guidelines, the process would have some serious flaws, as these steps are extremely important for a realistic preservation of what exists or existed, although the mimicry is not encouraged. If mimicry occurs, it shall be done consciously and acknowledged as such, in order to avoid misunderstandings and the public to be misled. In the referred chart, "Rural Heritage Recognition" stands out from the other topics, as it is the most important topic of all: without that recognition the other steps become useless. It is also possible to analyze that

this whole procedure ends in the "Application of Technical, Regulation and Required Policy" step. This demonstrates that the Preservation Process of Rural Heritage is subject to a number of regulations, such regulations showing interest in its preservation.
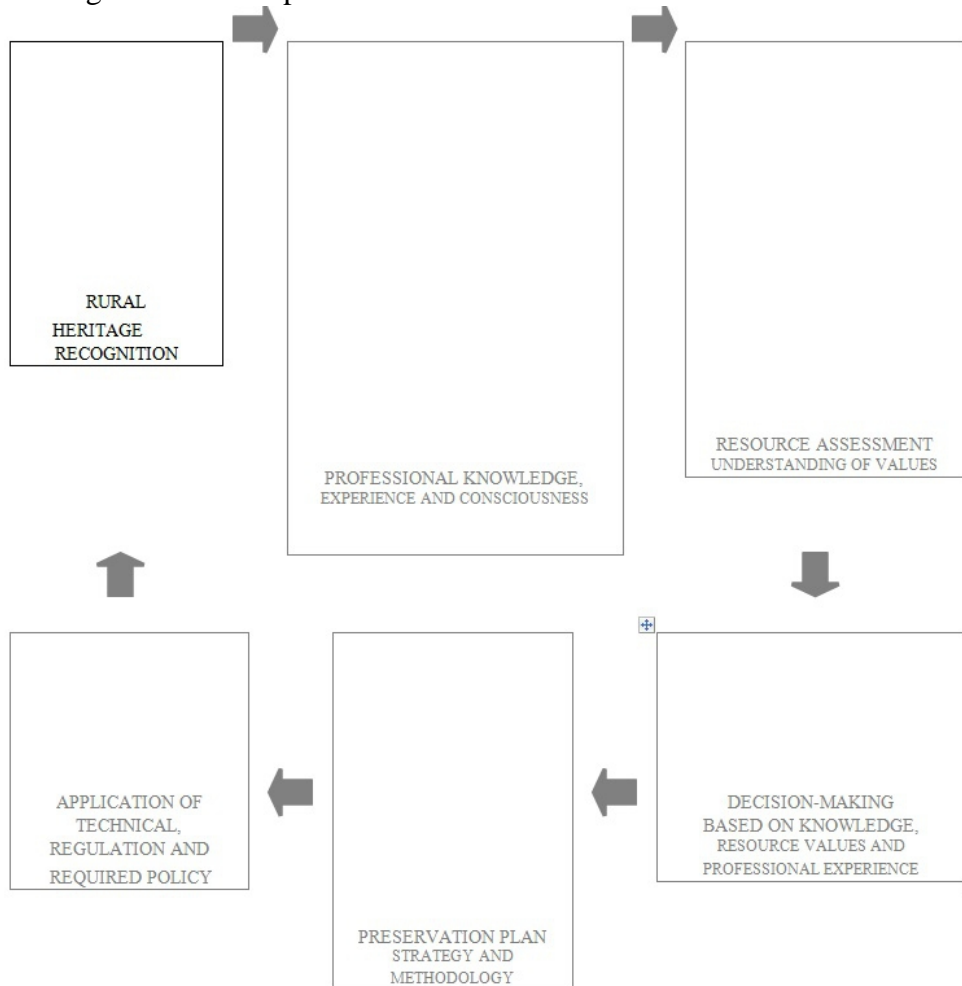
RURAL HERITAGE RECOGNITION

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT UNDERSTANDING OF VALUES

APPLICATION OF TECHNICAL, REGULATION AND REQUIRED POLICY

PRESERVATION PLAN STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

DECISION-MAKING BASED ON KNOWLEDGE, RESOURCE VALUES AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chart 1 Rural Heritage preservation process (Miri, 2012)

Collective Memory

Identity, Memory, Human and Rural Heritage merge into a single concept, Collective Memory, which has been evolving since the social and political evolution of the ancient world. Maurice Halbwachs, in the first half of the 20th century, finally baptized the term as Collective Memory and defined the concept to be used to describe a specific community. The identity of such communities is supported by testimonies, objects, spaces and places, and it passes from generation to generation. The French historian Jacques Le Goff supports that memory, where history grows, is an essential

element to individual or collective identity, and seeks to preserve the past to serve the present and the future. Le Goff also believes that we must ensure that Collective Memory should release and not restrain Men. (*apud* Romano, 1985)

We specifically refer the rural world because it is considered that the place where a community is located plays an essential role. Halbwachs considers space to be important in both memory and socialization, because images influence the Memory, making it operational.

