

Reoccupying Ruins in the Azores

Shifting Spaces, Materials, and Culture on the Islands of Terceira and Graciosa

by
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis including any required final revisions as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

Half a century of emigration from the Azores to North America has seen the abandonment and decay of many traditional houses throughout this Portuguese archipelago. Today, as members of the Azorean diaspora seek to return to their homeland, these ruined houses present a potent opportunity for renovation and reoccupation. Those who return, however, bring with them new domestic expectations and contemporary, urban needs at odds with the abandoned built fabric. Through an extensive photographic and qualitative survey of the over 1,600 abandoned buildings of the islands Terceira and Graciosa, and in-depth analysis of current conditions, historical precedents, and case-study design experiments, this thesis proposes a series of architectural principles and strategies for adapting these vernacular ruins to support the returning diaspora, while simultaneously restoring their spatial, material, and historical connection to traditional cultural practices for future generations. This design research tests vernacular architecture's ability to adapt temporally and culturally, and exemplifies a way of reconceiving building - and rebuilding - in the limited, cyclical context of island urbanism.

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This thesis and the work has spanned over 2 years: a year of research in the Azores, and a year of development in the School of Architecture. The outcome of the thesis would not have been the same without the immense support from my family in Canada and in Portugal and my friends here in the school of architecture. To all of you who have helped me, driven me around the islands, fed me, looked over my drawings, read my essays and given me something else to think about than the Azores, I express to you my deepest gratitude. Thank you.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Faustino Bettencourt de Ávila, Evarista Bettencourt and their son Manuel Telésforo Bettencourt de Ávila; and to Francisco dos Santos, Maria Inez da Silva and their daughter Olívia Maria dos Santos, who all left their native Azores in hopes of a better life.

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INTRODUCTION

Fig. 0.1. (Left) View of Pico and its mountain from Faial

“I have come to realize that what the islands have that is most beautiful and that completes them, is the island that is in front [of them] (...)”

*- Raul Brandão,
“As Ilhas Desconhecidas”¹*

The nine islands that form the archipelago of the Azores are located in the middle of the Atlantic. People have lived on the islands for over 500 years: cultivating the limited land; fishing and hunting in the infinite sea; praying to the divine forces to be spared from the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions; building their homes, their churches and their cities from the volcanic stones of the island soil. During this half-millennium of inhabitation, emigration has marked the Azores as much as its earthquakes. Thousands of Azoreans emigrated to Brazil and North America in hopes of a better future, leaving behind their islands, their families and their homes. *Reoccupying Ruins in the Azores* is a case-study that explores how rural architecture of the past can accommodate contemporary domestic expectations and spaces.

This thesis poses the following questions: how can we adapt these Azorean vernacular ruins to support a returning diaspora? What are the spatial, material, and historical connections to traditional cultural practices embodied in these houses, and how can we restore them for future generations? Terceira and Graciosa are the chosen islands of investigation, providing together an example of a large urban/rural island condition and a smaller, exclusively rural island condition. Six instances of potential reoccupation are chosen on the two islands to explore the relationships and dialogues between old and new, urban and rural.

Over the past 50 years, the rural landscapes of continental Portugal have been reshaped by the returning emigrants building new houses, which meant that the theoretical opportunity to channel the remittance economy into the rehabilitation of rural areas or historical centers was lost.² The emigrant builder rarely worked with an architect – due to the social distance that separated them and the fact architects rarely intervened in rural areas – and municipalities failed to provide the necessary guidance to help the returning emigrant during construction process of their new homes.³

Today, the Azores faces similar challenges, and

proposing the reoccupation of the houses left behind adds an additional challenge: catering to the cumulative life experience of the diaspora and the Azorean climate. Contrary to historical precedents, the Regional Government of the Azores has put in place programs to offer financial support to the owners of properties in the Azores that wish to rehabilitate houses – the “*Apoio à Habitação – Recuperação de Habitação Degradada*” (Housing Support – Restoration of Degraded Housing).⁴

Furthermore, the dawn of a new economic cycle in the Azores – tourism – has increased the number of low-cost airlines coming to the archipelago, allowing for a higher frequency of visits to the islands from continental Europe and North America. The increase in tourists also allows for higher occupancy rates of buildings and houses that would usually be vacant, and offers new financial opportunities for emigrants that have vacant properties.

In addition, Portuguese citizenship is available for the children and grandchildren of emigrants, which promotes the preservation of ties to Portugal, still strong today amongst the first generation of emigrants in the Azorean communities in North America. Within this current context, the Azores and its diaspora can reclaim for their own benefit the rich vernacular heritage left behind by so many emigrants. The research and design objectives of this thesis are to demonstrate how rural ruins can be reoccupied and reintegrated into the active built fabric of the Azorean islands.

This thesis is divided in three parts. ***Part One: Context*** is structured into two chapters that provide the situation and investigation essential to the understanding of the current Azorean context. The first essay, *Insularity and Azoreanity*, establishes the geographical and psychological dimensions of the territory. The second text, an illustrated chapter entitled *A Study of Existing Conditions*, rests on an extensive photographic and qualitative survey, completed by the author, of the 1,600 abandoned and decaying buildings of Terceira and Graciosa. The evaluation and understanding of the current conditions of vacant and decaying buildings - from the scale of individual buildings to that of the built fabric of the island - provides the foundation for the analysis of the nature of buildings, spaces and decay in the Azores.

Part Two: Rupture and Continuity acts as a roadmap of research to situate the Portuguese vernacular house and the houses of the diaspora within the contemporary discourse of conservation and preservation. The first chapter, *From the “Casa Portuguesa” to the “Inquérito”* establishes the chronology of discourse surrounding vernacular architecture in Portugal. The second chapter, *The Migratory Experience and the “Dream House”* outlines the

challenges posed by the house of the returning emigrants and the contemporary urban expectations acquired through the migratory experience alongside the challenges posed by the retention of rural practices. The third chapter, *Conservation, Preservation and the Vernacular* frames the values and principles of conservation that can aid in the preservation of the vernacular heritage left by the emigrants.

Finally, ***Part Three: Reoccupation*** establishes the design principles for the reoccupation of the abandoned houses on Terceira and Graciosa. Six case-study design houses illustrate the architectural principles and strategies: each house explores a different issue of ownership, generational return and occupational strategy. The projected design interventions outline the architectural resolution of new materials and building strategies that respond to the pre-existing vernacular structures and Azorean context, while simultaneously responding to the contemporary expectation of the returning diaspora.

Ultimately, this thesis demands the reconsideration of the place of vernacular heritage and contemporary architecture in a rural island-setting. As demonstrated in the Azores, in an island context, every building is forever in the landscape or forever in its landfill.

ENDNOTES

Introduction

- 1 “*Já percebi que o que as ilhas têm de mais belo e as completa é a ilha que está em frente (...)*”
Raul Brandão, *As Ilhas Desconhecidas - Notas e Paisagens*, with preface by António M. B. Machado Pires (1926; Açores: Artes e Letras, 2009), 160.
- 2 Roselyne de Vilanova, Carolina Leite, et Isabel Raposo, *Maison de rêve au Portugal* (Paris : Editions Créaphis, 1994), 10.
- 3 *Ibid*, 85-86.
- 4 Governo dos Açores, “Apoio à Habitação – Recuperação de Habitação Degradada,” Governo Regional, 2015, <http://www.azores.gov.pt/NR/exeres/BA69DEF2-6077-4352-B7CA-11BA78561913.htm>



Graciosa

São Jorge

Terceira

CONTEXT

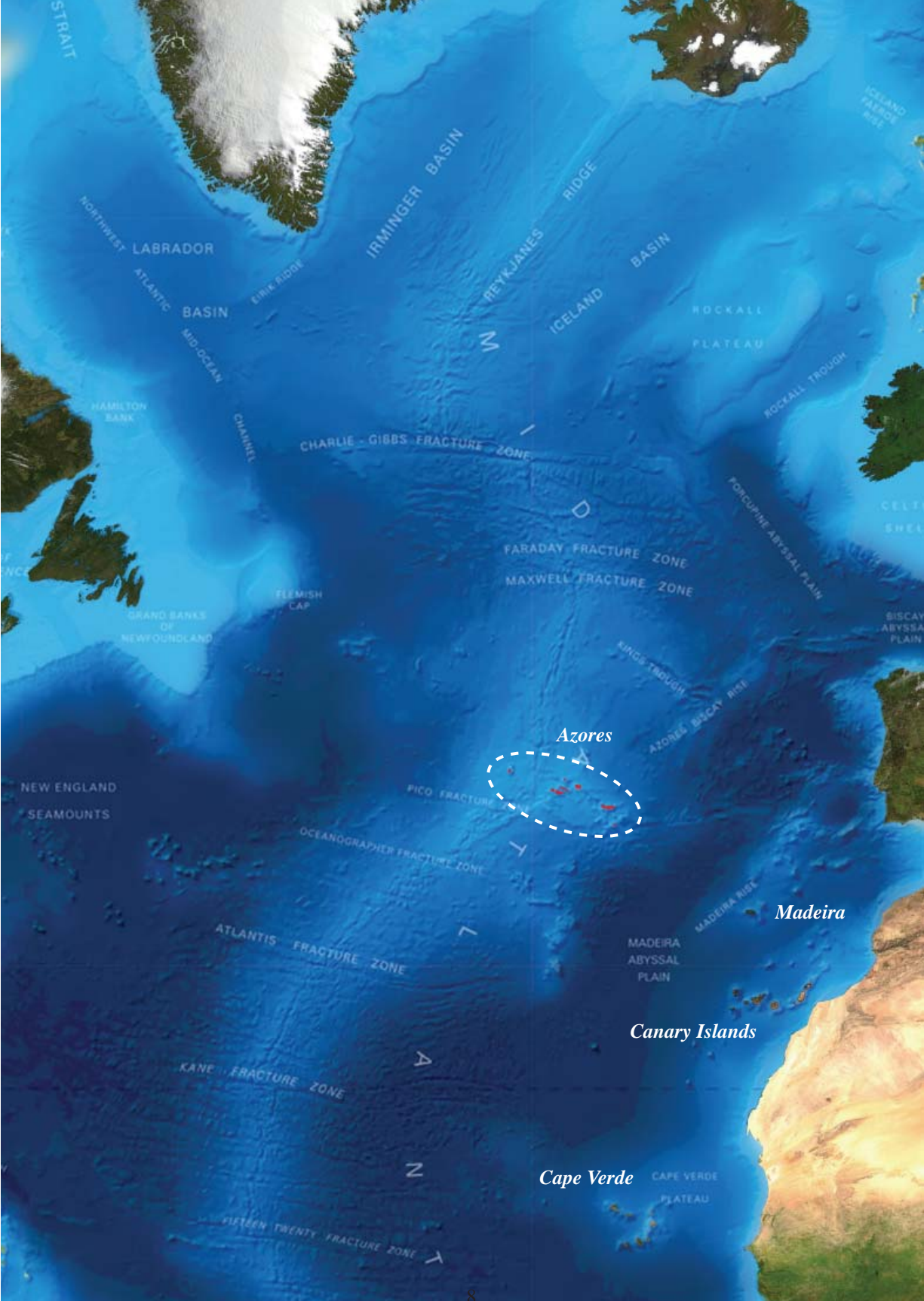
Part One



São Miguel

Santa Maria





INSULARITY AND AZOREANITY

Contemporary Transatlantic Azorean Culture

“Geography, for us, is worth as much as history, and it is no coincidence that fifty percent of our written memories are reports of earthquakes and floods. Like the mermaids we have a dual nature: we are of flesh and stone. Our bones dive into the sea.”

- Vitorino Nemésio, “Açorianidade”¹

NOTE:

All translation, unless otherwise indicated, are done by the author of this thesis. Original text can be found in the endnotes.

The small Atlantic archipelago of the Azores may have once been remote, but today its population and cultural influences are found across the North and South American continents. Its diaspora – Azorean emigrants and their decedents – is estimated to be six times the population of Azores residents today.² Azorean emigrants have set roots in the Americas – from Ouro Preto and Florianópolis in Brazil, California and New Bedford in the United States to Toronto and Montreal in Canada – and brought with them their cultural practices, creating thriving pockets of Azorean communities. Contemporary Azorean culture – in and outside of the islands – is inextricably shaped by the insular nature of the Azores and the migratory experience of its population.

Fig. 1.1. (Left) Location of the Azores in the vast expanse of the Atlantic

“As opposed to what could be drawn from the narrow space that cradled us, in terms of how we relate to the rest of the world and how we live, the truth is that no one more than the islander, except perhaps the plainsman, has this sense of endless expanse. And so with our eyes, we drew from the sea the land that was denied to us”.

- Vitorino Nemésio,
“*Corsário das Ilhas*”³

The archipelago of the Azores is made up of nine islands, all inhabited, located 1600 km west of Lisbon. They are divided in three groups: the occidental group of Corvo and Flores – located approximately 2000 km east of Newfoundland; the central group of Faial, Pico, São Jorge, Graciosa and Terceira; and the oriental group of São Miguel and Santa Maria, located approximately 1300 km from the Portuguese and Moroccan coasts. The archipelago extends between the 36.5°–40° North latitudes and 24.5°–31.5° West longitudes and is located between three tectonic plates – the American Plate, the African Plate and the Eurasian Plate – together forming the Azores Microplate alongside the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

The archipelago is also part of a larger group of Atlantic islands: Macaronesia. This group includes the archipelagos of the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands and Cape Verde.

All the Azorean islands are of volcanic origin: the oldest island, Santa Maria, dates back five and a half to two million years, while the most recent island of the archipelago, Pico, was formed 200 000 years ago. This volcanic activity has resulted in landscapes of craters, calderas, and *fajãs* (flat lands at the edge of cliff sides near the ocean).

GEOGRAPHY - THE AZORES MICROPLATE

[Corvo]

[Flores]

1717

[Graciosa]

1837

1974

1958

[Faial]

1998

1926

1973

[Pico]

AMERICAN PLATE

Mid-Atlantic Ridge

31°W

30°W

29°W

28°W

● Historical Earthquakes

AFRICAN PLATE

10

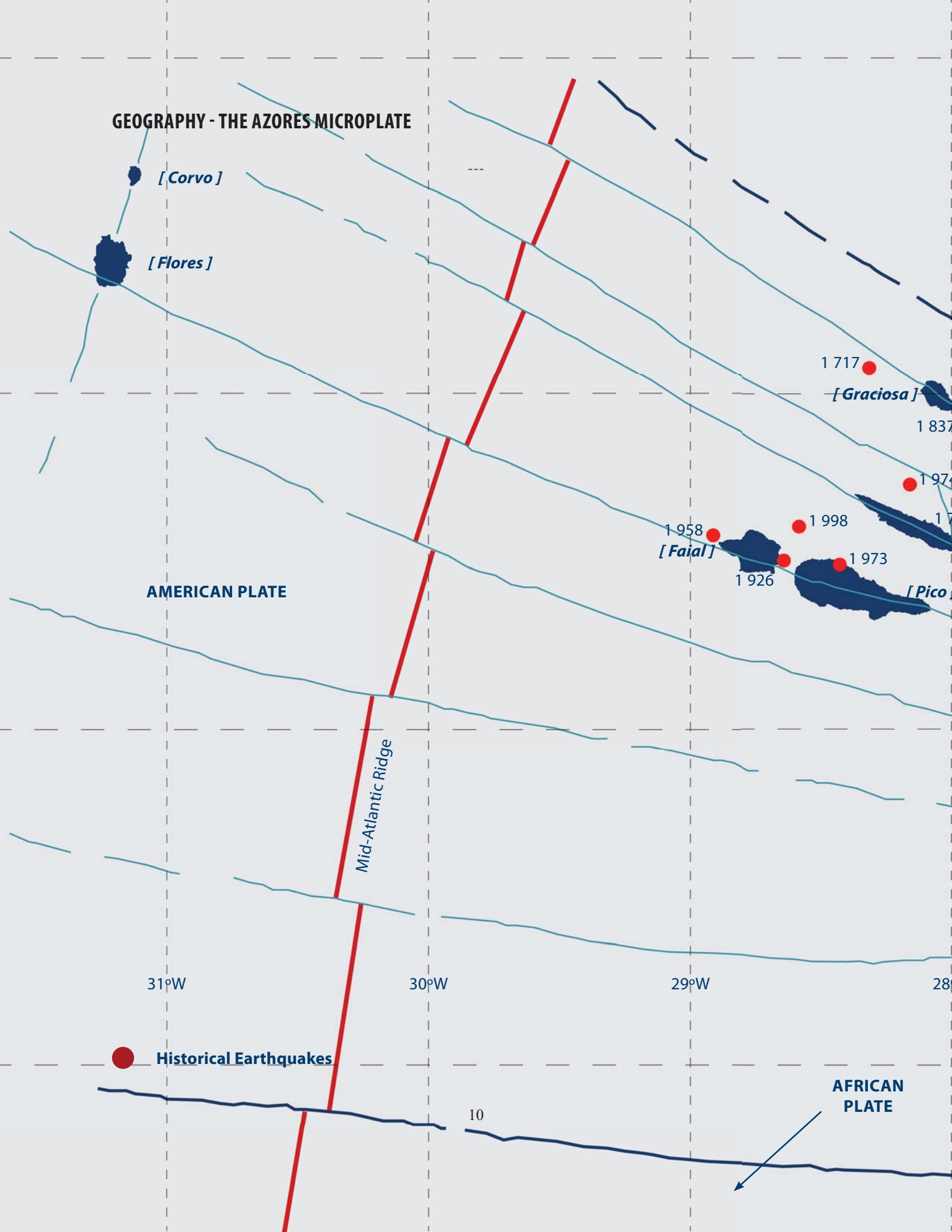
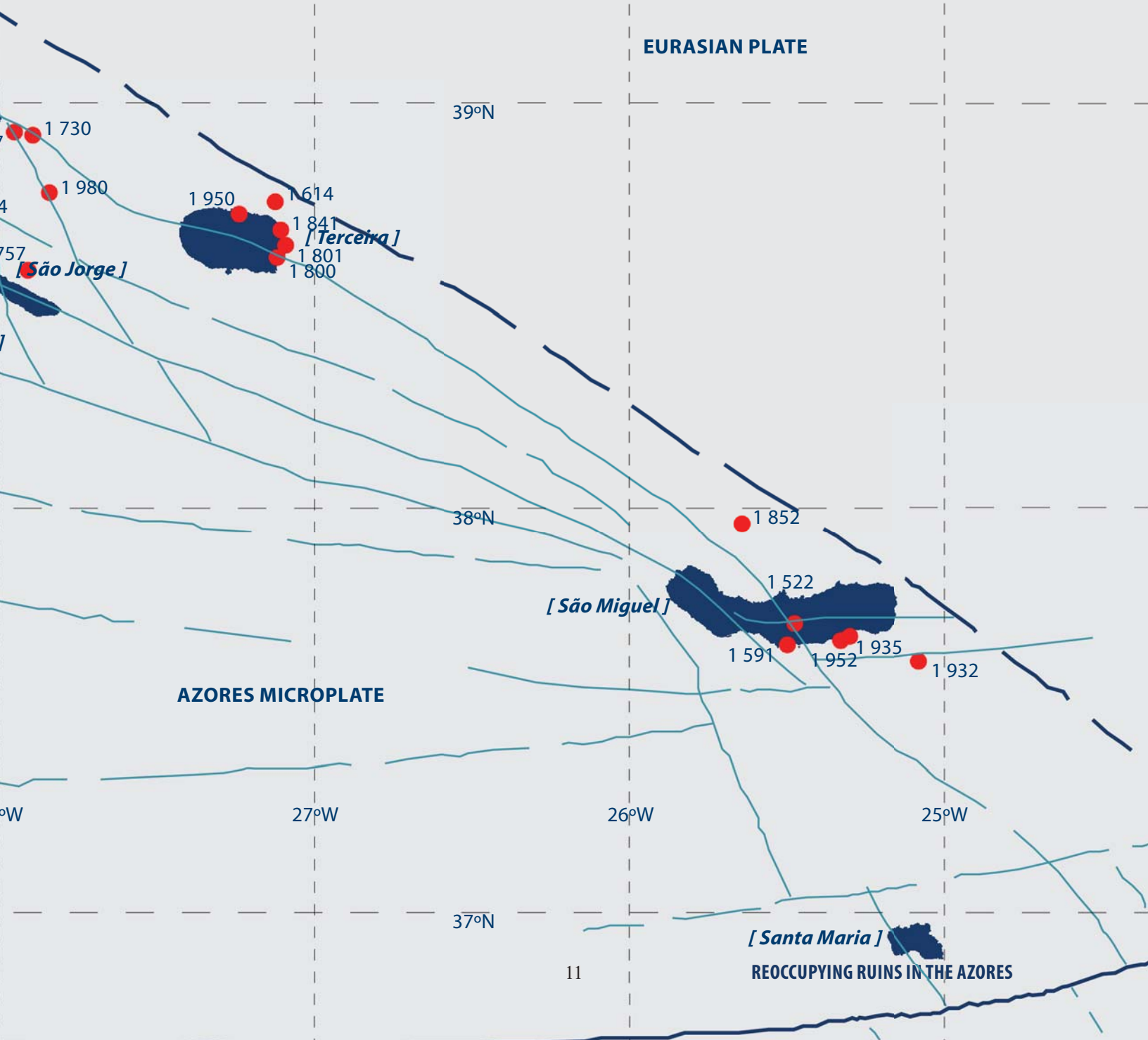


Fig. 1.2. Geography - The Azores Microplate

Data of tectonic plates:
"Atlas Básico dos Açores"

Data of historical earthquakes:
"Instituto de Investigação em
Vulcanologia e Avaliação de
Riscos"



LANDSCAPES OF THE AZORES



Fig. 1.3. Flores - Poço da Alagoinha



Fig. 1.4. Corvo - Caldeira



Fig. 1.5. Graciosa - Furna do enxofre

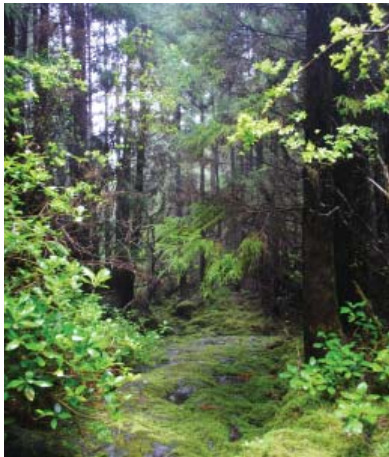


Fig. 1.6. Faial - Levada



Fig. 1.7. São Jorge - Fajã dos Cubres



Fig. 1.8. Terceira - Serra du Cume



Fig. 1.9. Pico - Lajedo



Fig. 1.10. São Miguel - Furnas



Fig. 1.11. Santa Maria - São Lorenço



Fig. 1.12. Açores Insulae, 1584

There is still some debate today as to the exact date of the discovery of the archipelago, but it is commonly accepted that the Portuguese discovered the islands in 1427. It is important to note that the islands were uninhabited when the first Portuguese settlers arrived. Afterwards, the navigator Gonçalo Velho Cabral is sent in 1432 by the Infante Dom Henrique, also known as Prince Henry the Navigator, third son of King João I of Portugal, to put sheep on the first island to have been discovered, Santa Maria, and arrange for its eventual settlement three years later in 1435.⁴ The other islands of the archipelago were discovered and settled over the fifty years following the settlement of Santa Maria. Over the next centuries of exploration and discovery, as the Portuguese, Spanish, English and French empires expanded to the “New World”, the Azores became a strategic port-of-call for ships on the route back from the Americas and other colonies across the globe.

