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### Urban /Architectural and Historic/Cultural Analyses of Rural Settlements -Region "Reka e keqe" in Kosova and Region "Reka e epërme" in Macedonia

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## **Urban /Architectural and Historic/Cultural Analyses of Rural Settlements -Region “Reka e keqe” in Kosova and Region “Reka e epërme” in Macedonia**

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**Abstract.** Rural settlement size and its extension are some of the main factors that is responsible for settlement success in achieving its development objectives. Interlinks between settlement functions and location; are dependent on the socio-economic general conditions of the society. These conditions were rapidly changing over the last century.

As case studies have been taken the region called “Reka e keqe” (eight rural areas) in Kosova and region called “Reka e eperme” (eleven rural areas) in Macedonia. Those regions have geographical position, territorial expansion, population, tradition and other similarities. Main parameters used for analyses of those rural settlements are to be considered:

- Population (structure, density, social status)
- Buildings (ownership, architectural model, functional and aesthetic concept)
- Public services (administration, education, culture, health, commercial)
- Public spaces (squares, streets, bridges)

The research will:

- Research the spatial extent, rates of change, and socio-economic character and urban-ecological systems in specific rural regions of both countries
- Model the demographic, urban/architectural, economic and ecological interdependencies
- Propose a range of urban design approaches, typological models, and adaptable architectural concepts suited to their character

Based on urban, architectural and social parameters, all together: crafts, architects, private owners, local foundations, organization’s for the protection of nature and the landscape, and national, and local authorities work together, it will be possible to attain the desired results: the, unbroken culture of the collective rural memory, the right architecture, the right culture, rural renewal through rurbanism, and a social options.

**Keywords:** rural, population, buildings, services, public, space, social, economic, urban, architectural.

### **1. The rural region “Reka e keqe” in Kosova, main characteristics**

## Urban /Architectural and Historic/Cultural Analyses of Rural Settlements -Region “Reka e keqe” in Kosova and Region “Reka e epërme” in Macedonia

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Based on analyses and study of area, developed on June 2016 (through field visits, professional analyses, using comparative methods). In the study have been treated three neighborhood villages of this selected area (Brovina, Molliqi, Ponosheci):

- Compactivity of area
- Model of spatial development
- Public spaces
- Buildings and architectural values
- Culture and heritage



Fig.1. Aerial views of Brovina, Molliqi and Ponosheci (source: Google Earth)

Brovina, concentrated village, spatial radius from the center of 320m, area is split by three main road axes, from the eastern part bordered by the national road Gjakova-Junik, while from the northern and southern part bordered by agricultural fields. Traditional buildings called "Kulla" (P+1-P+2) are dominant through main road axes inside settlement area, while modern housing units (mostly P+1) are next to them (second or third row). In the center there are dominant mostly constructions related to heritage ("çeshme", "tyrbe", "xhami"... ) and other multifunctional new buildings (school, medicine, shops, manufacturing units). Through the center is the river flow and in the periphery of settlement is cemetery.

Molliqi, concentrated village with tendency of spreading, spatial radius from the center of 560m, area is splitted by three main road axes, from the western part from is surrounded by mountains, from the eastern part bordered by the national road Gjakova-Junik, while from the northern surrounded by agricultural land. Traditional buildings called "Kulla" (P+1-P+2) are dominant through main road axes inside settlement area, while modern housing units (mostly P+1) are spreaded in the central part and periphery too. In the center there are dominant mostly constructions related to heritage ("çeshme", "tyrbe", "xhami"... ) and other multifunctional new buildings (school, medicine, shops, manufacturing units). Through the center is river flow and in the periphery of settlement is cemetery.