On the subject Time, in the construction of memory, it is safe to refer that it cannot be retained. It is not possible to reconstruct a collective past and make it eternal, except through the representations of the Present. As Memory is driven by present, what is absorbed is the most essential to the present time.

It is believed that as long as we maintain a Collective Memory, our traditions and our habits will last forever.

Village Tourism

Although in the late 30s, of the 20th century, the desire to improve, develop and recover rural areas emerged in Portugal, only in the 60s was launched the first support program to the Portuguese villages - the *Improved Villages Program* (*Programa das Aldeias Melhoradas*), in the region of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro -, which triggered many similar initiatives throughout the Portuguese territory. From such initiatives it is worth highlighting the *Recovery of Historic Villages Program* (*Programa das Aldeias Históricas*), the *Villages of Portugal Program* (*Programa das Aldeias de Portugal*) and the *Schist Villages Program* (*Programa das Aldeias do Xisto*). The *Schist Villages Program* emerged as a reproduction of the *Historical Villages Program* model, and so far has been the most successful in terms of tourist trips, business partners, support of local people and program range, forming a wide network. This network is extended to 26 villages, making them more valuable for inhabitants, as well as making these villages an attractive tourist product for visitors. During such recovery, river beaches and a network of routes, supported by infrastructures, were created, being the existing ones requalified. In addition, it was also founded a museum initiative composed of joint thematic initiatives.

All these programs are based on the Village Tourism typology, a type of tourism that is understood as more enriching than the other, as there is always an interlocutor. The conversations that may exist between the inhabitants and tourists become a learning resource for both parties, therefore adding value to the Village Tourism.

With these initiatives, it was imperative to analyze other proposals and projects on a smaller and also on a larger scale[30]:

On a larger scale, we have studied *The European Network of Village Tourism* (*Rede Europeia de Turismo de Aldeia- RETA*), the winning project of *Ulysses Award 2007 for Innovation in Tourism for ONG's,* awarded by UNWTO. This is a project that aims to sustainably develop a touristic offer of excellence in rural areas, developing a tourism product that proposes partnerships through a national and international network system. The starting point of such project is to seize the endogenous resources of each territory, being its main aim the promotion of the development of tourism in villages and regions within the network. This promotion should be based on the sustainable development, using tourism as a catalyst for activities in the villages from a development perspective. The project also aimed to create a workable framework for European cooperation of Village Tourism able to share insights and best practices, therefore encouraging overall quality, cooperation and heritage protection. However, the specific purposes of this project are a) to use tourism to develop the regions, by promoting, in villages, the cooperation between tourism and the other sectors of the activity;

b) the creation of an entrepreneurial spirit; c) to enhance economic and social cohesion by creating partnerships between the agents and the population, preserve the environment, cultural heritage and local identity; d) to encourage vocational training, ongoing knowledge and information exchange; e) cooperation between the various villages in order to create a sustainable structure that allows self-financing; f) to create conditions for villages assert itselves; and finally f) requalify the traditional tourism of rural nature, valuing life and environment quality, the cultural and ethnographic heritage, the endogenous products, in order to develop cooperation and networking. (Rodrigues, Rodrigues, [S.d]). This project made us realize that the creation of a National Integrated Village Tourism Network is possible, as, so far, partnerships have already been achieved between localities in different countries, such as Portugal, Finland, Romania, Italy and Poland. A network extended nationwide would be a good starting point for the dissemination of this Integrated Network, which makes the RETA project a great added value, because a part of this planning is already done, and the bridge to other European countries is already made.

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[30] In this article it is made a brief summary of these projects, although the master's dissertation includes a more extensive study of these case studies, where it is possible to understand the full potential of similar projects. The RETA project has become specifically important in the study not only for its breadth but also as a support, because when other tourism network are created there is support for the idea to be implemented.