The Azores have historically operated under agricultural cycles. Their location in the Atlantic, fertile land and temperate climate made them the ideal granary for Portugal and its colonies in the 15th century. After this first wheat cycle, the next cycle was known as the dyer’s woad cycle up to the 17th century. In the 18th and 19th century, the main economy of the Azores became the exportation of oranges – England became one of the major importers of the “Saint-Michael orange” (oranges from the island of São Miguel). There were also some minor cycles at the end of the 19th century: the island of Pico was well known for its Verdelho wine and it was exported almost exclusively to the Tsars of Russia; the Azores also produced some of the best whalers at the time.

These cycles ended, as oranges became readily available in continental countries like Spain and Morocco, the phylloxera epidemic made its way to the vineyards of Pico destroying most of the vineyards, and whaling was outlawed in 1986. At the dawn of the 20th century, the economy shifted to a meat and dairy cycle; today, the dairy industry is the most prominent in the Azores. However, for the first time, the islands find themselves at the brink of a non-land based economic cycle: tourism. The Azores are dealing with understanding tourism, its impact on local economies and the possible effects to current ecological balances.

Since their settlement, migration has shaped the history and culture of the Azores. The geographic isolation of the archipelago limited the access and departures to and from the islands until the mid-19th century and early 20th century; the advent of the steam ships and the commodification of travel opened the Azores to transatlantic travel. It is during the 20th century that the Azores witnessed their greatest waves of emigration to North America as well as Brazil

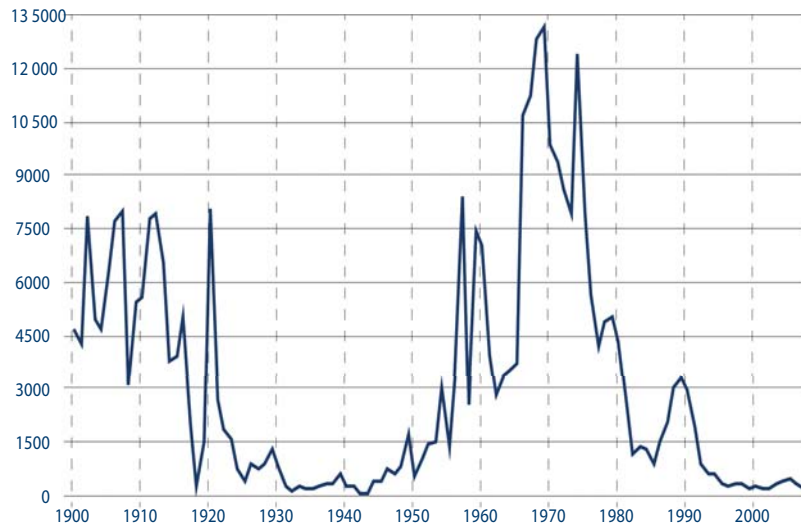


Fig. 1.13. Evolution of the number of emigrants in the Azores, 1900-2007
Data: “Between Two Worlds - Emigration and Return to the Azores”

and Bermuda. Harsh living conditions in the Azores brought on by economic difficulties, natural disasters, Salazar’s political regime, and colonial wars motivated thousands of Azoreans to leave behind their native islands, their families and their homes, some with the hope of returning one day. Emigration became the journey of thousands of Azoreans, and the hopes and dream of countless others.

Raul Brandão, notable writer and journalist for Porto, traveled to the Azores in 1924 and observed:

“[...] [Azoreans] love their island. When the young women leave for America, even the stones are embraced and farewelled.”⁵⁵ He adds: “Almost all the men, and even the women, emigrate to America, and only those who cannot emigrate do not leave. If America opened its doors wide, the Azores would empty themselves.”⁵⁶

Very few Azoreans today remain untouched by stories of emigration, and even though many Azoreans left harsh condition in hope of making a better life for themselves in North America, their love for their islands did not die out.

In their destination countries, Portuguese emigrants of all regions quickly formed communities. Emigration, a common destiny of so many Azoreans, overpowered regional differences,



Fig. 1.14., Fig. 1.15., Fig. 1.16.
São Jorge after an earthquake;
Faial after the eruption of 1957;
Terceira after the earthquake of 1980.



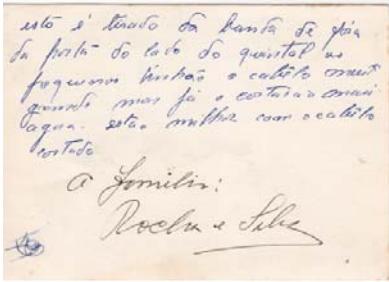


Fig. 1.18. Front and back of photograph sent to Canada from Terceira. Message read: “This is taken outside the door on the garden side, the children had very long hair but they’ve had a haircut and now it’s better after the haircut.”
The Rocha e Silva Family”

Saudade:
“Grateful remembrance of an absent person or of something that someone is deprived of.”
- Priberam Dictionary

Fig. 1.17. (Left) “Os Emigrantes” 1926, by Domingos Rebelo, Azorean artist from São Miguel.

uniting islanders and giving birth to the notion of an “Azorean motherland”.⁷ The strong cultural retention, high levels of cultural identification, language retention, and residential segregation⁸ created neighbourhoods like “Little Portugal” in Toronto and “Petit Portugal” in Montreal. These communities allowed the Azorean immigrants to maintain many of their cultural practices in North America. Furthermore, contact with their native islands was maintained throughout the years: letters and pictures were sent back and forth, and, as telecommunications became more readily available, Portuguese news channels were made available in North American homes. The geographical distance between the Azoreans and the Azores did not diminish their connection with and longing for homeland.

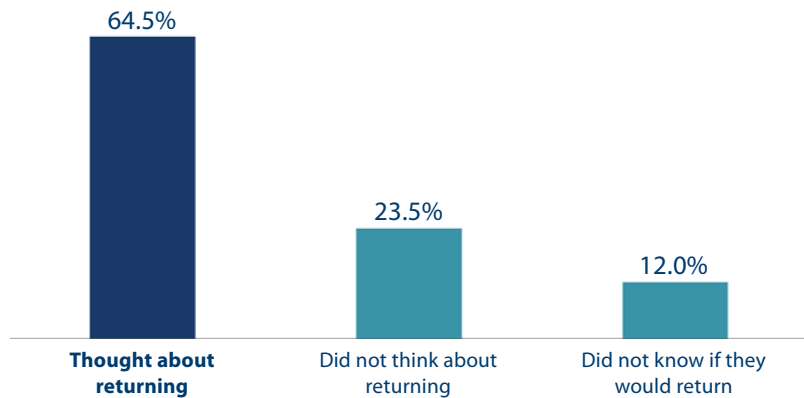


Fig. 1.19. Migrants’ objective to return at the time of departure
Data: “Between Two Worlds - Emigration and Return to the Azores”

If insularity speaks to the geographical condition of the Azores, Azoreanity describes the psychological dimension of being Azorean.⁹ The word Azoreanity is first used by the illustrious Azorean writer, Vitorino Nemésio native of Terceira, in 1932 in an article written for the 500th anniversary of the Azores’ discovery. In this article, he uses the word to describe his experience of *being* Azorean – to be inextricably shaped by and linked to the volcanic earth and filled with *saudades* of the Azores when away from them.

The term has evolved since then, and is described in the online *Enciclopédia Açoriana* (Azorean Encyclopedia), as

“expressing not only the quality and soul of being Azorean, but the set of *conditions of the lived archipelagic experience*: its geography – which Nemésio previously describes as being

as important as the history of the Azores – its volcanism, its economic limitations, its human dispersion and its idiosyncrasy, its regional expression, in short, everything that contributes to confer identity.”¹⁰

Over the last two decades, University professor Onésimo Teotónio Almeida, Doctor of Philosophy, born on *São Miguel*, discusses extensively the concept of Azoreanity in his book *Açores, Açorianos, Açorianidade – Um espaço cultural* (Azores, Azoreans, Azoreanity – A cultural space). He argues that the concept of Azoreanity is an open term, conditioned by the geography of the Azores and defined by the individual in his or her own relationship to the islands, and that Azoreanity is lived even when outside of the islands.¹⁰ In other words, Azoreanity is conditioned by the insular nature of the Azores. In effect, Azoreanity is applicable not only to an islander living on the islands and conditioned by its insularity, but also to an emigrant by the distance created by emigration; emigration to a continental land reduces insularity, but increases Azoreanity through longing and the creation of cultural communities.¹²

Today, more than ever before, the Azores find themselves accessible to the emigrants and their descendants because of the advances in transatlantic passenger transportation, which facilitates temporary stays and visits. Additionally, this allows for the Azoreans living their migratory experience in North America to maintain their links with their native islands and their culture.¹³ Strong cultural retention and emotional ties have catered to the emigrants’ desires to return. The study published by Gilberta Rocha, Eduardo Ferreira and Derrick Mendes entitled “*Between Two Worlds – Emigration and Return to the Azores*” demonstrates that the intention to return one day to the Azores cannot be ignored in the experience of emigration and the complexities of the return process. The emotional pull and longing are clearly major contributing factors for an eventual return to the archipelago; other factors, such as the family that stayed behind, the abandoned house and property, and hopes of prosperity in the homeland are equally motivating reasons.¹⁴ In many cases, the return process has been gradual or punctual: short periods of time to spend vacations or extended periods of time to tend to land and property. Those who have returned permanently are usually retired, and invest their savings in the acquisition and remodeling of a house in the Azores. João de Melo, Azorean author, illustrates the aspirations of the returned emigrant to Graciosa:

“[...] American money and subsidies from the autonomy bought the land and the houses, family assets were inherited and rebuilt [...]. Now the whole dream of Graciosa is to transform the old black stone house into a white house with a red roof, in the middle of the garden or the cornfield - and be surrounded by all the peace of the world and gaze calmly onto the green of the field, the blue of the firmament and the silence of the sea.”¹⁵

Melo paints here the image and aspirations of many emigrants that left with the hopes of improving their immediate quality of life and one day returning to do the same in the Azores with the money earned abroad. There is, perhaps for the first time in the history of the occupation of the Azores, the chance to channel this remittance economy to rehabilitate the built fabric of the islands – the houses that were left behind.

SATA AIRLINES' DIRECT FLIGHTS TO AND FROM THE AZORES

Fig. 1.20.

Data: SATA Airlines - Routes (online)



EMIGRANTS RETURNING TO THE AZORES

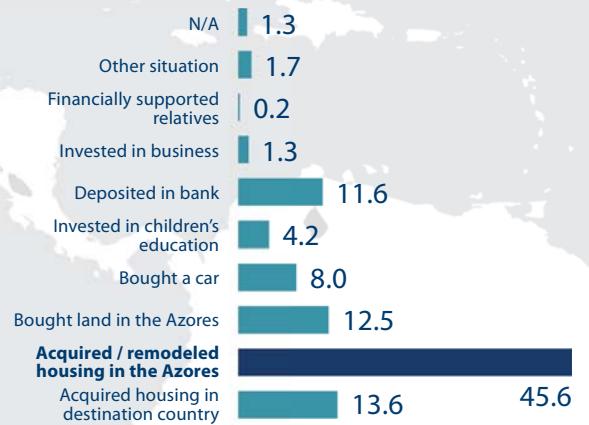
Fig. 1.21.

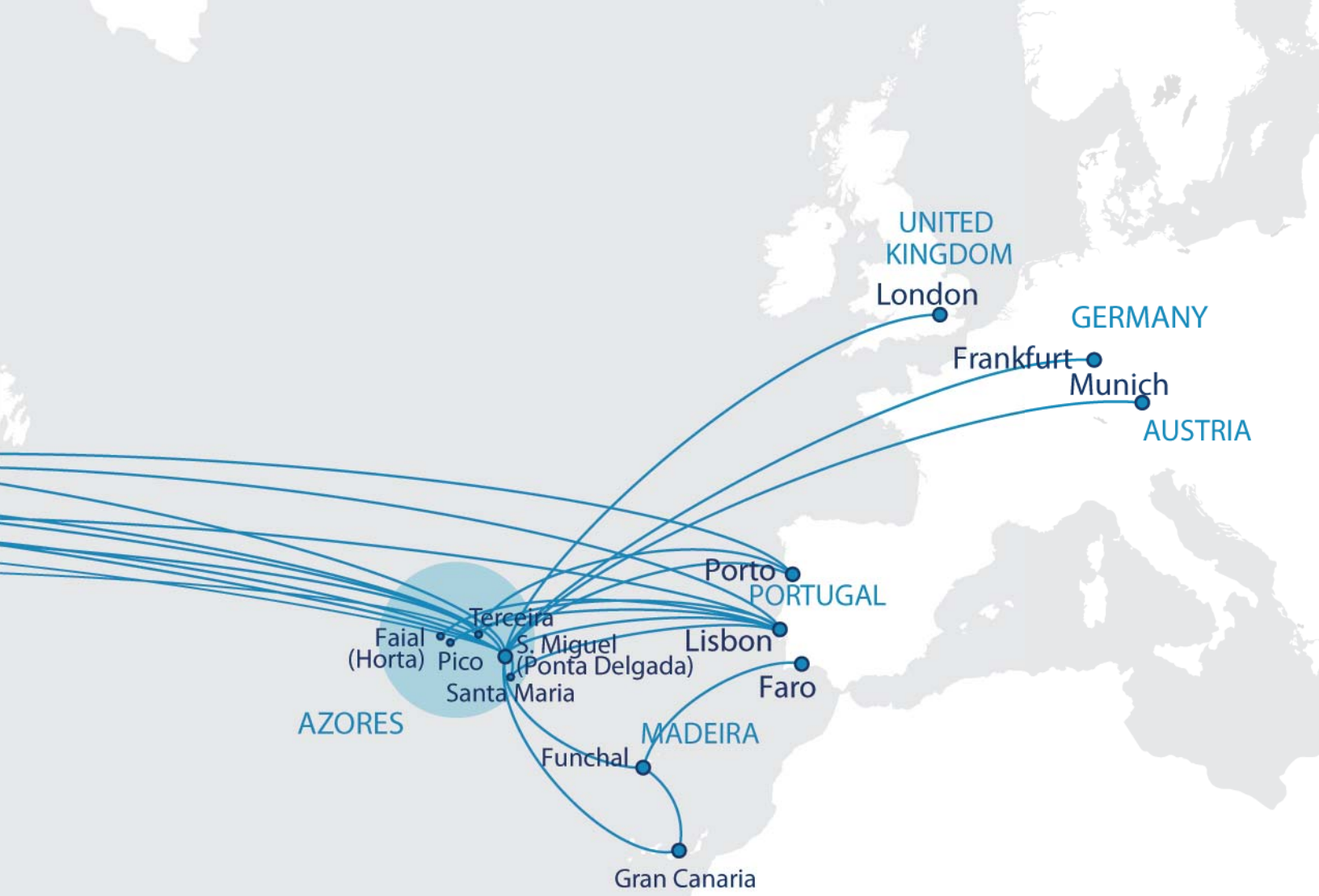
Data: "Between Two Worlds - Emigration and Return to the Azores"

RETURNING MIGRANTS' FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO THE AZORES - %

