The façades in the traditional rural constructions and their study through the documentary sources. Application to the house of principles of XX century in the region of Paradanta (Pontevedra, Spain)

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The basic type of the buildings in the so-called vernacular architecture, typical of each area or sub-area, has to be established through a process of analysis and synthesis of the greatest possible number of buildings (García Grinda, 1990).

When dealing with the analysis of the contemporary traditional rural buildings, nowadays the necessity arises of looking for valid documentary sources to complete the compulsory field evaluation of the typological resources of the landscape (Rivera, 1992).

This type of documentary sources is specially useful when you need to analyse a high number of buildings in areas of disperse construction, where the fields study would imply a high cost (Ortiz, 1999).

Among the documentary sources we can highlight the cadaster inventories, owing to the great amount of information they provide. Of all the cadasters made until today in our country, we have used in this study the «Libretas de campo de aparejadores» (technical architects field notebooks) which were made in all the parishes of Galicia in 1920 and which were used for the subsequent tax register of buildings and lands.

The aim of this paper is to show the information these field notebooks provide and also the possibilities they offer when having to analyse the earlier XX century traditional rural buildings in our country.

Material

The «Libretas de campo de aparejadores» (technical architects field notebooks) contain information of the assets placed on urban soil including, for each of them, data about the land (province, council, parish and place), data about the tax register (place, class, borders, extension, owner . . . ), data taken by the surveyor in the field (kinds of field, length of façade, roofed and unroofed extension . . . ), data about the building materials and ways (wall materials, wall coatings, decoration roof, floors, paving . . . ) and a drawing of the building.

These data are shown in an index card where the technicians would note down those aspects which were relevant (Figures 1 and 2). In Figure 3 some examples of drawings of buildings from the field note books have been included.

To carry out the study, we took as a sample the façades of all the villages in a parish in the area of «A Paradanta» (Pontevedra, Spain), which in the end implied the study of more than 500 façades.

Method

To carry out the analysis we had to define first the different buildings and façades that could be found in the register. With the help of a data base, we finished off the analysis of all the buildings and façades in the sample.
El aparador, de 1923.

Figure 1
Example of an index card to take data in the field - I

Figure 2
Example of an index card to take data in the field - II

The database is composed of four groups of fields. The first group of fields is devoted to the identification of the studied sample. Each of them would then be identified by the municipality, the parish, the place, the index card relevant in the place and the identification code of the card.

As more than one building can be registered in a card, it was necessary then to include another group of fields which enabled us to consider this aspect. In this way, a register could be created for each building being analysed. Besides, it was also noted down whether the building was attached to another one or not.

The third group of data was devoted to the typological study of the building. To carry it out we considered the criteria of Ortiz et al (2001) about the building kind of development, plan shape and number of roof slopes.

The building development is produced from a main volume in different ways (Figure 4). The first one is called simple development and in it the new volume is attached to the gable end wall of the former, following the longitudinal axis of the main volume. The second one has been called complex development and in it the new volume is attached to one of the longitudinal walls of the main one. In the second kind of development we can find three situations:

— Complex development through perpendicular attachment: the longitudinal axis of the new
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Figure 3
Example of several building drawings

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The volume is perpendicular to the one of the main volume.

— Complex development through extension of the roof: the longitudinal axis of the new volume is parallel to the one or the main volume.

— Mixed complex development: one of the end of the main volume is developed through extension of the roof and the other one through perpendicular attachment.

As far as the shape of the plan is concerned, we find plans with an «L», «U», «T», etc., shape. As far as the roof slopes are concerned, these are noted down in each wings. The wall materials, the roof materials and the build surveys were also included for their analysis in the data base.

The fourth group of fields in the data base would be constituted by the data of the analysis of the façade itself. In the first field the façade is given a code because one or two of them can be analysed in each building according to the characteristics of the drawing. Once each of the façades had been identified, we analysed those aspects which have a higher relevance in the typological definition of the composition of the façade. The two following analysed aspects are the shape of the baseboard and of the eave. These can be flat or sloping. Then, it was studied which way the façades stands with respect to the roof. This can be perpendicular or parallel. The analysis of the height and length finishes off the study of the general characteristics of the façade. Next the total number and type of doors and windows is analysed. Finally, the remarkable elements in the façade, such as stairs and projections are noted down. The stairs is characterised
Simple development through perpendicular attachment

Mixed complex development through extension of the roof

Figure 4
Development of the buildings

according to which way stands with respect to the façade, according the support of the landing and according its faces. The projections in the façade are characterised according to the way they are supported and according their faces.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The synthesis of the data obtained after the analysis allowed us to know the most relevant characteristics of the sample.

The results obtained were the frequency of the aspects studied. These distributions give us a very clear idea of which were the most frequent and then the most representative aspects of the buildings and the façade in the sample studied. These distributions would become the base for the establishment of the basic type of traditional rural buildings.

With this study it can be highlighted the great usefulness of the «Libretas de campo de aparejadores» (technical architects field notebooks) in the study of some remarkable aspects of the façades in the early XX century traditional rural buildings in Galicia.

REFERENCE LIST