The Aldeia da Mata Pequena project, located in a small place called Mata Pequena about 20 minutes from the Portuguese capital Lisbon, arises in this research naturally, once it was necessary to find a small-scale project to better understand the specific needs of a Village Tourism and what impact this could have in a small community and neighbouring communities. The SWOT chart illustrates and summarizes the impact caused by this project:

Strengths	Weaknesses
-Rigorous preservation of the architectural heritage; -Geographical location; -Population dynamics; -Archaeological and geomorphological value area; -Creation of jobs; -Environmental quality; -"Alive" culture (inhabitants and their way of life); -Economic and social regeneration.	-Agricultural Development; -Lack of Commerce (basic goods); -Poor access to public transport.
Opportunities	Threats
-Partnerships that boosts local economy; -Traditional trade; -Land-use planning; -Touristic attractiveness/appealing of the region.	-Weakly supported social development ; -(lack of) Land-use planning.

Chart 2 SWOT analysis of Aldeia da Mata Pequena project
(Nunes, Lourenço, Barreira, 2008)

From this analysis it is possible to understand that the village tourism unit of Aldeia da Mata Pequena brings huge gains to the territory, but the reverse is also true. If it was not the conditions that the place has, its implementation would have not been possible or it would have been be very difficult to achieve. One may verify these conclusions in the case study of Bemposta, where there were a lot of constructions that collide with the traditional architecture. In the Bemposta's case, the creation of a Village Tourism project will be more fruitful and have more impact to the local, than the local will have for the project.

The analysis of these case studies was very important for the study as it becomes an awareness of what can be done both locally and at national level, or even at an European level.

Village Tourism in Bemposta : a project-test

The project-test begins with a SWOT analysis, which proved to be an important tool in observing the conditions of the territory. The key topics of this analysis are listed in the chart below:

Strengths	Weaknesses
-Presence of major road and rail highways; -Geographical location; -Chestnut culture with high economic potential; -Archaeological and geomorphological value area; -High value culinary references: cattle-raising of mirandesa farming with the designation of origin "Carne Mirandesa", the sheep farming certified under the name "Cordeiro Bragançano" and the swine farming "Bísaro" breed; -Environmental and landscape quality; -Rich fauna, where it is possible to find rare species like Griffin or Vulture, or endangered species such as the Otter and the Buck; -Living culture (inhabitants and their way of living); -Potential of mining exploration, even though has decreased and the majority of holdings are closed; -Hunting wealth and rich flora; -Local production of olive oil and cork.	-Agricultural development; -Lack of Commerce (basic goods);; -Poor access to public transport; -Peripheral geographic location in the Portuguese context; -Disadvantageous economic situation; -Unprofitable mining exploration; -Unstable weather discourages investment in agriculture; -Absence of forest planning; -Lack of indicative and informative sinaletic; - Aging of the resident population, with average life expectancy increasing, due to the large migration flows which have brought great lurch to the village.
Opportunities	Threats
-Possibility of developing a tourism focused on the hunting, ecological and rest activities (Village Tourism); -Generate new centralities; -Traditional trade; -Land-use planning; -Inclusion of an intermodal transport network, extended to the Spanish territory; -Establish partnerships capable of generating local development; -Economic development through increased production of endogenous resources such as nuts, edible mushrooms, smokehouse products, etc.	-Lack of cohesion funds; -Roads seem to be non-functional because instead of coaxing the travellers to enter the village, draw them away; -Large asymmetry of development of the border areas between Portugal and Spain; -Land-use planning at risk due to the depopulation of the rural areas and the progressive growth and improvement of routes.

Chart 3 SWOT analysis of Aldeia de Bemposta project (Ferrão, 2015)

From the Chart 3 we conclude that Bemposta is a village with great value and economic potential. However, as it is out of sight of the governments - as all rural areas in Portugal - it fell into abandon and oblivion, which purges the past and does not provide an auspicious future. This analysis allows an informed and conscious intervention, facilitating the implementation of a strategic plan for the whole parish.

The Village of Bemposta is a territory with numerous advantages for an implementation of a hotel divided by its proto-urban centre, leading to the creation of several small-scale routes that should help to promote Cultural Tourism. These routes can contribute to enrich the territory by creating more points of interest, such as the Mirandês donkey rides, the practice of hunting and fishing, the flora and fauna observation, the local landmarks and contemplation work of art visits[31], the handicraft making observation.