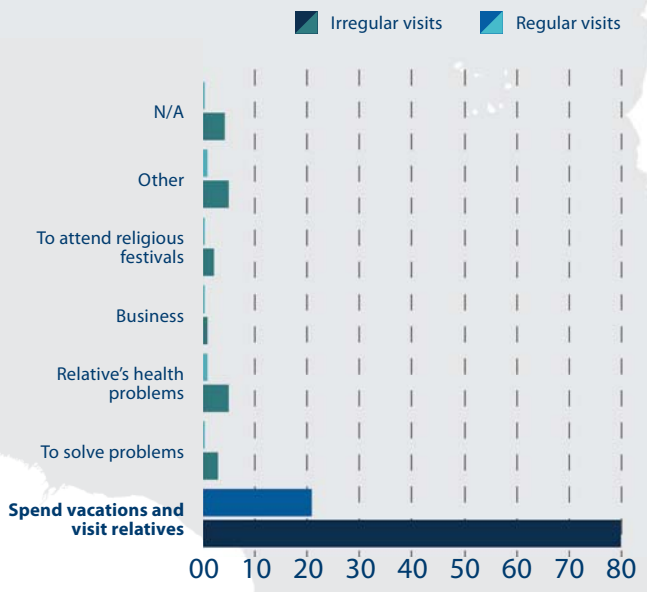


RETURNING MIGRANTS' MAIN FORM OF APPLICATION OF SAVINGS - %

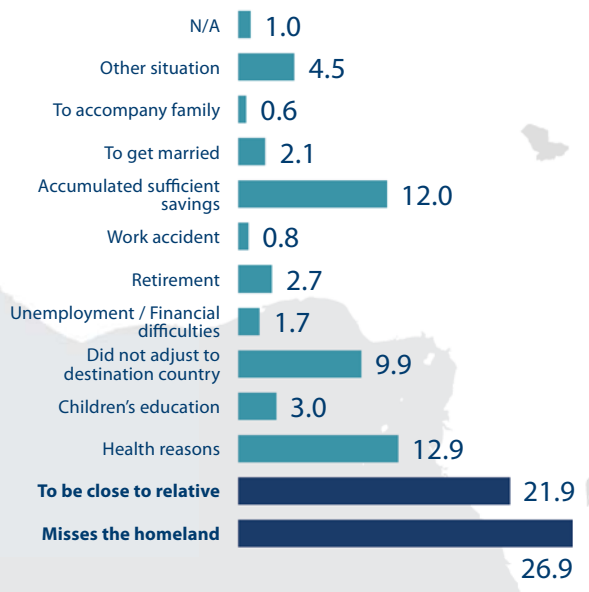




RETURNING MIGRANTS' MAIN REASON TO VISIT THE AZORES - %



MAIN REASON FOR RETURNING TO THE AZORES - %



POPULATION

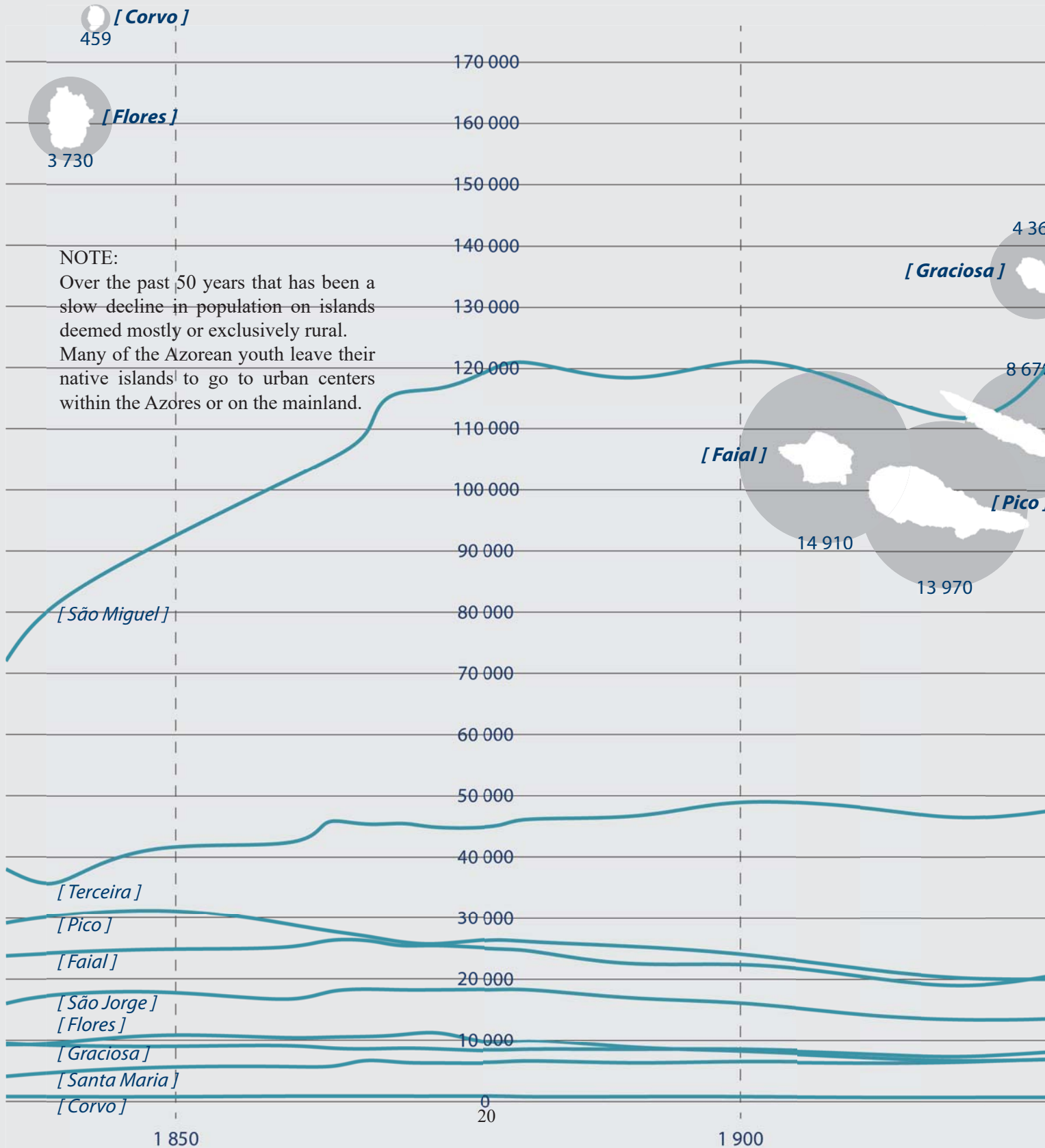
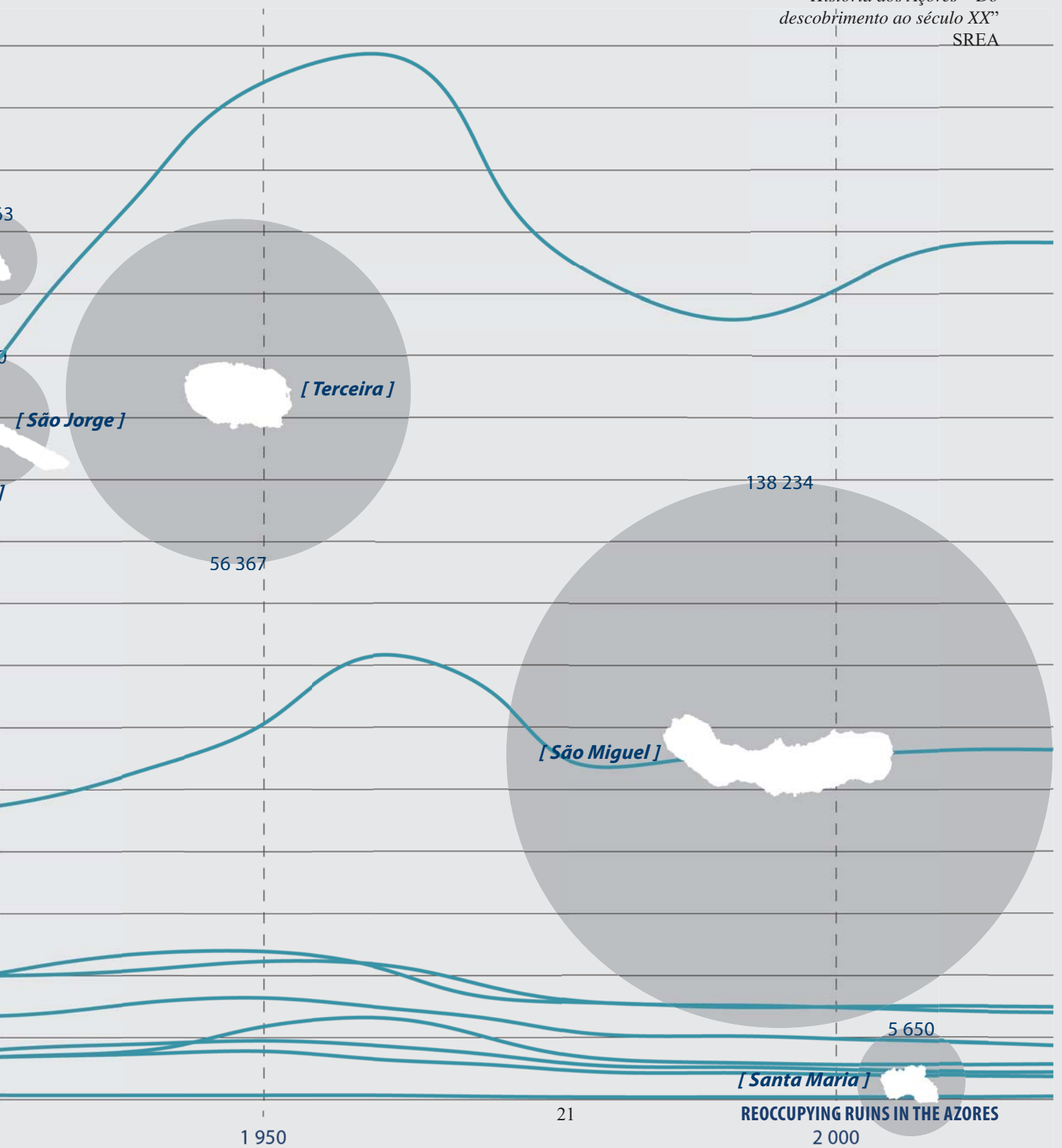



Fig. 1.22. Population

Data:
"História dos Açores – Do
descobrimento ao século XX"
SREA



DWELLING OCCUPANCY

 **[Corvo]**
190 dwellings

 **[Flores]**
2 155 dwellings

NOTE:

Emigration has caused high number of vacant dwelling across the archipelago. Secondary dwellings belong to local and emigrant Azorean - many are used as vacation or weekend homes.

 **[Graciosa]**
2 825 dwellings

 **[Faial]**
7 052 dwellings

 **[Pico]**
8 613 d

DWELLING OCCUPANCY




-  Primary Residence
-  Secondary Residence
-  Vacant

Fig. 1.23. Dwelling Occupancy

Data:
"Censos 2011 Resultados
Definitivos", INE

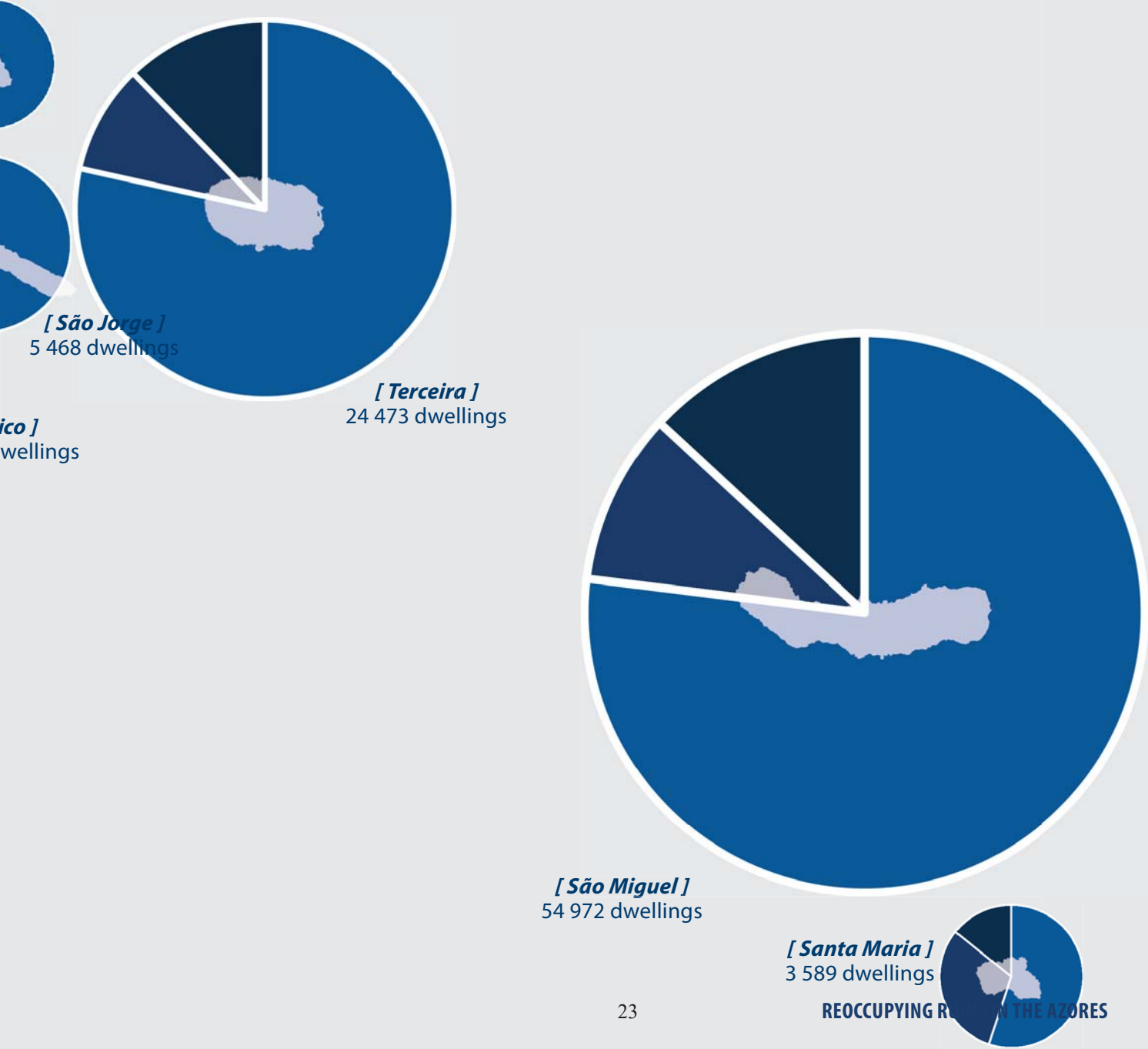




Fig. 1.24. View of the historic city of Angra do Heroísmo, Terceira

Urban Settlement / Urbanity

The island of Terceira has two urban centres: Angra do Heroísmo and Praia da Vitória. The former was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1983, satisfying two criteria for selection:

Criterion IV

“Set in the mid-Atlantic, the port of Angra, obligatory port-of-call for fleets from Africa and the Indies, is an outstanding example of a creation linked to the maritime world, within the framework of the great explorations.”¹⁶

Criterion VI

“Like the Tower of Belem, the Convent of the Hieronymites of Lisbon, and Goa, Angra do Heroísmo is directly and tangibly associated with an event of a universal historic significance: the maritime exploration which permitted exchanges between the great civilizations of the Earth.”¹⁷



Fig. 1.25.
Aerial view of
Angra do Heroísmo, Terceira
(IGeoE)



Fig. 1.26. Rural agricultural landscapes of Terceira

Rural Settlement / Rurality

Out of the nine islands of the Azores, only three have urban centers: São Miguel, Terceira and Faial. Although not without their vacant houses and buildings, this thesis focuses on the reoccupation of rural dwellings. Urban centers, especially Angra do Heroísmo, receive greater attention from municipal entities as well as architects due to their urban nature. In the case of Angra do Heroísmo, its UNESCO distinction already regulates the types of interventions that take place within the city.

All of the nine islands of the Azores have greater rural territories than urban centers. Out of the nine islands, six are considered exclusively rural, although all containing at least one town. The rural built fabric presents the greatest opportunity for reoccupation, both in terms of number of vacant dwellings as well as design opportunities. Rarely has rural architecture and “rurality” held the same importance in the architectural discourse and in design interventions as urban centers. This thesis focuses on the reoccupation in rural areas and the challenges that are posed by exclusively rural islands contexts, such as the island of Graciosa.

Fig. 1.27.
Aerial view of
Raminho, Terceira
(IGeoE)



ENDNOTES

Part One: Insularity and Azoreanity

- 1 “A geografia, para nós, vale outro tanto como a história, e não é de balde que as nossas recordações escritas inserem uns cinquenta por cento de relatos de sismos e enchentes. Como as sereias temos uma dupla natureza: somos de carne e pedra. Os nossos ossos mergulham no mar.”
Vitorino Nemésio, “Açorianidade,” *Insula*, n.º 7-8 (Julho-Agosto 1932)
- 2 Gilberta Pavão Nunes Rocha, Eduardo Ferreira, and Derrick Mendes, *Between Two Worlds – Emigration and Return to the Azores*, trans. Nuno Pavão Nunes (Azores: Government of the Azores, 2011), 25.
- 3 Vitorino Nemésio, “Corsário das Ilhas,” 2.^a ed. (1983): 75, quoted in Victor Pereira da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, *Azorean Emigration – A Preliminary Overview*, trans. Margaret Butler (Porto: Fernando Pessoa University Press), 9.
- 4 Rui Carita, “O descobrimento dos Açores,” in *História dos Açores – Do descobrimento ao século XX*, vol. 1, ed. Artur Teodoro de Matos, Avelino de Freitas de Meneses, e José Guilherme Reis Leite (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2008), 55.
- 5 “[...] amam a sua ilha. Quando as raparigas embarcam para a América até das pedras se despedem abraçando-as.”
Raul Brandão, *As Ilhas Desconhecidas - Notas e Paisagens*, with preface by António M. B. Machado Pires (1926; Açores: Artes e Letras, 2009), 103.
- 6 “Quase todos os homens, e até as mulheres, emigram para a América, e os que não emigram é porque não podem fugir. Se a América abrisse largamente as portas, os Açores despovoavam-se.”
Ibid, 203.
- 7 Victor Pereira da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, *Azorean Emigration – A Preliminary Overview*, trans. Margaret Butler (Porto: Fernando Pessoa University Press), 16.
- 8 Carlos Teixeira, “A Comparative Study of Portuguese Homebuyers’ Suburbanization in the Toronto and Montreal Areas”, *Espace, populations, sociétés*, 2006/1 (2006): 121-135.
- 9 Pereira da Rosa and Trigo, *Azorean Emigration*, 10.
- 10 “Açorianidade,” Enciclopédia Açoriana, Governo dos Açores, accessed September 20, 2017, <http://www.culturacores.azores.gov.pt/ea/pesquisa/default.aspx?id=566>

- 11 Onésimo Teotónio Almeida, *Açores, Açorianos, Açorianidade – Um espaço cultural*, 2.^a ed. (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2011), 119.
- 12 Pereira da Rosa and Trigo, *Azorean Emigration*, 19.
- 13 Maria Beatriz Rocha-Trinidade, “The Portuguese Diaspora,” in *The Portuguese in Canada – Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed., ed. Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 32.
- 14 Rocha, Ferreira, and Mendes, *Between Two Worlds*, 21.
- 15 “[...] o dinheiro americano e os subsídios da autonomia compraram a terra e as casas, houve bens de família herdados e reconstruídos (...). Agora, todo o sonho da Graciosa consiste em transformar a velha casa de pedra negra numa casa branca com telhado vermelho, no meio do jardim ou do milheiral - e ter todo o sossego do mundo em volta, e o olhar tranquilo perante o verde do campo, o azul do firmamento e o silêncio do mar.” João de Melo, *Açores – O Segredo das Ilhas* (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2016), 130.
- 16 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Central Zone of the Town of Angra do Heroísmo in the Azores”, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/206>
- 17 Ibid.



Fig. 1.28. Vacant house in Santa Bárbara, Terceira

A STUDY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Construction, Deconstruction and Reconstruction in the Azores

The sight of an abandoned house is common in the Azorean landscape: amidst a row of perfectly maintained houses and well-kept gardens will be the ruins of a house, with its roof long collapsed and trees growing in what was once the interior. The number of houses in various state of decay will vary from street to street, parish to parish and island to island. Very few of the regional authorities – neither the local parish offices nor regional government – have tangible data regarding this issue, quantitative or qualitative. The only statistical data available that hints at the extent of the situation tracks occupation and vacancy of dwellings. This information only provides aggregated data at the island and parish level. There is no indication of the state or location of the dwelling, the type of construction and the reason for its deteriorating state.

It can be said in general terms that many factors have led to high numbers of uninhabited buildings and dwellings, and consequent deterioration throughout the island built fabric: emigration, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and economic difficulties. Furthermore, ownership and inheritance laws are currently contributing to the inadequate maintenance of current built fabric, resulting in rapidly decaying buildings. For example, a small property with a traditional house may find itself in stages of decay far beyond renovation, with 23 owners across North America: inheritance and property is divided equally amongst the owner's children, and then grandchildren. With emigration having spread the Azorean diaspora across the American continents, owners find themselves the inheritors of fractions of properties and, more often than not, in family feuds that bring any rehabilitation or renovation to a standstill.

The easiest way to inquire about these properties is to go knock on the door of the neighboring houses. The neighbors will usually be aware of who owned the house, when they left, and what the

owners did in their day to day lives before leaving – and if they don't know, they will know someone who does. Municipal authorities should then be able to provide cadastral information.

In the case of someone wanting to acquire a property, locating the inheritors and completing the necessary paperwork will sometimes result in greater expenses than the net worth of the property itself.

The Process

For the purpose of this thesis, an extensive photographic and qualitative survey was completed on two of the islands – Terceira and Graciosa. The objective was to collect qualitative, disaggregated data in order to understand the full scope of the current state of decaying buildings, and to analyse how the vernacular houses that were left behind have decayed, in order to help inform how future interventions on these houses might take shape. The resulting catalogue of buildings locates, identifies and describes all buildings in various stages of decay – from small individual houses to large industrial and institutional buildings – across the entirety of the two islands.

On Terceira, in order to find and locate decaying buildings, travel was done by vehicle between longer distance and building agglomerations, and by foot where vehicular access was not possible, or in areas of higher building density like historic cities and towns. Graciosa's survey was completed by bicycle due to the island's small dimensions and relatively flat geography. Each building was first identified on a printed map and subsequently photographed from the street; as many of these buildings and properties are closed or difficult to access, the documentation of the building was generally done from the exterior only. When buildings did allow for access, which was rare, additional pictures were taken of the interior conditions. Subsequently, each building was attributed a code, and a dated information form identifying its location, typology, function, state of conservation and any other observation regarding the general state of the building. A broad analysis of the survey can support the following general conclusion:

- most of the buildings identified are small houses, many of which are vernacular
- this condition is encountered almost evenly across all parishes
- a greater percentage of decaying buildings are found in exclusively rural areas.

As I surveyed buildings across the islands of Terceira and Graciosa, I became aware of a difference between the nature of the decay



Fig. 1.29., Fig. 1.30.
Printed maps used to locate surveyed houses

affecting traditional buildings and that of more recent contemporary buildings. However, identifying the exact period of construction proved to be almost always impossible due to the fact that many buildings had been rebuilt at one moment in time, especially after the earthquake of 1980. The close investigation of the decaying buildings also revealed the layers of history visible upon the traditional materials used in the construction of vernacular houses, as well as the evolution of these houses across the islands.

Fig. 1.31. Survey Binder
Survey information sheets are divided by parish.

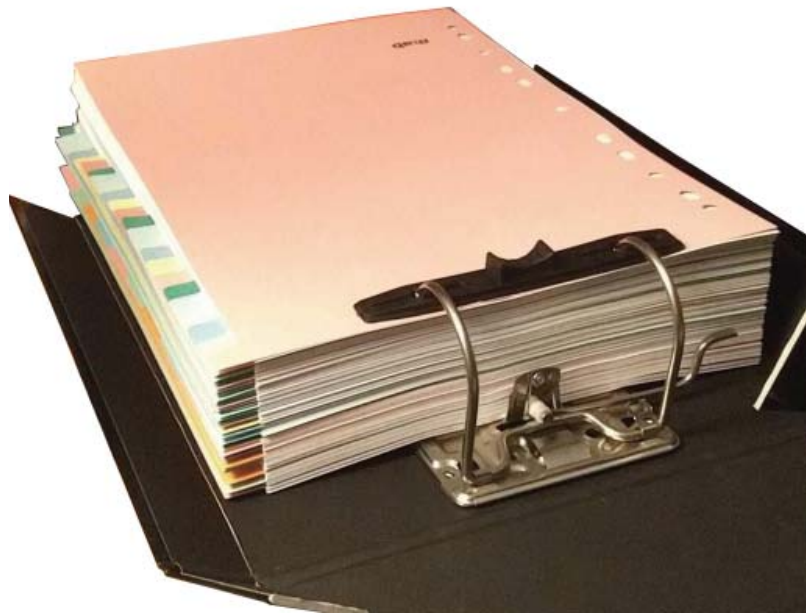


Fig. 1.32. Survey Binder
Each documented house is on an independent information sheet.



SELECTION OF INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEETS - TERCEIRA

Fig. 1.33.

INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Altares DATA: 28 / 01 / 2016

RUA: Canada da Vieira CÓDIGO: AL-CnV-001

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - invasão por vegetação no telhado
 - danos nas janelas

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Com cozinha inte., 2 águas / 1
 - danos no caixão do revestimento
 - exposição do material estrutural
 - danos estruturais

FUNÇÃO: Habitação
 - vestígios de tintas nas barras

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Cinco Ribeiras DATA: 22 / 01 / 2016

RUA: Estrada Nationale CÓDIGO: CR-EN-003

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - invasão por vegetação à volta
 - invasão por vegetação sobre a estrutura
 - danos / defeitos na estrutura do tecto
 - abatimento da estrutura do tecto
 - danos estruturais

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Pl. complexa com varanda / loja / 2
 - vestígios de cores
 - danos no caixão do revestimento
 - varanda metálica

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Santa Bárbara DATA: 25 / 01 / 2016


RUA: Rua Nossa Senhora da Ajuda CÓDIGO: SªB-RSA-005

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - construção em perdas
 - invasão por vegetação à volta
 - danos no caixão do revestimento
 - vestígios de tintas nas barras

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Casa linear, 2 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: São Pedro DATA: 17 / 06 / 2016

RUA: Caminho de Baixo CÓDIGO: SP-CmB-002

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - casa do quinteiro
 - ermida
 - grande propriedade
 - invasão do mato
 - danos / defeitos na estrutura do tecto
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - indícios de infiltração
 - danos superficiais e estruturais
 *ver documentação fotográfica

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Quinta / Solar / 2

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



Fig. 1.34.

INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Santa Cruz DATA: 29 / 06 / 2016


RUA: Estrada 25 de Abril CÓDIGO: SC-E25A-004

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - sem portão
 - sinais de vandalismo
 - invasão por vegetação à volta
 - fechada / entaipada
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Apartamentos, 2 águas / 2

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Aqualva DATA: 27 / 11 / 2015


RUA: Caminho do Concelho CÓDIGO: AG-CmC-001

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento
 - exposição do material estrutural
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - construção em perdas
 - danos estruturais
 - porta de verga redonda
 - vestígios de cores
 - acesso em ruínas

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Casa ele., linear / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Feteira DATA: 15 / 06 / 2016


RUA: Caminho da Cidade CÓDIGO: FT-CmC-003

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - invasão por vegetação
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - sem portas / janelas
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento
 - construção em perdas
 - vestígios de tintas nas barras

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Cozinha integrada, 4 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 ① 2 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Fonte do Bastardo DATA: 20 / 06 / 2016

RUA: Estrada Regional CÓDIGO: FB-ER-007

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - acesso irregular
 - fechada
 - sem porta / janela
 - danos / defeitos na estrutura do tecto
 - janela de verga redonda
 - vestígios de cores

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Complexa com balcão e loja, 2 ág. / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



SELECTION OF INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEETS - GRACIOSA

Fig. 1.35.

INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Guadalupe DATA: 11 / 03 / 2016


RUA: (Estrada Nacional 4) CÓDIGO: GD-EN4-005

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - acesso em ruínas
 - invasão por vegetação à volta
 - sem porta / janelas

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Complexa balcão/loja, 2 ág. desig. / 2
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento
 - vestígios de tintas

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Guadalupe DATA: 11 / 03 / 2016


RUA: Pé da Ladeira CÓDIGO: GD-PL-006

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - invasão por vegetação
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - danos estruturais
 - vestígios de cores
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Complexa com loja, 2 águas / 2

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 ① 2 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Luz DATA: 09 / 03 / 2016

RUA: (Estrada 3-2) CÓDIGO: LZ-E32-008

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - fechada / entaipada
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - janelas quebradas
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento
 - vestígios de cores

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Complexa com loja, 2 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Luz DATA: 09 / 03 / 2016

RUA: Rua 6 de Janeiro CÓDIGO: LZ-R6J-002

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - acesso irregular
 - invasão por vegetação no telhado
 - vestígios de cores
 - sinais de humidade

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES: Linear térrea, 2 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO: Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 3 ④ 5




Fig. 1.36.

INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: São Mateus DATA: 10 / 03 / 2016


RUA: (Caminho da Caldeira) CÓDIGO: SM-CmC-002

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - casa de esquina
 - invasão por vegetação
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Cozinha int. com balcão, 2 ág. des. / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: São Mateus DATA: 10 / 03 / 2016


RUA: Canada do Pontal CÓDIGO: SM-CnP-008

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - jardim / reduto frontal
 - sem portão
 - invasão por vegetação à volta
 - invasão por vegetação no telhado
 - danos / defeitos na estrutura do tecto
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Linear térrea, 2 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Santa Cruz DATA: 08 / 03 / 2016


RUA: Caminho de Santo Amaro CÓDIGO: SC-CmSA-001

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - portão avariado
 - invasão por vegetação no telhado
 - fechada
 - sem janelas
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Cozinha integrada, 2 águas desig. / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 2 ③ 4 5



INVENTÁRIO DE CASAS E EDIFÍCIOS ABANDONADOS

FREGUESIA: Santa Cruz DATA: 08 / 03 / 2016

RUA: Caminho do Barroso CÓDIGO: SC-CmB-002

ÉPOCA DE CONSTRUÇÃO: OBSERVAÇÕES:
 - acesso em ruínas
 - fechada
 - cedência da estrutura do tecto
 - danos no caiaço do revestimento
 - sem janelas

TIPOLOGIA / ANDARES:
 Linear balcão e loja, 2 águas / 1

FUNÇÃO:
 Habitação

ESTADO DE CONSERVAÇÃO:
 1 ② 3 4 5



INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

Fig. 1.37.

PARISH:

Cabo da Praia

DATE OF SURVEY:

17 / 06 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Rua das Pedras

CODE:

CP-RP-002

TYPOLGY:

Complex + prod. space, + linear with (roof)

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

OBSERVATION:

- entrance gate broken
- invasion by vegetation
- windows / doors boarded
- failure of roof structure
- (beirado com sanca)
- (rounded window)
- remnants of paint on door and window frames
- damage to the whitewash
- exposed constructive material

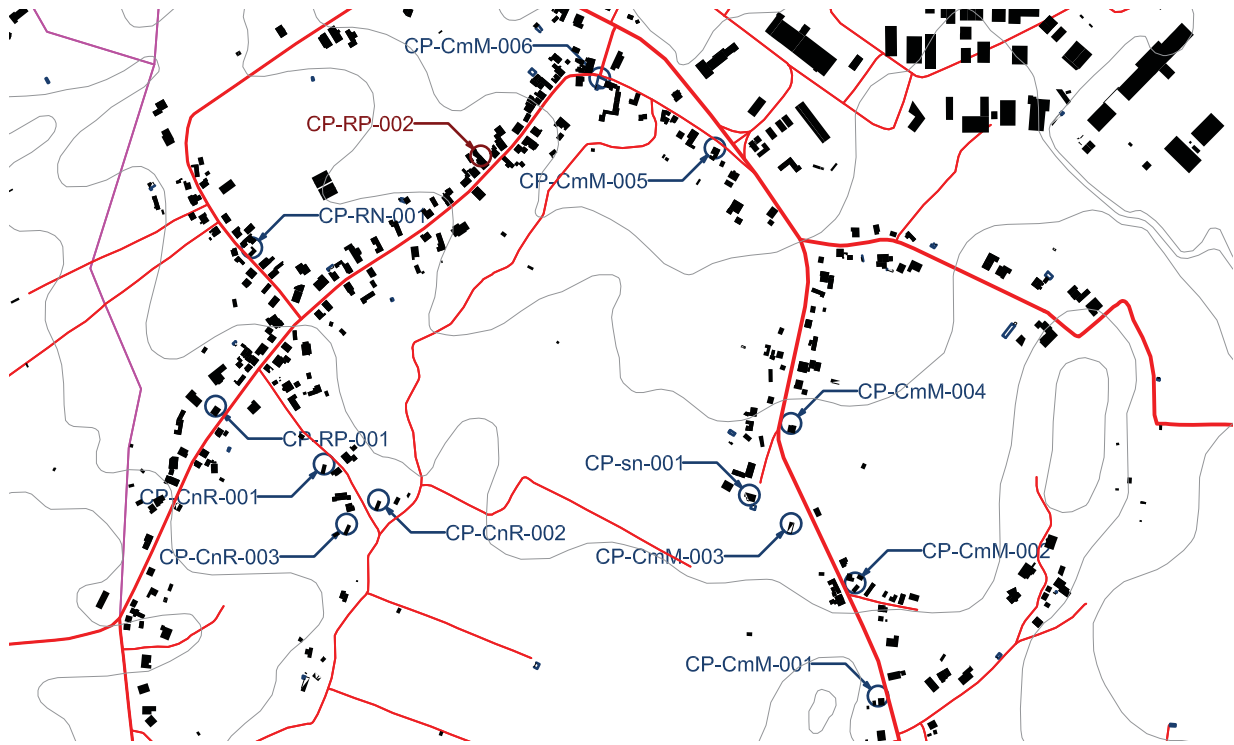
STATE OF CONSERVATION:

1 ② 3 4 5



MAP SEGMENT SHOWING BUILDING ID

Fig. 1.38.



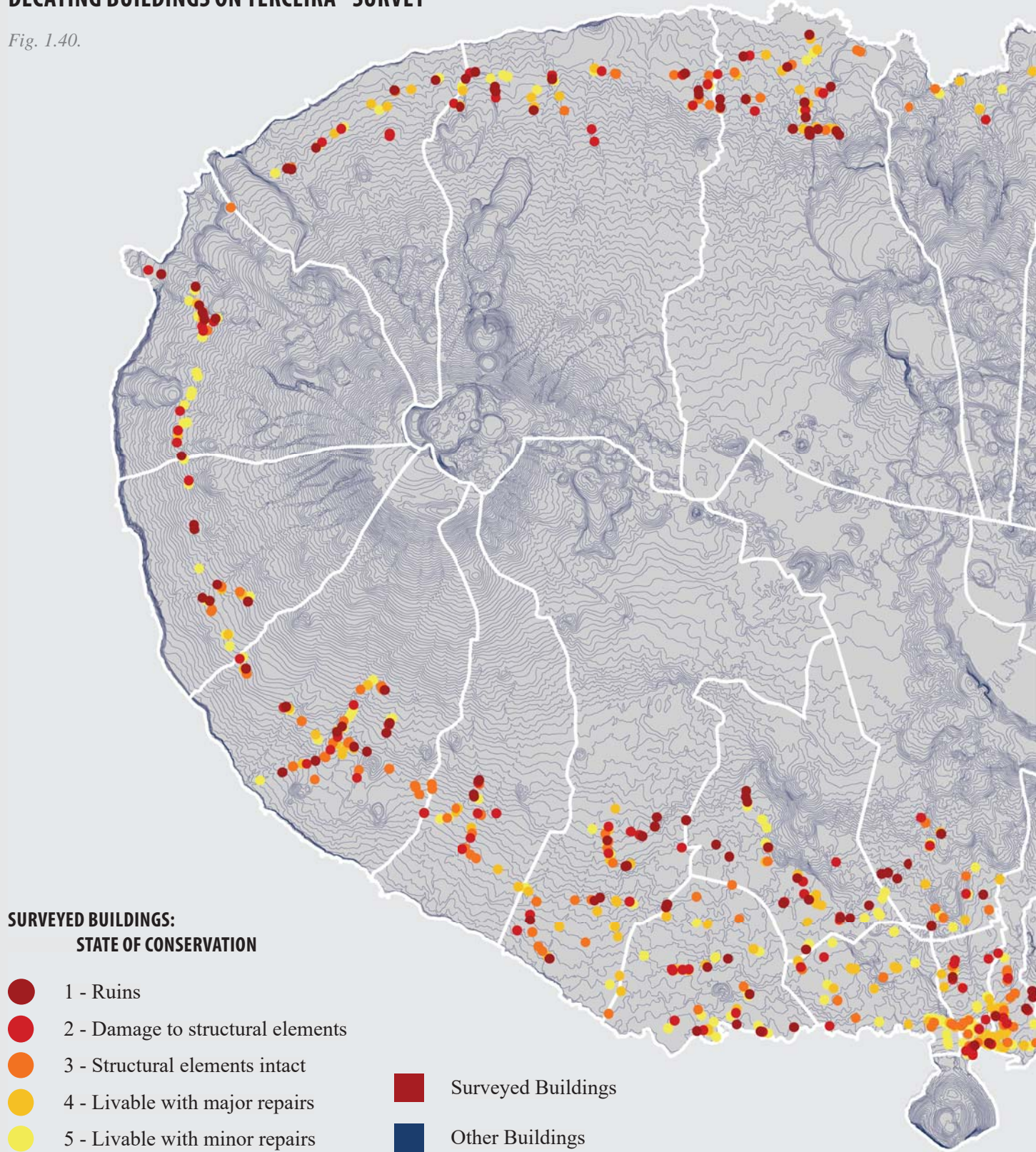
MAP SEGMENT SHOWING LEVEL OF DECAY

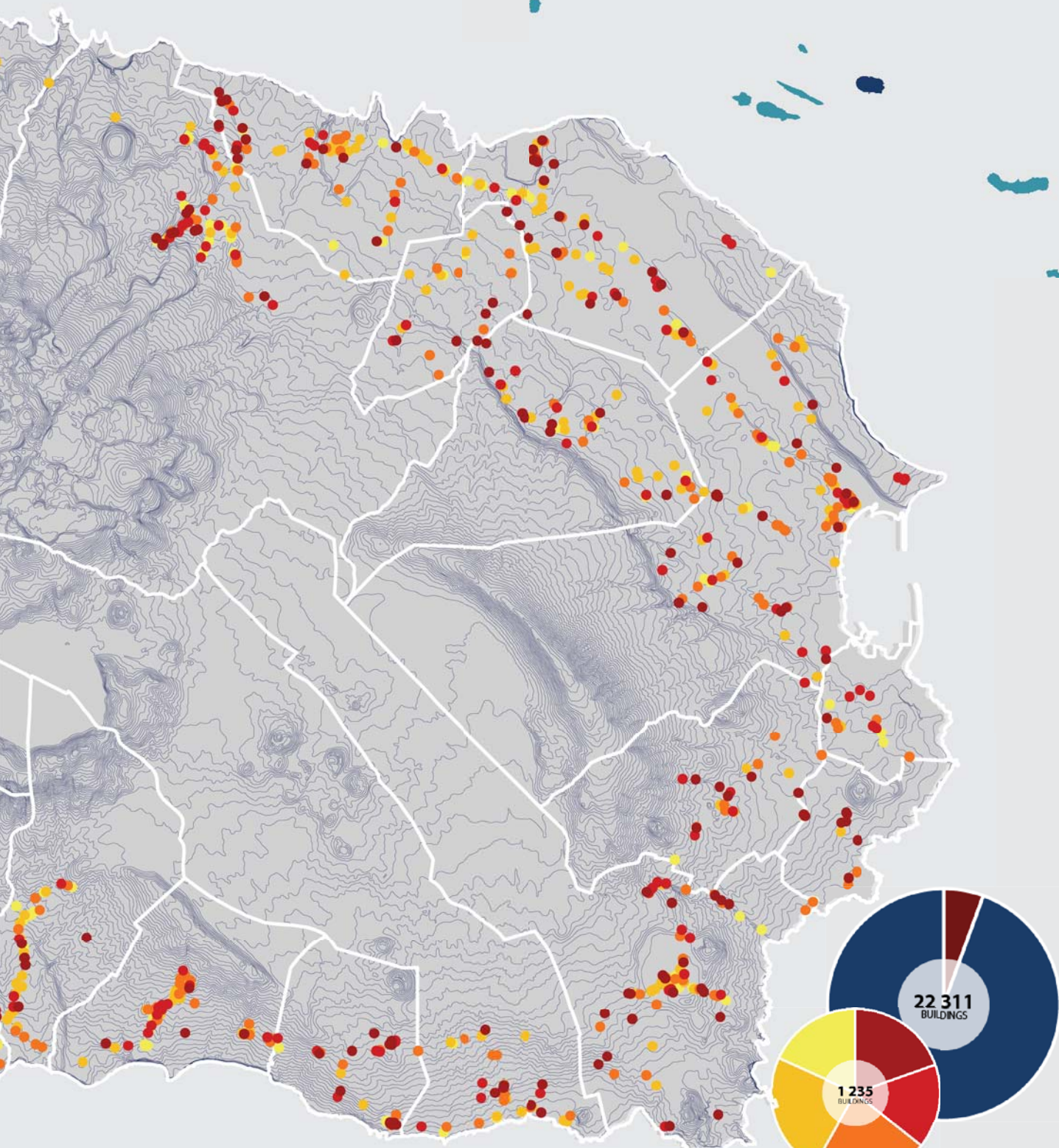
Fig. 1.39.



DECAYING BUILDINGS ON TERCEIRA - SURVEY

Fig. 1.40.



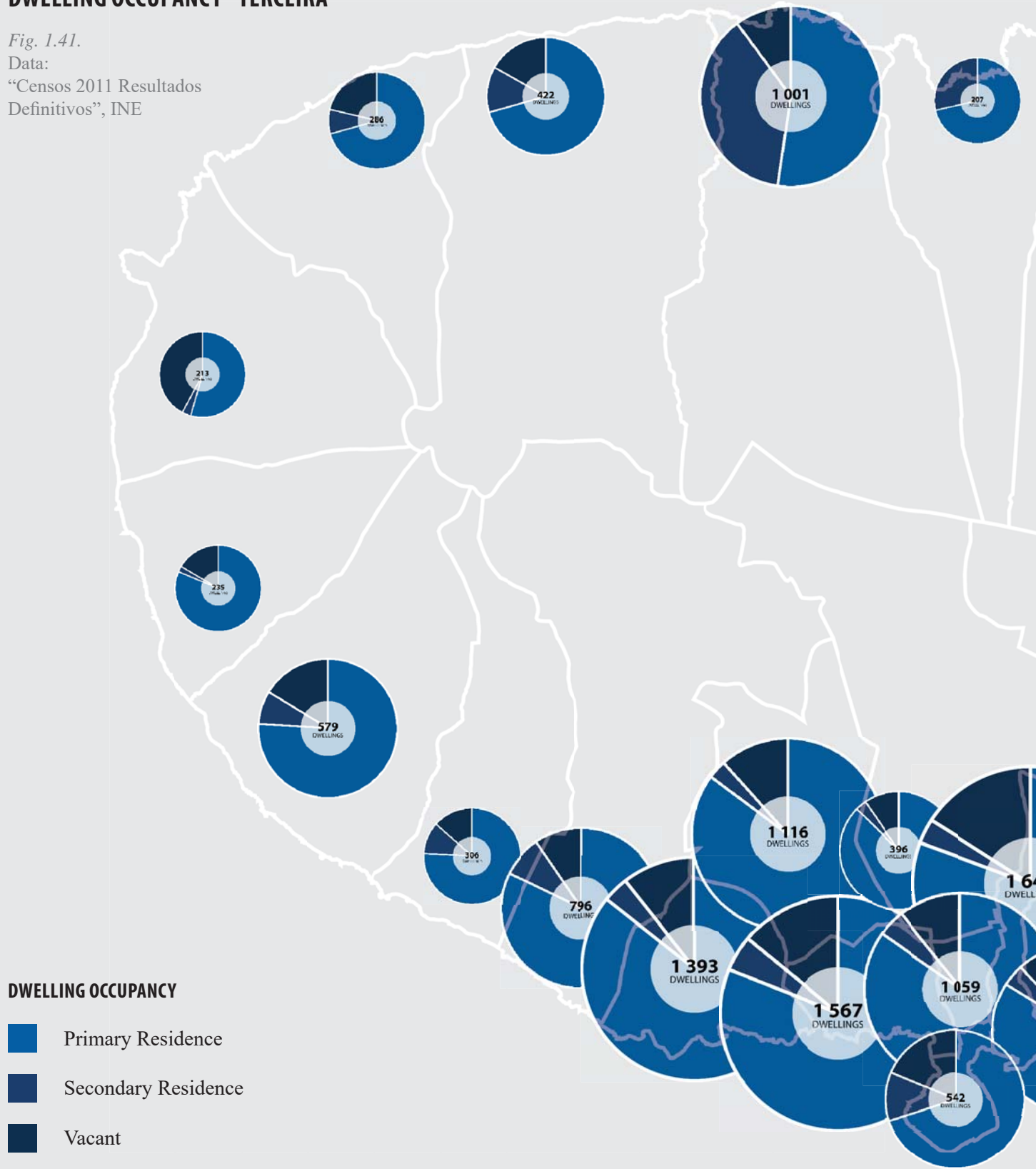


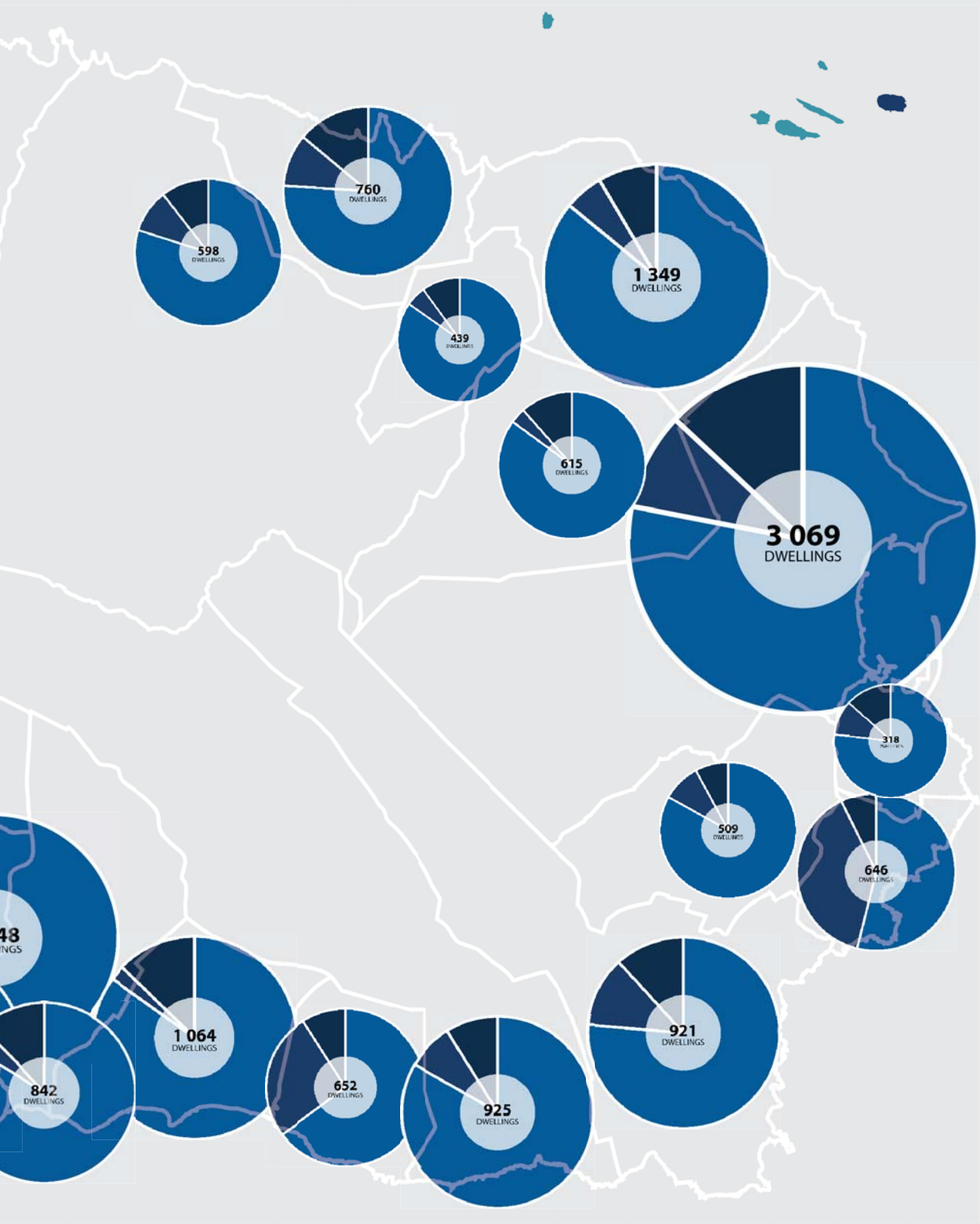
DWELLING OCCUPANCY - TERCEIRA

Fig. 1.41.