Ponosheci, spreaded village, spatial radius from the center of 680m, area is splitted by five main road axes, from the eastern part bordered by the national road Gjakova-Junik, while from the northern and southern part bordered by agricultural fields. Traditional buildings called "Kulla" (P+1-P+2) are spreaded through the whole settlement area, while modern housing units (mostly P+1) are spreaded too. In the center there are dominant mostly constructions related to herritage ("çeshme", "tyrbe", "xhami"... ) and other multifunctional new buildings (school, medicine, shops, manufacturing units). Through the center is river flow and in the periphery of settlement is cemetery. Referent point for this settlement is also crossroad to the border with Albania.

As below study results are presented in Tab.1, regarding spatial model of selected settlements:

Tab.1. Spatial model of selected settlements (source: study done in June 2016)

<b>Spatial model</b>	<b>Brovina (%)</b>	<b>Molliqi (%)</b>	<b>Ponosheci (%)</b>
Regular geometric model	20	55	20
Irregular geometric model	70	45	60
• Freely spreaded	20	10	25
• Concentrated through main road axes	45	25	15
• Spreaded units	5	10	20
Other models	10	5	20

From Tab.1, can be seen that spatial model of those settlements is dominant irregular model especially that one related to main road axes inside settlement area, which model has some implications regarding compactivity, landscape, infrastructure, social aspect and traditional behavior of people in those settlements.

*\*measurements are approximate from "Google maps"*

Tab.2. Main public spaces identified from the study (source: study done in June 2016)

<b>Main public spaces</b>	<b>Brovina (nr.)</b>	<b>Molliqi (nr.)</b>	<b>Ponosheci (nr.)</b>
Squares	2	3	4
Main road axes	3	3	5
Sport units	1	2	2
Recreation units	2	2	3
Culture & heritage units	5	3	2
Public services (trade, school, medicine...)	4	3	3

As can be seen from Tab.2, there are some similarities regarding spatial form of selected settlements especially related to their public spaces, public infrastructure and public services too. There are main axes of roads dominant constructions through those axes, and public spaces in the central part followed by public functions (school, medicine, shops...) or elements of culture and heritage (mosque, çeshme...).

From analyses can be summarized that form of settlements is a structures as combination between old constructions and new ones mainly concentrated in the central part of area, but, also spreaded towards main road axes. There is a relatively good infrastructure of traffic flow and other public services. The architectural style of buildings is from both traditional and modern concepts regarding etazhity, form, materialization, dominant functions, and those styles are relatively in good relationship with each other. The dominant constructions related to heritage are Kulla-s and their urban surrounding (supporting units) as multifunctional complexes. In this regard can be mentioned main entrance in the complex and main entrances in the building, which are in relation with traditional behavior of families there (privacy, autonomy, security...for respective family there). Kulla as multifunctional building has an important public functional unit inside "oda e burrave" (main living room dedicated only mans), where this functional unit was used for different public purposes too, like for different family meetings, different ceremonies, different public debates for community there! For sure those buildings are important elements of urban/architectural landscape of selected settlements.

Other constructions related to the heritage are in function of tradition, culture, religion or social activities. Integrated part of those settlements, natural landscape is also important part: vegetation, rivers etc. While regarding social and cultural life this is dominated by their customs, local tradition and culture, developed through the centuries with reflections in the public life for citizens not only in selected area but also in wider area.

## 2. The rural region “Reka e epërme” in Macedonia, main characteristics

The mountain region “Reka e epërme” in Gostivar, south- western part of Macedonia. In this area there is one main river ”Radika”, and this area is in between triangle of Macedonia, Kosova and Albania. Villages of this region, mostly are concentrated and in their structural content are neighborhoods based on tribes (surnames) like neighborhoods of: e bregzajve, leshkaj, gorgë, teme, kindenje, shtutkaj, te kolës, te halirkave, garamhall, te kolës, te kondet/kondallar/, grykalaret, etj.). There are identities between them even in architectural style of buildings. Building’s evolution through through historical and societal development was based on traditional housing buildings which have been used mainly for housing purposes but also for another additional functions too, like social and public events. Those buildings hava had small windows for two reasons: tough climatic conditions or defense purposes from attacks of different military invasions through the centuries. Nowadays buildings have two main functional characters:

- Mountain buildings (areas at high altitude above sea level)
- Field buildings called “çardaklija” (areas at low altitude above sea level).