The strategy involves the planning of these pathways (which have natural and humanized treasures of Bemposta) that are considered of great importance to anyone visiting the area, and it should be supported by small shelters, as the routes are quite long, and any intervention on the pavement would be quite expensive. Therefore, we have left this action of intervening on the pedestrian paths to the centre of the localities. The shelters, besides its refuge function, are intended to have other functions, such as storing extreme sports equipment; transform itselves into tourist information offices; show local crafts; host wine tastings, olive oil, honey from the region, among others; function as wildlife observatory, etc. The aim is the paths to expand to the neighbouring villages, culminating in a national behaviour, as well as to avoid tourists to only travel into cities and raise interest in knowing the small villages, which maintain almost untouched the history and memory of people, customs and some traditional architecture. These paths are intended to become a route that can be sectioned by regions, facilitating logistics, giving chance to the tourists to visit each province deeply.

Other activities, such as rowing, paragliding, mountain biking, climbing, geocaching, parachute jumps, etc. can be offered to the youngest, as this parish meets all the conditions to do it.

The intervention project focuses mainly on the recovery and protection of traditional architecture, in order to convert the use of vernacular historic houses that are in a state of disrepair. Once the not classified architectural heritage is at great risk of deterioration and abandonment, we grew up the idea of creating a project that would promote better social and economic dynamics to the community and also demonstrate care in preserving the Collective Memory- a Village Tourism project. As this project must show respect for the rural areas, we see the need for a major planning and preliminary study of the touristic activity and the area potentialities for this kind of tourism, which should be direct and honest, not intended to be a "musealization" and dramatization of what the country life is.

The Village Tourism Unit Project, formed by 13 buildings located all around the village, was architecturally developed only in 5 Country Houses,

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[31] There is some Renaissance frescoes on a local chapel, the Capela do Santo Cristo.

fully equipped allowing a comfortable and extended accommodation. The location of these Country Houses is not random, but the result of a study conducted during the visits to Bemposta, which allowed us to observe the natural flows taken by the inhabitants and the visitors inside the village space. Therefore, we were able to create a logic of re-use for each building, which has been determined by its location.[32]

The idea of creating an enterprising project of this nature in Bemposta emerged with the aim of providing a recovered social and economic dynamics, getting tourists in direct contact with the locals, their habits and their lifestyle, allowing the village to integrate a community tourism that helps to promote the local economy. In the speech of the entities that coordinate similar projects to the one created for Bemposta, the desire to expand their networks is obvious. As such, the joint efforts that would allow the creation of an Integrated Village Tourism Network would be a positive feature.

Conclusion

This work is based on an investigation oriented towards an analysis of rural territories, in order to better understand the preservation of its heritage, either tangible or intangible. Being strongly rich in historical, cultural and natural heritage, these areas can generate wealth boosting local development. The investigation is divided into three phases:

1) Firstly, we approach the subject Memory as an extension of Identity, perpetuating it, and these two subjects of study together form the understanding of the Human Heritage. Since rural areas are considered to be Men's foundations, an approach is made to the subject Rural Heritage in which Identity and Memory merge.

2) The subject Village Tourism emerges from the will to implement one unit in Bemposta, where the architectural test of the Case Study is to be deployed.

3) Finally, it is made an intensive analysis of the village of Bemposta, in search of the capital gains and disadvantages by implementing the project, trying to understand what opportunities it offers and what threats points to the cluster. This process is accomplished through a SWOT analysis that provides us a positive diagnosis, because the territory has many advantages for a Village Tourism Unit Project. This diagnosis draws up a strategic plan for the whole parish and aims to extend to the entire Portuguese territory.

This research intends to revive the debate on a topic that is not new but has not earned the proper attention, and this investigation will be useful as a

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[32] For further information about the project see Ferrão, 2015.

reflection tool based on knowledge, also contributing to personal, intellectual and architectural development, and being categorical to reach a reasoned and constructive criticism posture.

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Chart Credits:
Chart 2 Rural Heritage preservation process
Source: Adapted and worked by the investigator from Miri, 2012 (*Diagram 1. Process of evaluation, recognition and selection of methodology, policies and standards on the bases of professional knowledge, experience for preservation of cultural heritage*).
Chart 2 SWOT analysis of Aldeia da Mata Pequena project
Source: Adapted and translated by the investigator from Nunes, Lourenço, Barreira, 2008: 25.
Chart 3 SWOT analysis of Aldeia de Bemposta project
Source: Adapted and translated by the investigator from Ferrão, 2015: 97-100