Data:

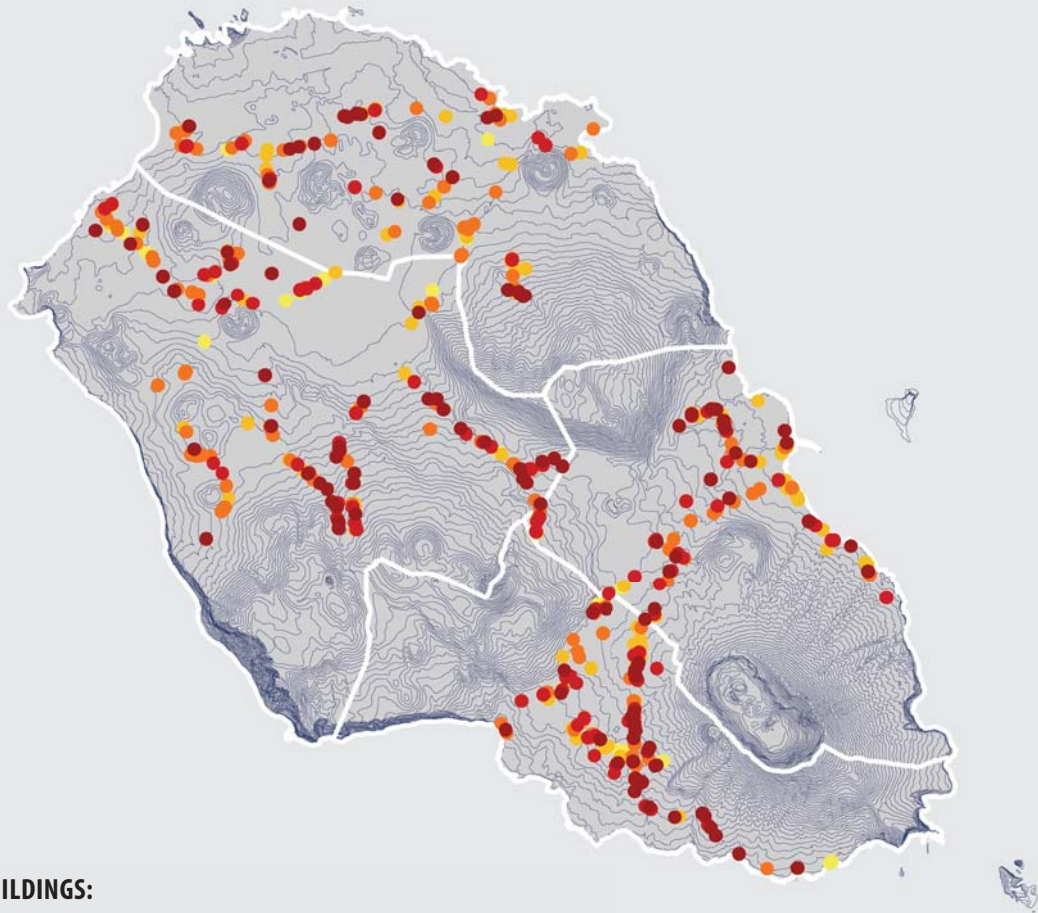
“Censos 2011 Resultados Definitivos”, INE





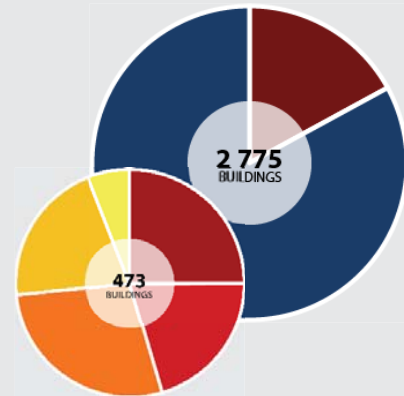
DECAYING BUILDINGS ON GRACIOSA - SURVEY

Fig. 1.42.



SURVEYED BUILDINGS: STATE OF CONSERVATION

- 1 - Ruins
- 2 - Damage to structural elements
- 3 - Structural elements intact
- 4 - Livable with major repairs
- 5 - Livable with minor repairs
- Surveyed Buildings
- Other Buildings

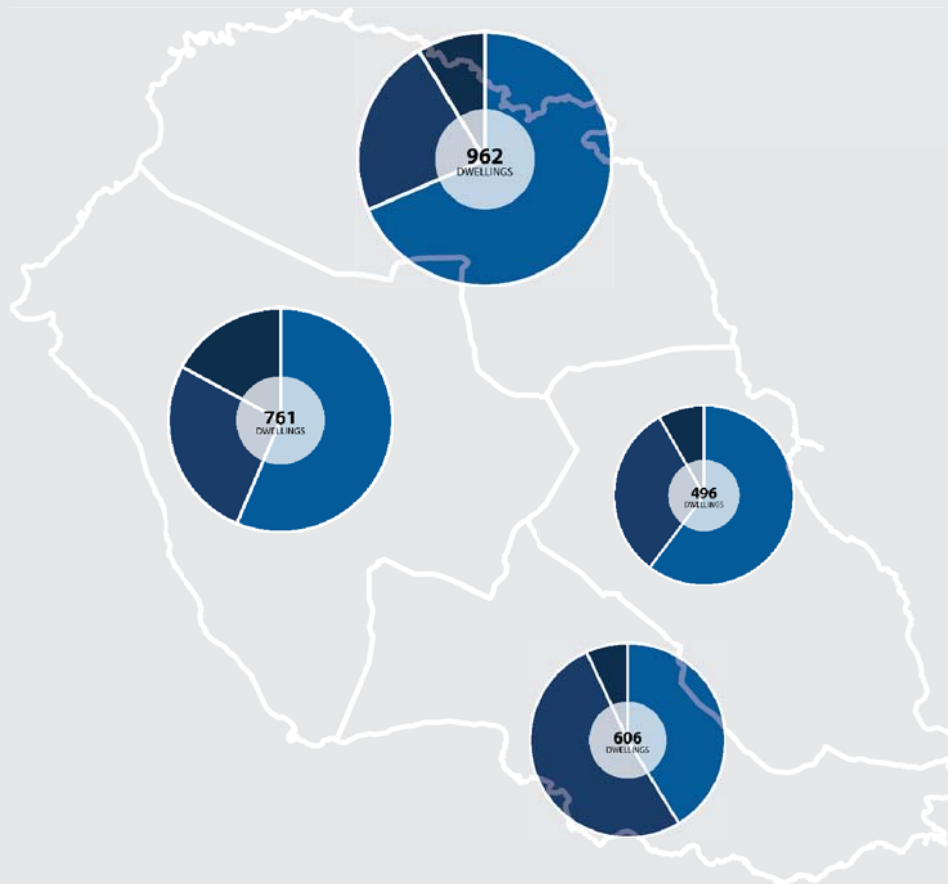


DWELLING OCCUPANCY - GRACIOSA

Fig. 1.43.

Data:

“Censos 2011 Resultados
Definitivos”, INE



DWELLING OCCUPANCY

- Primary Residence
- Secondary Residence
- Vacant



Fig. 1.44. Rubble and vegetation inside an abandoned house

THE NATURE OF DECAY

“The owner’s absence is felt in the misalignment, the grass, the moss that invaded the garden, in the melancholy of the solitary things. The fragility of our acts is palpable, I feel the sadness of ephemeral life, and it seems to me that this entire garden of camellias transformed itself into the cemetery where the dreams of the poet are buried. What is important is that as I stepped out, there was *Pico*, which is eternal.”

- Raul Brandão, “As Ilhas Desconhecidas”¹

Many of the traditional and vernacular buildings in the Azores are made with local materials: stones, wood, clay. Consequently, these buildings have a seemingly organic way of decaying. Due to the subtropical and very humid climate of the Azores, and the rural nature of the landscape, one of the notable aspects of decay is the overgrowth of vegetation in and around the abandoned buildings. Houses built with traditional materials are especially vulnerable to “destruction by vegetation”. In a very short period of time after vacancy, small plants will root themselves at the edges of the roofs, slowly lifting the tiles and allowing for moisture to penetrate the interior of the house. Eventually, the wooden structure of the roof rots and collapses, allowing rain into the house. Plants will eventually over take the property and, if left unattended long enough, only the stone walls will be left.

There is also a tendency for abandoned houses to attract the undesired elements of the street; if a communal garbage bin is to be put in the street, it will be placed in front of the abandoned house.

THE DECAY OF VERNACULAR HOUSES IN THE AZORES

FIRST SIGNS

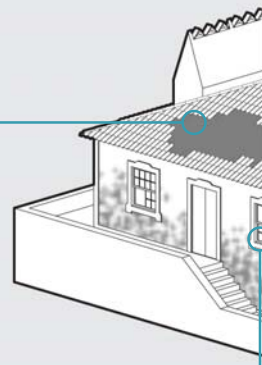
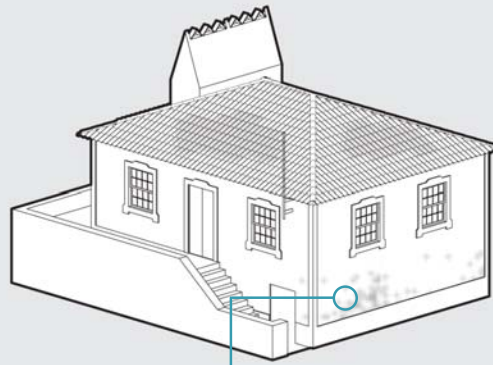
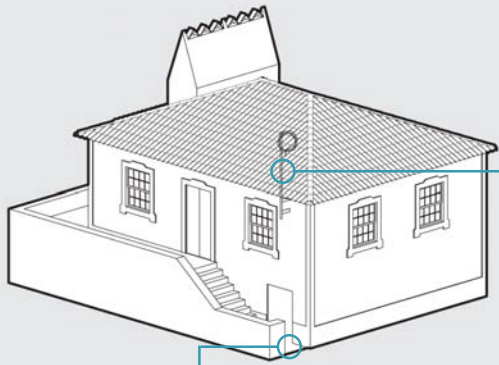
- Electrical wires are cut
- Entrance gate is open or broken
- Early signs of erosion of the exterior finishes
- Growth of vegetation and moss around the house

EXTERIOR FINISHES AND SPACES

- Exterior finishes start to degrade
- Garden / Exterior spaces are clearly unkept
- Windows might be broken
- Roof structure starts to suffer, tiles start to slip

ROOF AND OPENINGS

- Parts of the roof start to collapse
- Exterior finishes erode, structure is revealed
- Windows and doors are damaged
- Humidity degrades the



to collapse
le and the stone
are significantly
the interior

INTERIOR DIVISIONS AND FLOORS

- The roof is in great parts collapsed
- The windows and doors are gone
- The interior divisions and floors suffer from extensive damage
- Very little of the exterior finishes remain
- Openings might be blocked up

EXTERIOR STONE WALLS

- Vegetation is now growing around, in and on the structure
- The stone walls start to degrade, the stones fall or are displaced
- Pigments layers remain visible around the window and door openings

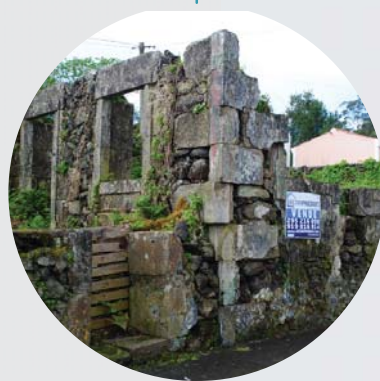
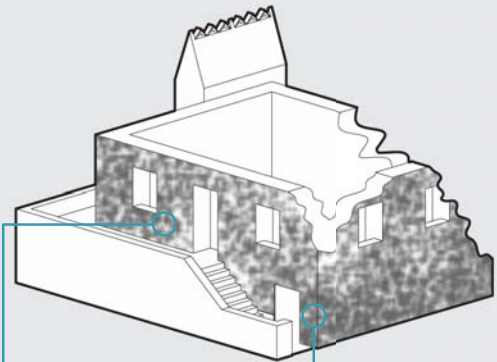
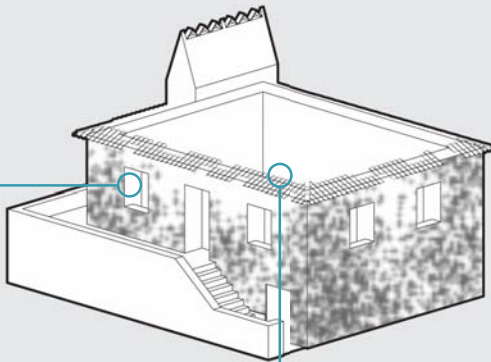




Fig. 1.46. Incomplete house project for sale

CONTEMPORARY RUINS

“New ruins have not yet acquired the weathered patina of age, the true rust of the barons’ wars, not yet put on their ivy, nor equipped themselves with the appropriate bestiary of lizards, bats, screech-owls, serpents, speckled toads and little foxes which, as has been so frequently observed by ruin-explorers, hold high revel in the precincts of old ruins [...]. But new ruins are for a time stark and bare, vegetation less and creature less; blackened and torn, they smell of fire and mortality.”

- Rose Macaulay, “Pleasure of Ruins”²

As previously mentioned, many factors have contributed to the high number of vacant buildings on the islands: emigration, earthquakes and other natural disasters, and the financial crisis of 2008. Today, amongst the ruins of vernacular houses left behind by the emigrants, contemporary buildings can be found vacant, incomplete or vandalized. Many of these newer buildings decay very differently than their vernacular predecessors due to their material nature. The walls and roofs are often made with concrete block or poured concrete, making it more difficult for the structure to collapse or disintegrate. Vandalism is more prominent: windows will be broken, graffiti will be painted on interior and exterior walls, and electrical wires will be pulled out. Any plastics or insulation materials will be found in and around the property, even after several years of abandonment. Even machinery – too large or too heavy to be removed – will be left in the buildings. These buildings tend to be more reminiscent of the apocalypse than the picturesque scene created by the ruins of a small rural house.

The following is a catalogue providing a limited selection of various types of ruins and vacant buildings and brief, speculative descriptions of how they came to be unoccupied. These speculative scenarios emerge from the many informal discussions that occurred during the survey with local Azoreans - they are meant to be examples of cases founds across the islands surveyed unless otherwise specified.



Fig. 1.47. The Small Rural House

The Small Rural House

The small family home was left behind when the owners emigrated, with the hopes of maybe one day coming back, or leaving the property to their children.



Fig. 1.48. The Large Rural House

The Large Rural House

Once the wealthy owners of many acres of land, they left their property to their children. Unfortunate, the children did not desire to work the land; the fields were sold and the property was left to perish slowly.



Fig. 1.49. The “Casa da América”, or “Imported House”

The “*Casa da América*”, or “Imported House”

Much like the “House of the French” or the “House of the Brazilian” in mainland Portugal, the “House of the American” is the demonstration of the successful life of the returned emigrant and realization of the dream of building a bigger better home on the land / island that was left behind.



Fig. 1.50. The Unfinished Contemporary / Modern House

The Unfinished Contemporary / Modern House

Due to unforeseen circumstances (financial, health, migration), the unfinished modern house is left on its newly lotted land to be eventually put up for sale as a “project”. The electrical wires will have been pulled out and any construction materials left on the site will eventually disappear.



Fig. 1.51. The Unfinished Developments

The Unfinished Developments

Similar to the unfinished modern house, the unfinished development suffers from similar unforeseen circumstances (most likely financial). In a row of identical units on newly lotted land, the unfinished unit is for sale.



Fig. 1.52. The Unfinished Renovations

The Unfinished Renovations

In the case of the unfinished renovations, the owner – who emigrated to Canada - had started building an extension to a pre-existing house. The reasons for incompleteness are unknown, but may be due to unforeseen financial or health related circumstances.



Fig. 1.53. The “Slightly Out-of-Place”

The “Slightly Out-of-Place”

Of impressive proportions, the intervention on the pre-existing building exceeds the height of most buildings on the island. It is highly probable that the construction was stopped due to a lack of building permit, building code infractions, or financial issues.



Fig. 1.54. The House of Historical Importance

The House of Historical Importance

The “*Casa da Salga*” (House of Salga), built in 1562, played an important role in the Battle of Salga, the battle against the Spanish invasion of Terceira, and is erroneously attributed to have been the house of Brianda Pereira, legendary heroine of Terceira. A valuable part of local historical heritage, it has been unoccupied for many years but remains the property of the Merens de Távora family.³



Fig. 1.55. The Larger Industrial Buildings

The Larger Industrial Buildings

Located at the periphery of the UNESCO designated historic city center of Angra do Heroísmo, the *SiloTer* grain silo complex was abandoned when grain processing was transferred to the other side of the island. They are currently for sale and property of the bank – demolition is too costly to be considered.



Fig. 1.56. The Famously Tragic

The Famously Tragic

The luxurious “*Estalagem da Serreta*” (Serreta Inn), designed by modernist Azorean architect João Rebelo in the 1960’s, once accommodated French president Georges Pompidou for the “Gold Meeting of 1971” with American president Richard Nixon. Its hoteling days ended in the early 1980’s, and today it finds itself in an advanced state of disrepair.



Fig. 1.57. Angra do Heroísmo after the earthquake of 1980

“Roughly 35km S-W from the city of Angra do Heroísmo, the earthquake with its epicenter in the sea, had a magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale and an intensity of 9 on the Mercalli scale destroyed a great part of Terceira.

The catastrophe killed 73 people and hundreds were injured. (...) Approximately 12 000 buildings were destroyed, leaving 21 296 people without shelter.”

- Quotes found in the online documentary *Sismo d'Oitenta* ⁴

CONSTRUCTION PERIODS

“The construction period of these houses is at times difficult to identify clearly being that most of them were reconstructed and altered after earthquakes. This is the case for the buildings in the parishes of *Praia da Vitória*, where very few houses are dated prior to the violent earthquake of 1841, which affected the entirety of that zone.”

- 10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980 ⁵

How is the construction period of a building determined when the building is rebuilt, or partially rebuilt periodically? Would it be said that the *Ise Jingu* shrine in Japan, which has been taken apart and rebuilt exactly the same every twenty years for the past 1,300 years, is only a decade old or almost 2000 years old?⁶ If the materials are renewed cyclically but the typology and construction methods remain unchanged, perhaps this becomes an example of cultural continuity, as opposed to striving for permanence. Is the same true of the opposite: if a house is destroyed by an earthquake and rebuilt with the same materials, but the construction methods are slightly different and the typology adapts to contemporary needs, does the age of the house change? Or if the materials are changed but the typology remains the same? Such are the questions raised about many buildings and houses in the Azores. After the earthquake of 1980, the damages sustained by the built fabric of the island of Terceira were mapped by two different groups. Both groups' results are fairly comparable. However, the current census of 2011 does not reflect the same information: the western parishes of the island, notably *Doze Ribeiras* and *Santa Bárbara*, show strikingly different numbers of buildings built prior to 1919 even though both parishes suffered extensive damages to their buildings. Perhaps the question of age and construction period in the Azorean context becomes open to interpretation.