Fig.2. Aerial views of two rural settlements, village Tanushe-Reka and Rimnice (burimi: Google Earth)

Analyzing the characteristic housing unit and its urban surrounding, there is dominant space dedicated family private life (living room, kitchen, sleeping rooms, sanitary...) , while there is also a space dedicated public activities of family in relation with others called “oda e burrave”. Urban surrounding

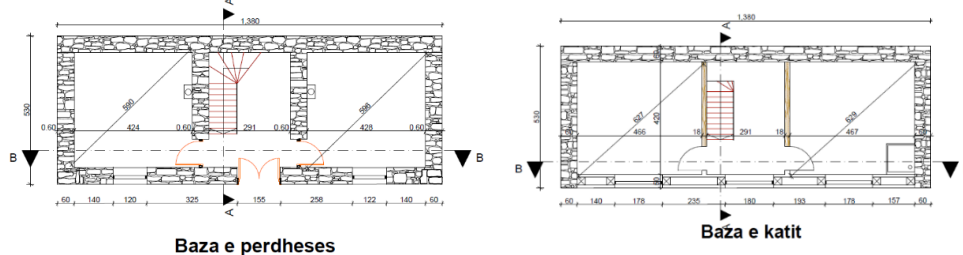
content is dominated mainly from main entrance, greenery -garden and some secondary small building units (warehouses, pharm, garage...). Building materials are dominated from stone (walls), wooden



elements in façade and roof) and slope roof covered from classic tiles.

Fig.3. Sketch of building unit and its urban surrounding: 1. Building, 2. Pharm units, 3. Kitchen outside, 4. Public sanitary, 5. Greenery, 6.warehouse (source: study done in June 2016)

“The existential space“ is a psychological concept, determining the scheme that people are developing for using that and having pleasure there. (Norberg-Schulz, 1971). Because the existence, space and architecture are three main elements for peoples coexistence Analyzing the character of building unit, the constructive system is massive one with constructive stone walls combined with wooden “kushak” as enhancer, facades by stone, roof construction by wood, stairs by wood, wooden floor slab, wooden windows and doors, .



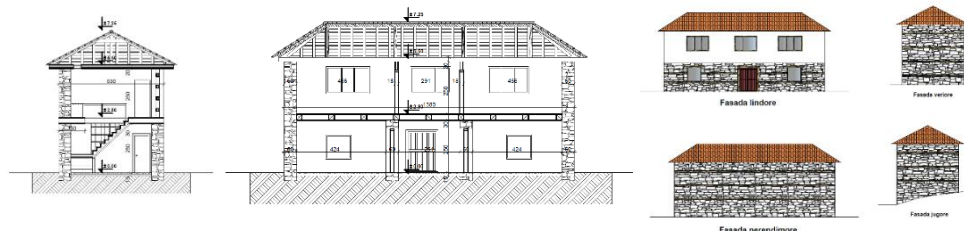


Fig.4. The structure of characteristic building: elevations, sections, facades (source: study done in June 2016)

## Conclusion

Regarding rural area treated in Kosova, based on thematic study work, can be concluded that selected settlements, have their own spatial and socio-cultural identity, which is directly related to their own history of development. They are spatially and functionally compact in good relation between history of their development and contemporary development too and well integrated between each other through "rurban" spatial development.

Regarding rural area treated in Macedonia, vernacular architecture is main factor integrating social and cultural behavior of citizens there through the history of development. Their function split into two main functional groups: private-family and public one and building materials used there, dominated mainly by stone and wood which are present in the surrounding of those settlements.

From both analyzed study cases can be concluded that selected rural regions have values based on their own urban/architectural, social/cultural and historic development characteristics with their originality well interrelated between past and present developments of history, culture, tradition and collective behavior of Albanian nation through the centuries.

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