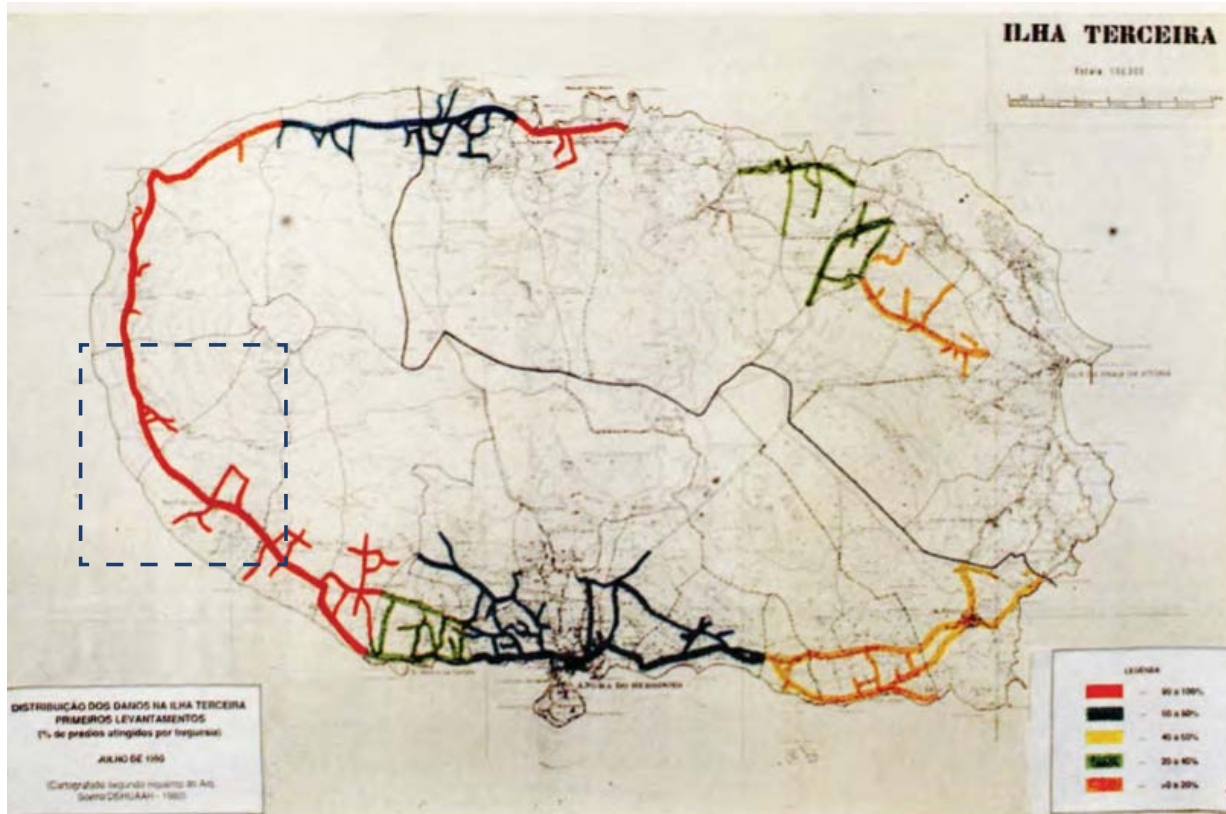


Fig. 1.58. Survey by Soreio / “Direcção dos Serviços de Habitação, Urbanismo e Ambiente”

10 % - 20 %
 20 % - 40 %
 40 % - 60 %
 60 % - 80 %
 80 % - 100 %

Survey by Soreio / “Direcção dos Serviços de Habitação, Urbanismo e Ambiente de Angra do Heroísmo” - February 1980

“Cartography of numerical data referring to general damages in Terceira island. [...] These charts clearly show the geographic distribution of the damages, and their attenuation with the separation of the epicentral zone, west of Terceira, as well as their almost symmetrical arrangement with respect to an E-W axis passing in the center of the island.”

- *10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980* ⁷
 (10 Years After The Azores' Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)

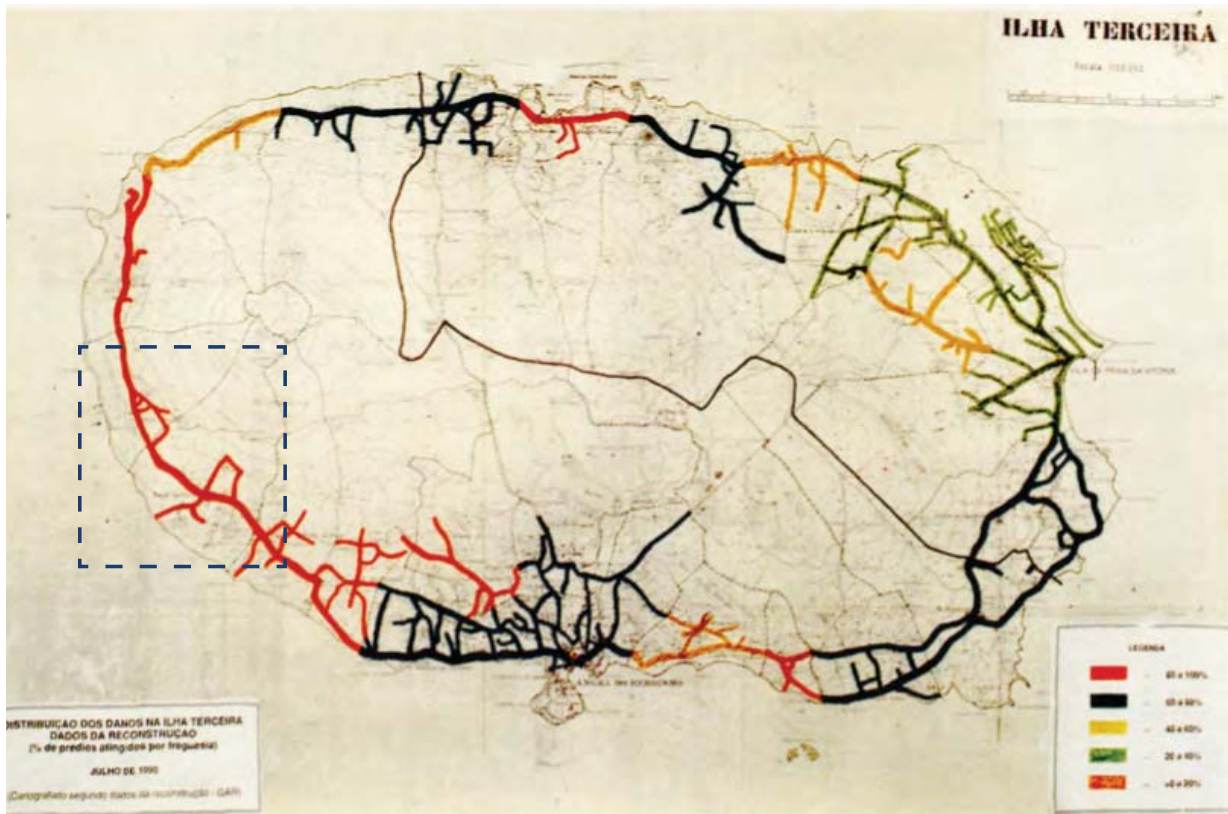


Fig. 1.59. Survey by “Gabinete de Apoio e Reconstrução”



Survey by “Gabinete de Apoio e Reconstrução” - December 1981

“A comparison of the results expressed [in both charts] reveals an agreement on the number of houses existing before the earthquake and the number of houses in total ruin, and disagreement as to the number of houses that suffered intermediate damages. In this last point, the Soeiro chart points to much lower percentages than the GAR chart.”

- *10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980*⁸
 (10 Years After The Azores' Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)

CONSTRUCTION PERIODS - TERCEIRA

Fig. 1.60.

Data:
 “Censos 2011 Resultados
 Definitivos”, INE

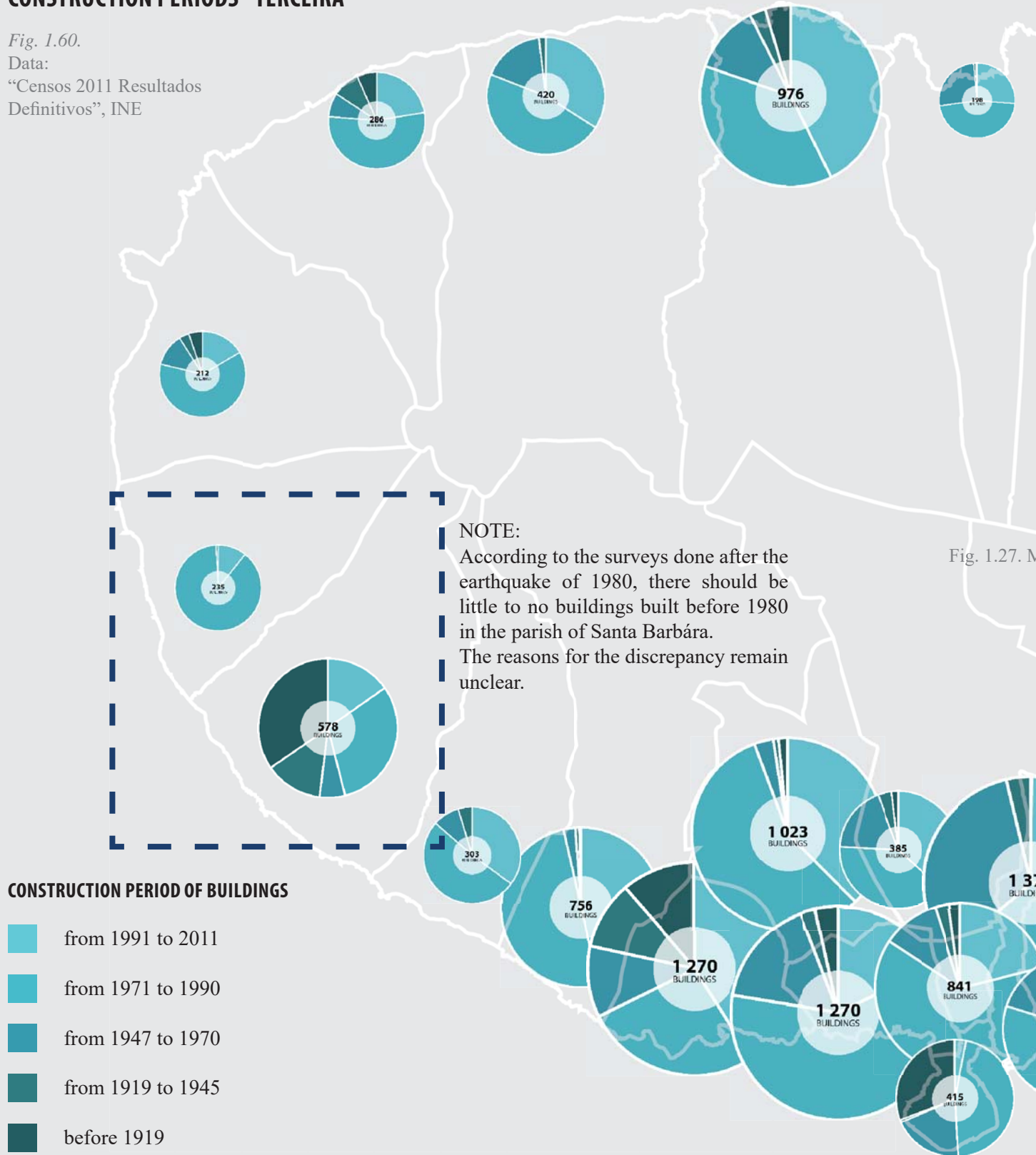
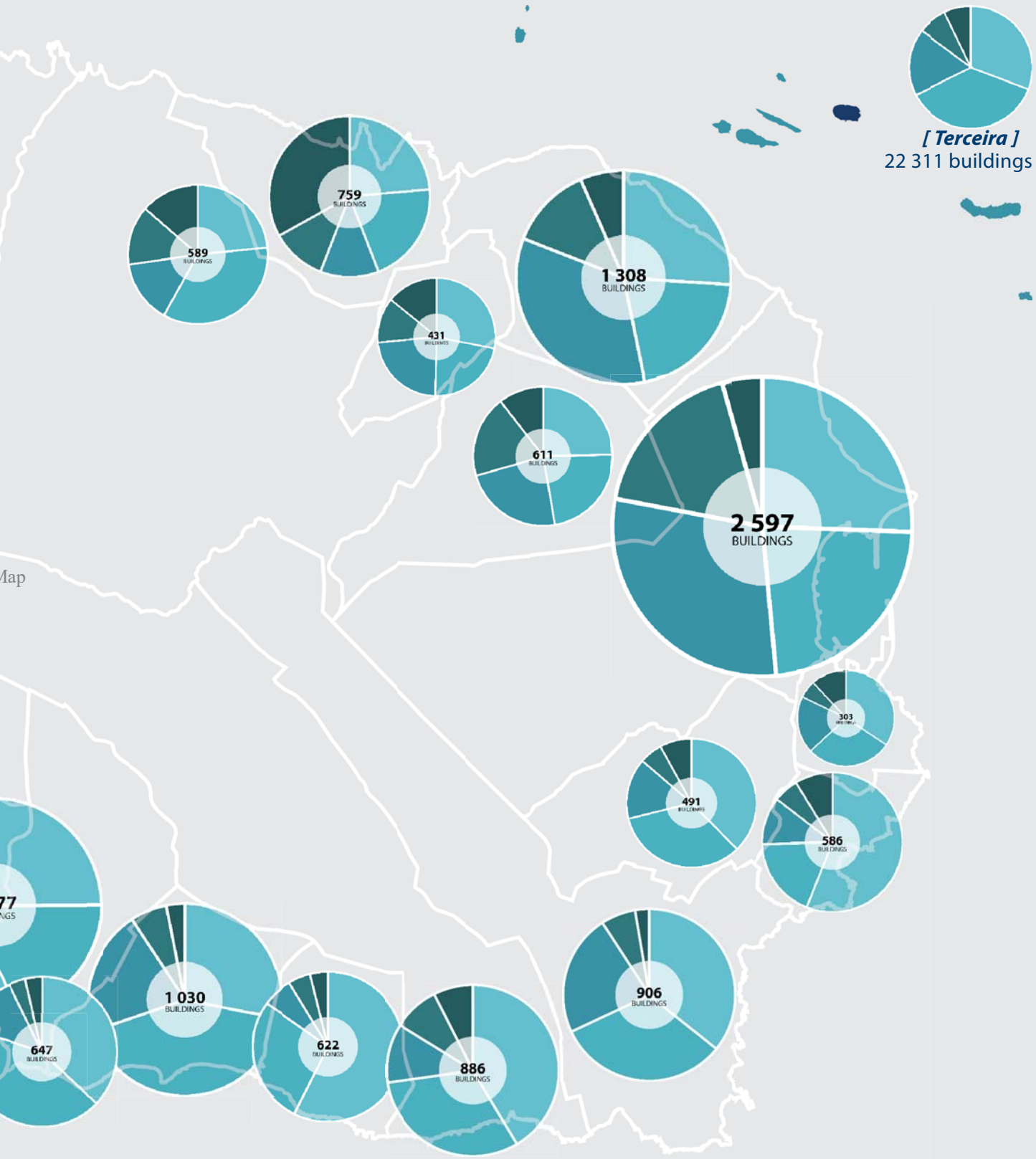
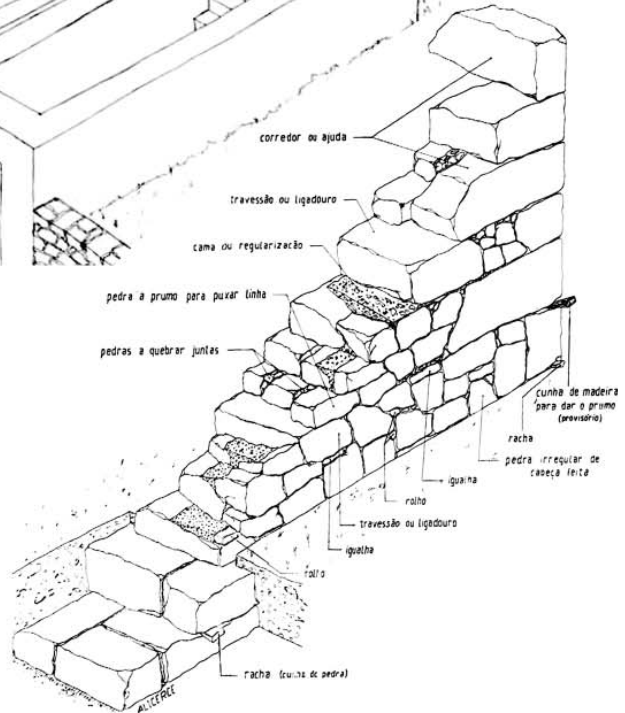
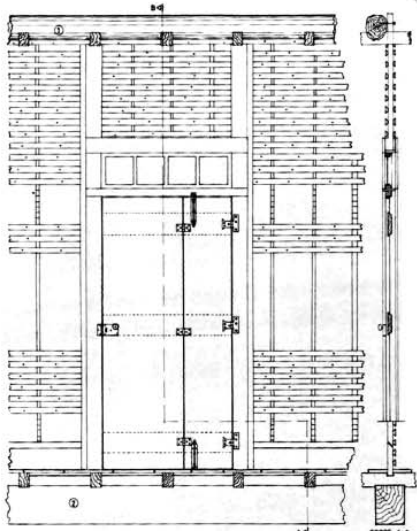
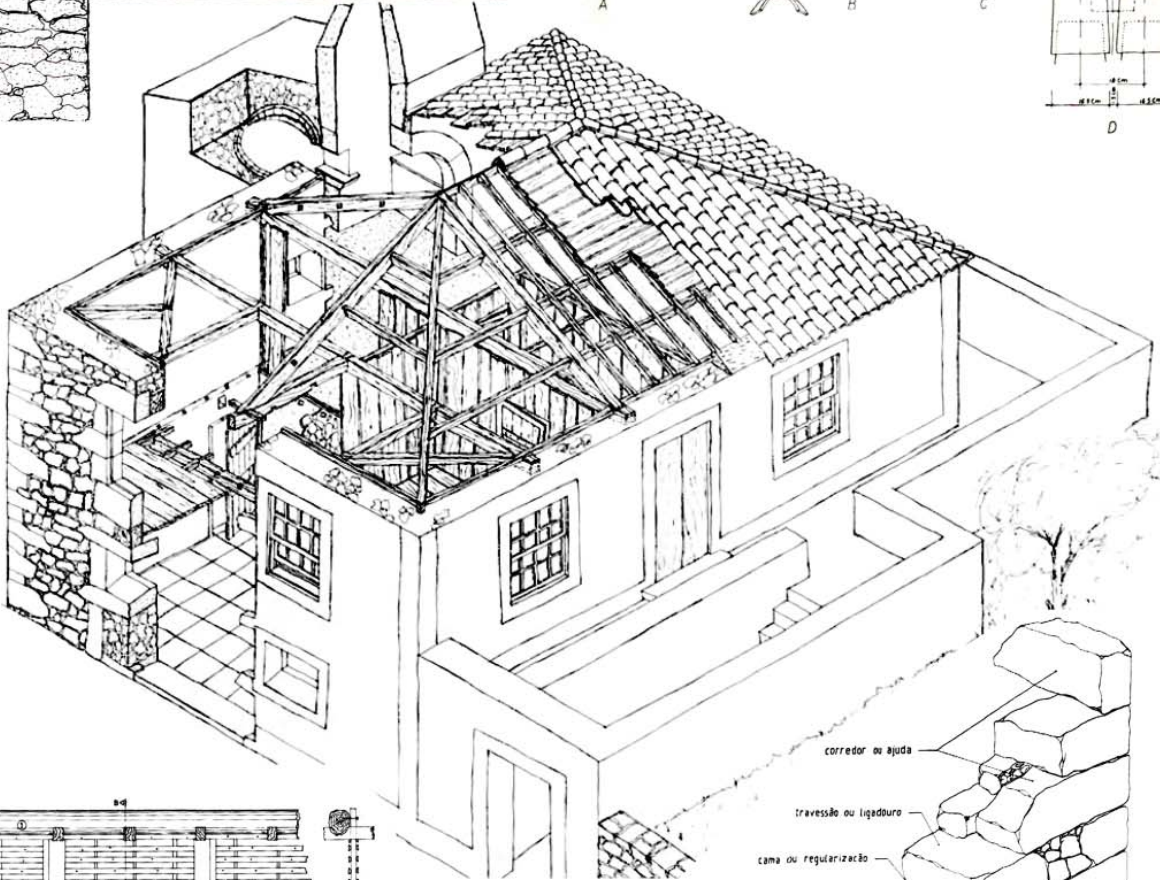
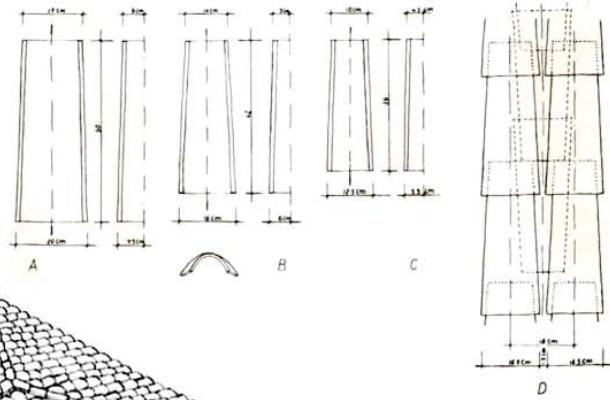
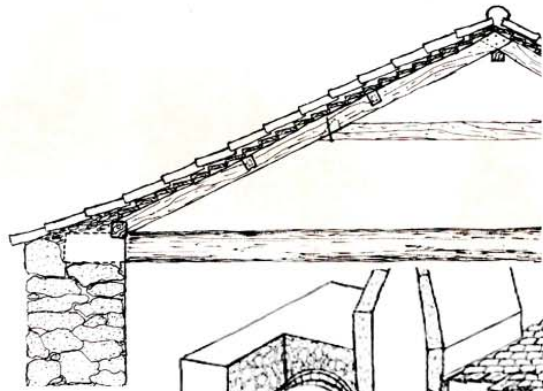


Fig. 1.27. M





MATERIALS AND LAYERS OF HISTORY

“Mr. Verber was a plasterer and roofer. The lime plaster delighted me: by its smell, by its brushes, by the way the rain would clean the splatters and would leave what was paint. And, furthermore, at that time they were already starting to use what we call “tiles from the Mainland”, and that eliminates the need for retiling. I like the idea of disassembling, cleaning and reassembling again, clean but with history.”

- Joel Neto, “A vida no Campo”⁹

Fig. 1.61. Material assemblies of typical vernacular house on Terceira.

From top to bottom, left to right:

- Wood structure roof assembly
- Local clay tile
- House structure axonometric
- Interior partition
- Stone wall structure

For a very long time, the Azores used materials that were almost all exclusively sourced or grown on the islands. These local materials served multiple purposes, shaping not only the Azorean landscapes and built fabric of the islands, but also Azorean culture.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the Azorean landscape is the black volcanic stone. The black stones are used to make the walls of houses – noble and rural –, churches, sheds, the small field and property walls and even the walls to fence the vineyards. In fact, the vineyard stone walls heat up during the day from the sun then release their heat at night, making the grapes especially sweet for the production of wine. Some of the houses are covered in whitewash and colourful paints, others are left exposed and over time grow lichen and moss.

The dark clay of the Azores is another distinctive feature of Azorean architecture and culture. The porous nature of the clay has been utilized from the roof tiles that retain enough moisture to limit the spread of termites, to “*alguidar*”, the clay pots that are used to cook the traditional “*Alcratra*” – a meat dish typical of Terceira. The more the *alguidar* is used, the more it retains flavor and the better the meat is.

These materials, stone and clay, and even wood, seem to have the ability to reveal through time the layers of their history. (Travel notes taken by author, 2016)



Fig. 1.62. Stone Property wall

Basalt

“Basalt is the hardest, densest and most resistant material to weathering. It is also more difficult to work, presenting a compact or vacuolar texture. It is applied not only in the construction of dwellings, but also in the paving of roads and stone sheds / cellars.”

The ‘Biscoito and Pedra-Queimada’

“Loose material, of variable granulometry, compact, appearing next to and associated to the lava flows (clinker). It is used in garden and property walls, in rural buildings and also as gravel.”

*- 10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980*¹⁰
(10 Years After The Azores’ Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)



Fig. 1.63. Inverted lintel



Fig. 1.64. Traditional door lock reused in exterior wall



Fig. 1.65. Small field wall

“Everyone thinks that it’s easy, but not at all. Building a wall is something that you plan well in advance. It’s not just a stone, cement, a stone, cement. We imagine that this wall, in a hundred years, it will still be standing. It’ll have to protect the children. People will rest on it. It must be solid, not to let misfortune pass. Back home, in my country, a wall is often one more room to the house.”

- José Ribeiro in *“La Cage Dorée”* (The Gilded Cage, 2013) ¹¹



Fig. 1.66. Tiled roof with local tiles

Roof tile

“The regional tile is made with very porous clay and pomitic materials. It is necessary to apply about 35 units per square meter of cover. Its geometry and material make the roof more adaptable to the wood finishes of the roof and provides greater thermal comfort. When fully saturated with water, these tiles come to weigh 1.2kN m^2 and become very fragile. Although the weight gain is an inconvenience, it improves the behavior of the cover during intense winds.”

*- 10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980*¹²
(10 Years After The Azores' Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)



Fig. 1.67. “Alguidares de barro” (clay pots) and clay jugs



Fig. 1.68. Cleaning of the roof tiles



Fig. 1.69. “Alcatra” - Traditional Terceira meat dish

Alcatra

“Cut the meat into small pieces. Grease the clay pot with lard. Cut the onions into thin slices and bacon in small pieces, placing a layer on the bottom of the clay pot. Add a part of meat, and again onions and bacon. [...] Place in the oven for 3 to 4 hours, turning the meat from time to time. It is served boiling hot in the clay pot in which it is cooked.”

“Note: The clay pots used for the cooking of this dish are made of unglazed clay.”

- *Saberes e Sabores dos Açores*¹³
(Knowledge and Flavors of the Azores)



Fig. 1.70. Wooden roof structure in the abandoned chapel of the “Casa da Salga”

Woods

“The roof structures and the intermediate floors are made with wood from the islands and with imported wood. In the first case, the most commonly used species of wood are acacia, eucalyptus, firetree (Morella Faya), Australian cheesewood (*Pittosporum undulatum*), pinewood, rose bush, cedar, “cedro-do-mato” or juniper (*Juniperus brevifolia*) and, more rarely, chestnut. More recently and in works of reconstruction, wood from cryptomeria has been used. Among the imported timbers are pine, scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*), brazilwood and other exotic species, now difficult to find on the market. The structural elements made in these woods are well suited and in a reasonable state of conservation, including door and window frames made of exotic woods, some more than four centuries old.”

- *10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980*¹⁴
(10 Years After The Azores’ Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)



Fig. 1.71. Wooden floor beams and structure, and interior partitions



Fig. 1.72. New roof structure



Fig. 1.73. Wooden wine press screws

Carpenter wind

[...] the strong south and southwest wind, that over 5 centuries, caused countless wrecks in the islands of the Azores. Carpenter wind because the ships made in wood, destroyed against the rocks, were a source of raw materials for the populations, mainly in the construction of houses. In the city of Horta it is still possible to find in some of the oldest houses, numerous pieces of wood salvaged from the coast.

- *Microdocs 01 - Vento Carpinteiro* (Carpenter Wind, 2017) ¹⁵



Fig. 1.74. Paint layers on the window frame of abandoned house

Paint

“The final finishing of the wall surfaces is the whitewash, usually done every year, using pigments such as vermilion (hematite), Siena and yellow ocher, and it is common to mix them with lime, melted cow tallow or whale oil.”

*- 10 Anos Após O Sismo Dos Açores De 1 De Janeiro de 1980*¹⁶
(10 Years After The Azores' Earthquake of January 1st, 1980)



Fig. 1.75. Door frame showing layers of paint



Fig. 1.76. Repainting of the window apron



Fig. 1.77. Samples of traditional pigments

It's detail

“Due to the fragility in the maintenance of the different paints caused by poorly efficient binders, the successive coating was done according to the availability of moment and personal taste of its user. This circumstance allows us, fortunately, to recognize today the “history” of the cycles of successive layers applied, [...]”

*- O saber e a criatividade do pormenor*¹⁷
(The knowledge and creativity of the detail)



Fig. 1.78. Overgrown vegetation on ruins of a traditional house

Vegetation

“As main endemic species of flora are included laurel, heather, Azores heather (*Erica azorica*, an endemic plant), cedars and colicwood. The *Vidalia* is a flower endemic to the Azores. In addition, some flowers give a special charm to the islands as hydrangeas, camellia and azalea, introduced plants used as natural divisions of property. Acacia and cryptomeria, bigger trees, were also introduced in the archipelago and gained commercial importance.” (not translated by author)

- *Flora e Fauna* (Flora and Fauna) ¹⁸



Fig. 1.79. Garden plants and wood oven



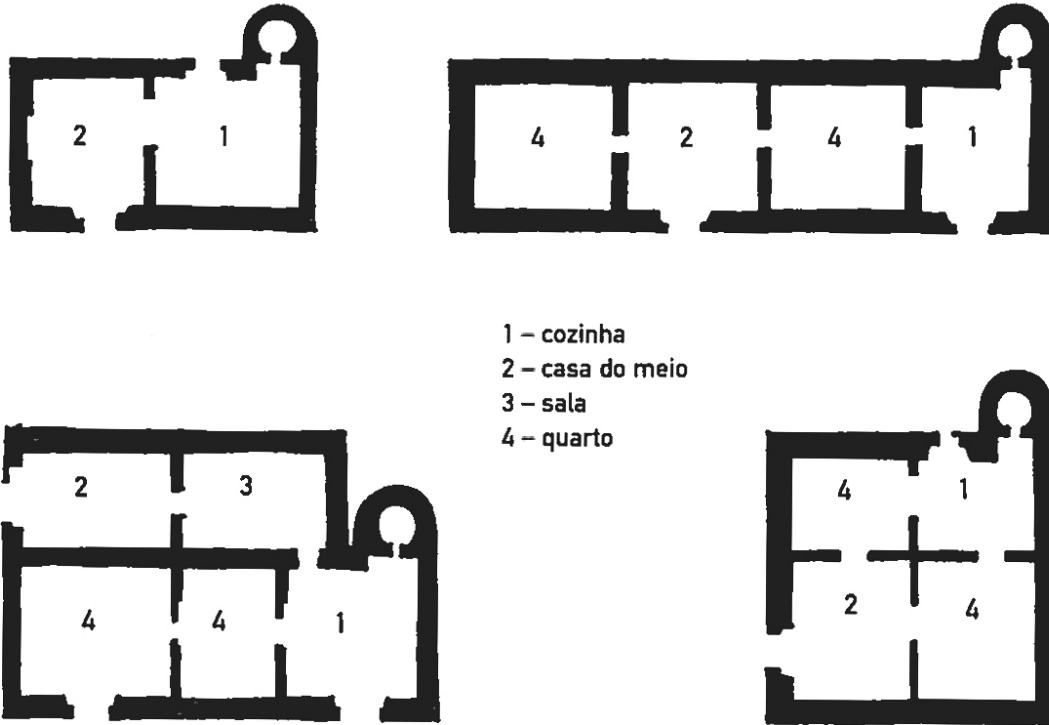
Fig. 1.80. Grape vines under trellis



Fig. 1.81. Invasion of vegetation on abandoned house

“The owner’s absence is felt in the misalignment, the grass, the moss that invaded the garden, in the melancholy of the solitary things.”

- *As Ilhas Desconhecidas* (The Unknown Islands) ¹⁹



Plantas esquemáticas de uma casa elementar, uma casa linear, da casa de Fontinhas e de uma casa integrada

Fig. 1.82. Typical layouts of vernacular houses of Terceira

TYOLOGIES AND THEIR EVOLUTIONS

“Family individualism that led to the construction of the detached dwellings is confirmed by the existence, in every house without exception, of an oven, accessible through the interior of the kitchen, which allows each family to bake their own bread. The organization of the house, its volume, size, finishes, how the oven articulates itself with the kitchen and the shape of the respective chimney (when it exists) vary from island to island and within the island itself.”

- Arquitectura Popular dos Açores ²⁰

Nearly 30 years after the national survey of vernacular architecture in continental Portugal in 1955, the same type of survey took place in the Azores. It was demonstrated that each island had developed different typologies over the last 500 years. However, three general categories of typologies could be identified across all the islands:

- the house with disassociated kitchen, where the kitchen is fully or partially detached from the house
- the linear house, where all the rooms are arranged linearly and the kitchen is always at one end
- the integrated house, where a singular volume contains all the rooms and the kitchen, most often square or rectangular²¹

In every case, the oven is the most important part of the house: the oven allows for the making of bread, the cooking of meats and the smoking of sausages. This vernacular heritage was shaped by each individual region's rural and agricultural activities. Many of these typologies incorporated spaces dedicated to production or work animals.

With historic shifts in economy and agriculture, many of these spaces have lost their original purpose. The commodification of water and electricity, and new materials and construction methods, have changed and altered many of the traditional typologies to respond to contemporary comforts. Is the vernacular model doomed to extinction, or is it able to adapt to the rapidly changing world? Which spaces that can be converted to new uses and what are which need to remain?

ANALYSIS OF TERCEIRA'S VERNACULAR TYPOLOGIES

Fig. 1.83.



ANALYSIS OF GRACIOSA'S VERNACULAR TYPOLOGIES

Fig. 1.84.

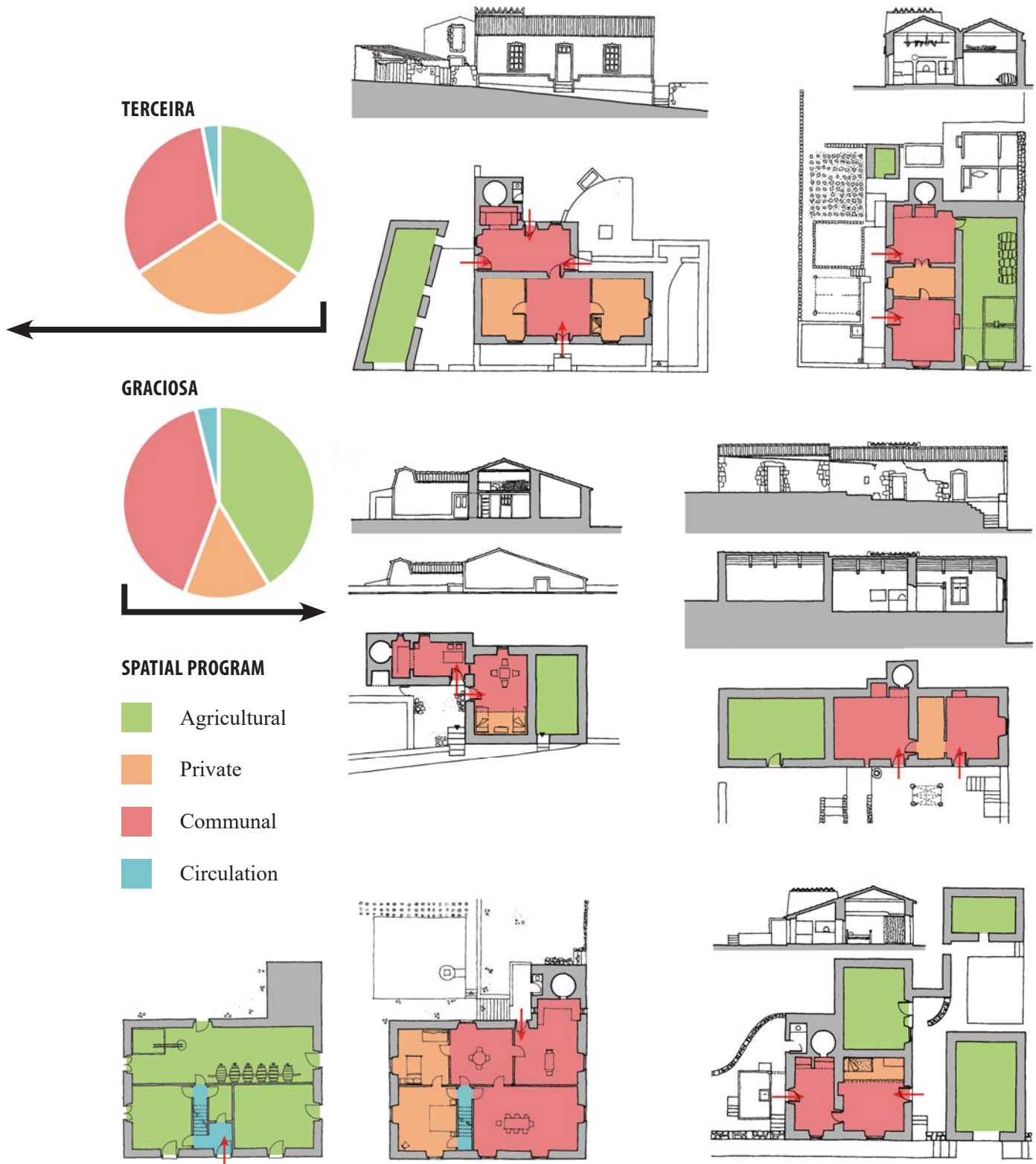




Fig. 1.85. Traditional oven and kitchen space

Traditional Wood Oven and Chimney

“The kitchen is therefore understood as the crux of vernacular housing: ‘... it is the essential compartment of the house, the place where the whole life of the family relationship takes place, where people cook, eat, and gather after work ...’ (Oliveira, Galhano, 1968). It is in this compartment that the home is found as a strict but primordial concept of the place where fire is made. It also summarizes and therefore symbolizes the Home in the broad sense.”

- Arquitectura Popular dos Açores
(Vernacular Architecture of the Azores)²²



Fig. 1.86. Contemporary exterior wood oven



Fig. 1.87. Sausages being smoked in chimney above oven



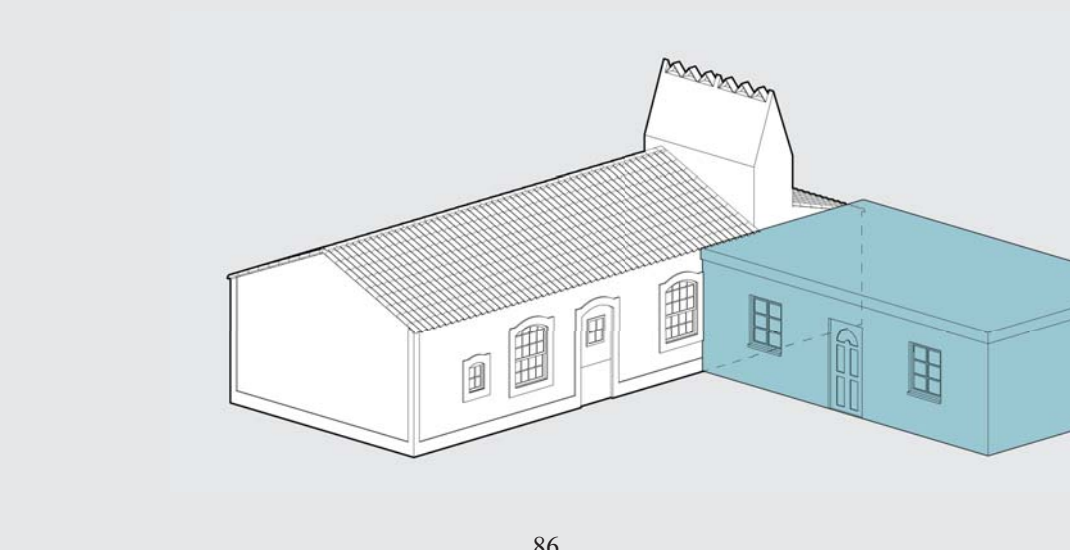
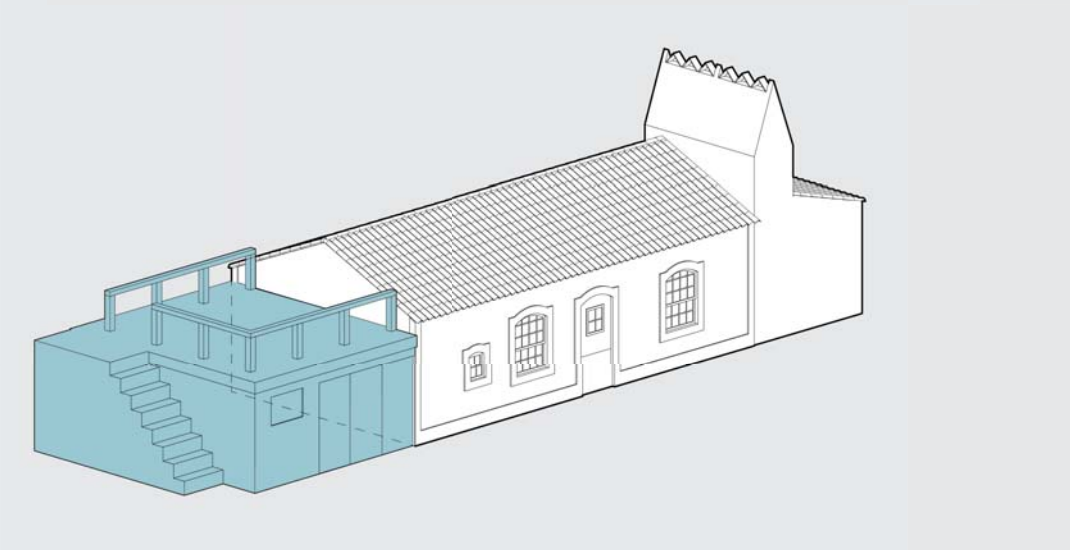
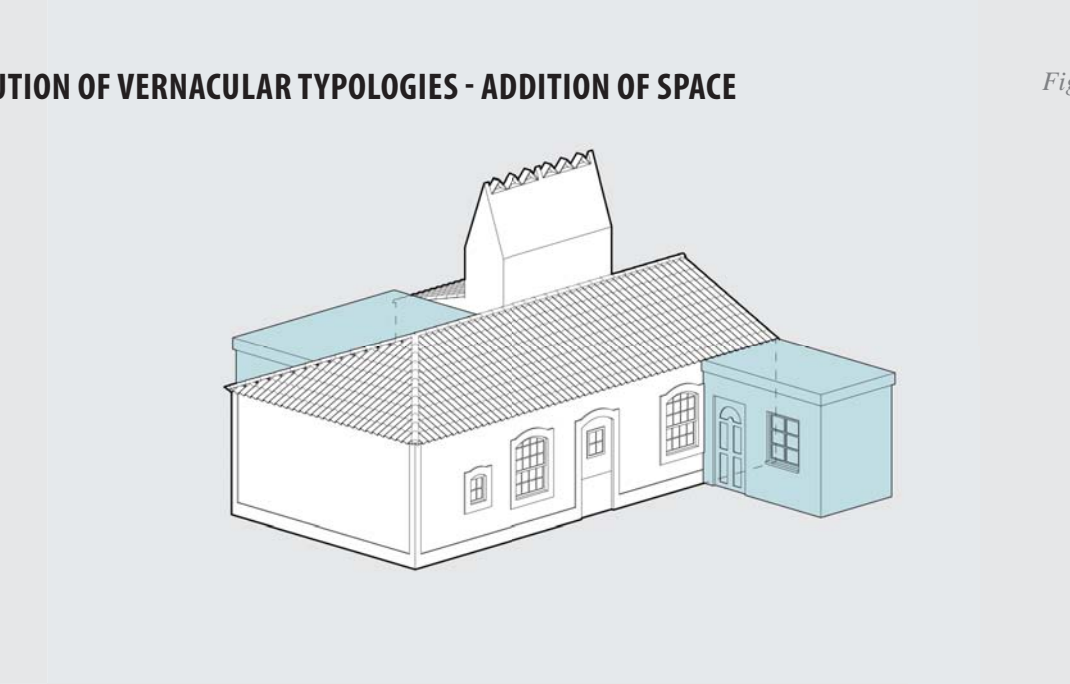
Fig. 1.88. Oven in ruined vernacular house in Terceira

The wood oven is still an integral part of Azorean culture today: the traditional meat dishes, fish dishes, breads and sausages are all cooked in the oven. If a new or contemporary house does not have a traditional oven, an independent exterior oven is built.

The wood oven and chimney are almost always intact in the ruined vernacular houses.

EVOLUTION OF VERNACULAR TYPOLOGIES - ADDITION OF SPACE

Fig. 1.89.



EVOLUTION OF VERNACULAR TYPOLOGIES - MODIFICATIONS

Fig. 1.90.

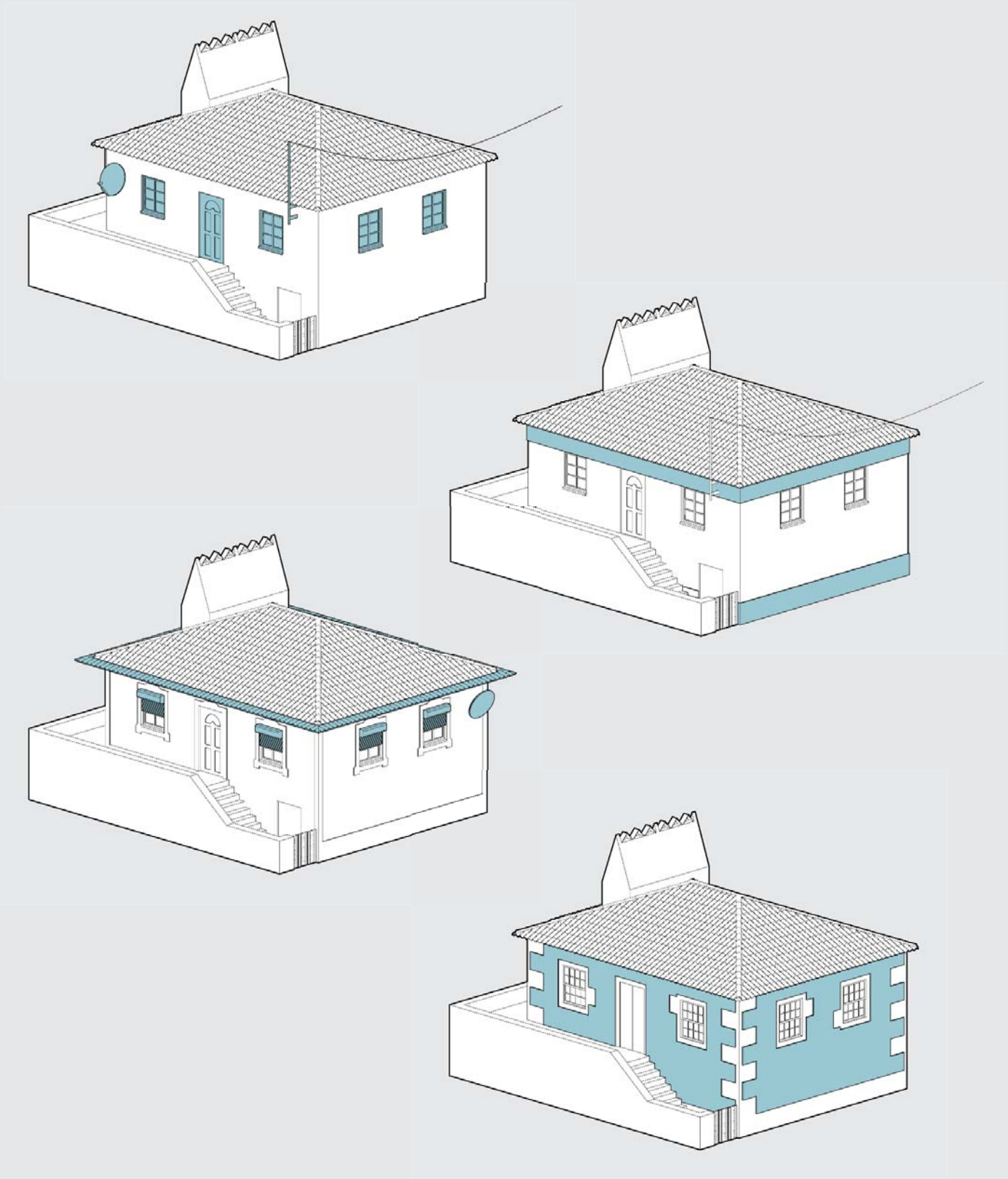




Fig. 1.91. The Blue House in São Roque, Pico

A Casa Azul / The Blue House

“Amongst all the wooden houses made on Faial and Pico, the most imposing as a display is doubtless The Blue House in S. Roque - Pico.

We have a drawing of the plan and of the elevation of this wooden house made on top of a traditional masonry house.

The above mentioned drawing was brought from the United States and comes along with the text in English.

To this set was added a beautiful porch with a carved wooden balcony.

Here we can also see grouped windows as on the other side of the Atlantic.”

- Arquitectura Baleeira nos Açores - Whaling Architecture in the Azores ²³
(Bilingual Portuguese-English Book)

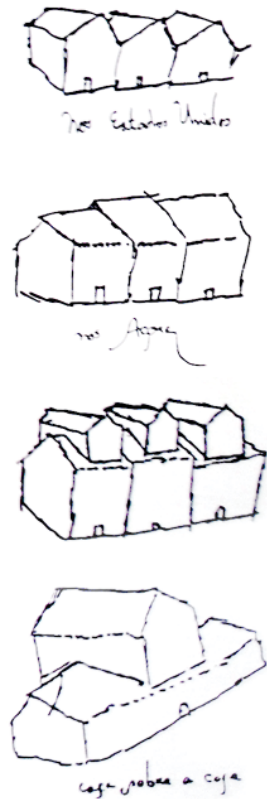


Fig. 1.92. Sketches of the influence of American architecture in Pico and Faial, by Paulo Gouveia



Fig. 1.93. Dormer, house on Pico



Fig. 1.94. Mansard added to traditional house on Pico

Whaling Architecture on the Islands of Pico and Faial - A Case-Study by Paulo Gouveia

The bilingual book entitled “*Arquitetura Baleeira no Açores - Whaling Architecture in the Azores*” by the late Azorean architect Paulo Gouveia beautifully and synthetically demonstrates the influences of American architecture in the whaling villages on Pico and Faial.

What we see in the examples highlighted by Gouveia are both the aesthetic and volumetric modifications to vernacular houses that come out of the frequent travels between the Azores and the United States by Azorean whalers. Clear parallels are drawn between American architecture - dormers, windows, porches, house façades, exterior finishes - and their apparition in Azorean vernacular.

The Blue House (left) is an exceptional example of an American typology superimposed harmoniously onto a pre-existing house, adding almost twice the volume to the property.

Whaling architecture, as identified by Gouveia, is a contemporary example of trans-atlantic Azorean architecture that is suited to local Azorean context.

ENDNOTES

Part One: A Study of Existing Conditions

- 1 *“A falta do dono sente-se no desalinho, nas ervas, no musgo que invadiu o jardim, na melancolia das coisas solitárias. Mas eu gosto mais disto assim. Palpo a fragilidade dos nossos actos, sinto a tristeza da vida efêmera, parece-me que todo este jardim de camélias se transformou num cemitério de camélias onde se enterrou só sonho do poeta. O que me vale é que saio e dou logo com o Pico, que é eterno.”*
Raul Brandão, *As Ilhas Desconhecidas - Notas e Paisagens*, with preface by António M. B. Machado Pires (1926; Açores: Artes e Letras, 2009), 144.
- 2 Rose Macaulay, Roloff Beny, and Constance Babington Smith, *Pleasure of Ruins* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), 453.
- 3 Francisco Miguel Nogueira, “Casa da Salga,” *Jornal da Praia*, May 1, 2017, <http://www.jornaldapraia.com/noticias/ver.php?id=2008>
- 4 *“A apenas 35km a sudoeste da cidade de Angra do Heroísmo, o terramoto com epicentro no mar, possuía uma magnitude de 7,2/10 na escala de Richter e intensidade 9/12 na escala de Mercalli que destruiu grande parte da Ilha Terceira.*
A catástrofe arrancou a vida de 73 pessoas e fez centenas de feridos. (...) Para lá de 12.000 estruturas ficaram destruídas deixando 21 296 pessoas desalojadas”
João Aguiar e tal. “Sismo d’oitenta – O terramoto”, 2011, <http://www.sismodoitenta.com/terramoto>
- 5 *“A época de construção destas moradias é por vezes difícil de identificar claramente, pois muitas delas foram reconstruídas e alteradas após a ocorrência de sismos. É o caso das construções das freguesias da Praia da Vitória onde são raras as moradias anteriores ao violento sismo de 1841, que afectou toda aquela zona.”*
Carlos Sousa Oliveira, Arcindo R. A. Lucas, e J. H. Correia Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores de 1 de Janeiro de 1980*, vol. 2, (Lisboa: SRHOP e LNEC, 1992), 360.
- 6 Jingushicho, “About Ise Jingu,” <https://www.isejingu.or.jp/en/about/index.html>
- 7 *“Cartografia de dados numéricos referentes aos danos gerais na ilha Terceira. (...) Estas cartas evidenciam claramente a distribuição geográfica dos danos, e sua atenuação com o afastamento da zona epicentral, para oeste da Terceira, bem como a sua disposição quase simétrica em relação a um eixo E-W passando no centro da ilha.”*
Oliveira, Lucas, e Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores*, 669.
- 8 *“Uma comparação dos resultados expressos (nas cartas) revela concordância no número de casas existentes antes do sismo e no número de casa em ruínas total, e discordância quanto ao número de casas que sofreram danos de grau intermédio. Neste último ponto a carta Soeiro aponta para percentagens muito inferiores*

às da carta GAR.”

Ibid.

9 “O Sr. Veber era caiador e retelhador. A cal encantava-me: pelo chairo, pelas brochas, pelo modo como a chuva limpava os respingos e deixava o que era pintura mesmo. E, além disso, naquela altura já começava a impera aqui também aquilo que chamamos “telha do Continente”, e que dispensa retelhação. Gosto da ideia de desmontar, limpar e montar de novo, asseado mas com história.”

Joel Neto, *A vida no campo* (Barcarena: Marcador, 2016), 189.

10 *Basaltos*

“O basalto é o material mais rijo, denso e mais resistente à meteorização. É também mais difícil de trabalhar, apresentando textura compacta ou vacuolar, sendo aplicado não só na construção de habitações, como também na pavimentação de estradas e de arruamentos.”

Biscoito ou pedra-queimada

“Material solto, de granulometria variável, compacto, aparecendo junto e associado às escoadas lávica (clinker). É utilizado em muros, em construções rurais e como brita.”

Oliveira, Lucas, e Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores*, 361-362.

11 “Tout le monde croit que c’est facile, mais pas du tout. Monter un mur ça se pense longtemps avant. C’est pas juste une pierre, du ciment, une pierre, du ciment. On se dit que ce mur, dans cent ans, il sera encore debout. Il devra protéger les enfants. Les gens se reposeront dessus. Il doit être solide, pour pas laisser passer le malheur. Chez moi, dans mon pays, un mur est souvent une pièce de plus à la maison.”

La Cage Dorée, directed by Ruben Alves (2013; France: Pathé, 2013), DVD.

12 *Telha*

“A telha regional em canudo é feita com barro e materiais pomíticos, muito porosos, sendo necessário aplicar cerca de 35 unidades por metro quadrado de cobertura. A sua geometria e material tornam o telhado mais adaptável aos empenos da madeira da cobertura e conferem-lhe características de maior conforto térmico. Quando encharcam, estas telhas chegam a pesar 1.2 kN/m² e tornam-se muito frágeis. Apesar do aumento de peso verificado constituir um inconveniente, melhora o comportamento da cobertura à acção dos ventos intensos.”

Oliveira, Lucas, e Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores*, 364.

13 *Alcatra*

“Corta-se a carne em bocados. Unta-se o alguidar de barro com banha. Cortam-se as cebolas às rodelas finas e o toucinho em bocadinhos, colocando-se um camada no fundo do alguidar. Introduz-se depois um bocado de carne e novamente cebolas e toucinho. [...] Leva-se ao forno durante 3 a 4 horas, virando-se a carne de vez em quando. Serve-se a ferver no alguidar em que é cozinhada.”

“Nota: os alguidares utilizados para a confecção de alcatras são de barro não vidrado.”

Maria Orísia Melo and Conceição Melo Cabral, *Saberes e Sabores dos Açores* (Azores: Letras Lavadas, 2014), 86.

14 *Madeiras*

“As estruturas de cobertura e dos pavimentos intermédios são executadas com madeira proveniente das ilhas e com madeira importada. No primeiro caso, as espécies de madeiras mais utilizadas são a acácia, o eucalipto, a faia-da-terra, a faia-do-norte, o pinho-da-terra, a roseira, o cedro, o cedro-do-mato ou zimbro e, mais raramente, o castanho. Mais recentemente e nas obras de reconstrução foi muito utilizada madeira de criptoméria. Entre as madeiras importadas contam-se o pinho resinoso, o pinho-de-flandres, o pau-brasil e outras espécies exóticas, hoje difíceis de encontrar no mercado.

Os elementos estruturais executados nestas madeiras apresentam-se bem aparelhados e em estado razoável de conservação, incluindo as peças de vergas de portas e janelas em madeira exótica, algumas com mais de quatro séculos.”

Oliveira, Lucas, e Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores*, 364.

- 15 OurIsland, “Microdocs 01 - Vento Carpinteiro,” Vimeo, 2017, <https://vimeo.com/244869993>
- 16 *Pintura*
 “O acabamento final das superfícies das paredes é a caiçã, normalmente executada todos os anos, utilizando-se pigmentos como sejam o vermelhão (hematite), a Siena e o ocre amarelo, sendo comum misturá-los com a cal, sebo de vaca derretido ou óleo de baleia.”
 Oliveira, Lucas, e Guedes, *10 anos após o sismo dos Açores*, 364.
- 17 *O seu detalhe*
 “Pela fragilidade na manutenção das diferentes tintas provocadas por ligantes de deficiente eficiência, o sucessivo recobrimento processava-se conforme a disponibilidade de momento e de gosto pessoal do seu utilizador. Esta circunstância permite-nos, afortunadamente, reconhecer hoje o “historial” dos ciclos das sucessivas camadas aplicadas, [...]”
 Nuno Ribeiro Lopes, Francisco Maduro-Dias and António Menéres, *A Terceira e Angra do Heroísmo – Momentos da vida de um património arquitetónico* (Azores: SREC/DRC, 2015), 61.
- 18 GeoAçores Association, “Fauna and Flora,” Geopark Azores, https://www.azoresgeopark.com/acoes/fauna_flora.php?lang=EN
- 19 “A falta do dono sente-se no desalinho, nas ervas, no musgo que invadiu o jardim, na melancolia das coisas solitárias.”
 Brandão, *As Ilhas Desconhecidas*, 144.
- 20 “O individualismo familiar que conduziu à construção das habitações destacadas umas das outras confirma-se na existência, em todas as casas sem exceção, de um forno, acessível pelo interior da cozinha, que permite a cada família cozer o seu próprio pão. A organização da casa, a sua volumetria, a dimensão, os acabamentos, o modo como o forno se articular com a cozinha e a forma da respectiva chaminé (quando existe) é que variam de ilha para ilha e dentro da própria ilha.”
 Ana Tostões et al., *Arquitectura Popular dos Açores*, 2.^a ed. (Lisboa: Ordem dos Arquitectos, 2007), 25.
- 21 Ibid, 26-27.
- 22 “A cozinha é, portanto, entendida como o cerne da habitação popular: ‘... é o compartimento essencial da casa, o local onde decorre toda a vida de relação da família, onde se cozinha, se come, e se reúnem as pessoas depois do trabalho...’ (Oliveira, Galhano, 1968). É neste compartimento que se encontra o lar enquanto conceito estrito, mas primordial, de lugar onde se faz fogo. É ele também que resume e por isso simboliza o Lar no sentido lato.”
 Ibid, 15.
- 23 Paulo Gouveia, *Arquitectura Baleeira nos Açores – Whaling Architecture in the Azores* (Azores: Gabinete de Emigração e Apoio às Comunidades Açorianas, 1990), 95.



Graciosa

Terceira

São Jorge

RUPTURE AND CONTINUITY

Part Two



São Miguel

Santa Maria





The vernacular house has long been at the centre of the contemporary architecture discourse in Portugal. Fuelled by a spirit of nationalism, the quest for a “Portuguese identity” in architecture sparked debate on the value of vernacular architecture in Portugal and its relevance in contemporary modernist architecture.

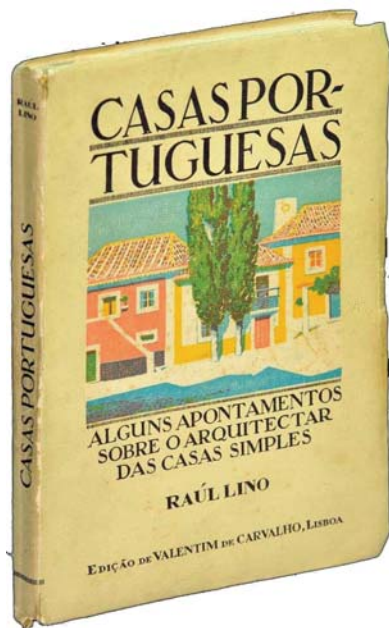


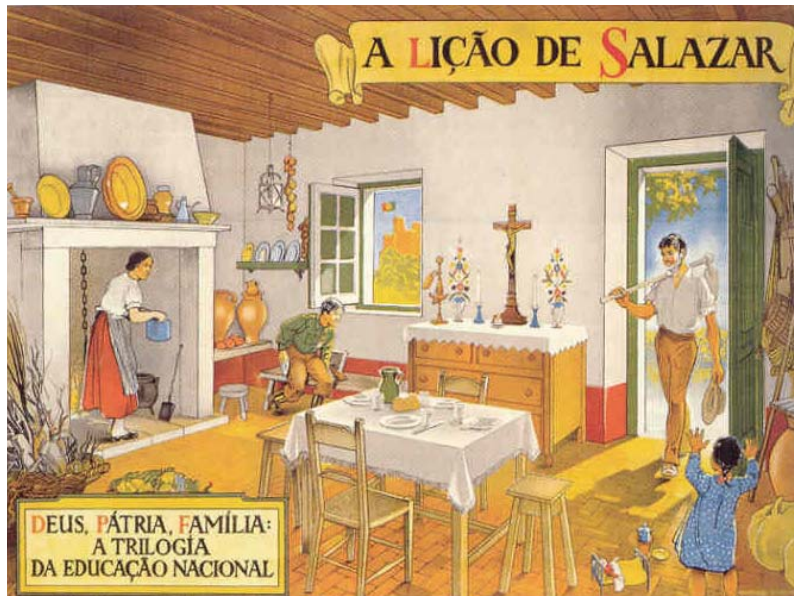
Fig. 2.2. Book cover of Raúl Lino’s “Casas Portuguesas”

Raul Lino (1879-1974), Portuguese architect, theorist and writer became the instigator of the debate some would call “the Portuguese house movement” with his book *Casas Portuguesas* (Portuguese Houses) in 1933. In his book, which became one of the bestselling books of Portuguese architecture, Lino described at length the elements that constituted the essence of Portuguese architecture, which were found in traditional vernacular houses. He argued the existence of a singular, specific type of vernacular dwelling that was characteristically Portuguese, the “*Casa Portuguesa*” (Portuguese House) and that the typifying of certain vernacular elements – an aesthetic kit-of-parts – inspired from this ideal vernacular model could help shape modern contemporary Portuguese architecture.¹ This ideology, brought to the forefront of the architectural discussion, was fuelled by the nationalist character of Salazar’s *Estado Novo* (New State) which asked if a “Portuguese house aesthetic” could exist². Lino demonstrates a strong concern for the creating and maintaining a Portuguese identity in the face of emerging modernism:

“The architect, therefore, well acquainted with the language of his country, will have to create in the use of this plastic language the necessary neologisms, and will make Portuguese the forms whose import is inevitable in the evolution of all things. The architect will not use archaisms but will oppose everything that tends to the denationalization of our domestic architecture.”³

Fig. 2.1. (Left) Elderly women looking out a window, Graciosa

In effect, the “*Casa Portuguesa*” can be seen as a manifesto for an “*aportuguesamento*” (literally “portuguesification”) of Portuguese architecture in the face of international modern architecture, using aesthetic elements based on the idea of a typical Portuguese vernacular house.



1938 - *Salazar's Lesson*
Part of seven posters made during the “*Estado Novo*” to promote the ideals of the Salazar’s New State. These posters and images were located in classrooms throughout Portugal.
“*Deus, Pátria, Família*” (God, Country, Family) depicts the ideal household and family values. The setting glorifies the vernacular architecture as the ideal Portuguese home.

Fig. 2.3. Salazar’s Lesson - God, Country, Family

Over a decade later, in 1947, Fernando Távora (1923-2005) writes a counter-argument to Raul Lino’s book in an essay entitled *O Problema da Casa Portuguesa* (The Problem of the Portuguese House). Fernando Távora, renowned Portuguese architect and professor, rejects the notion of an architecture of Portuguese essence and of a Portuguese house based solely on the selection and application of aesthetic elements, as expressed by Lino. Távora argues that any sort of architectural style emerges from “*o Povo*” (the People) and “*a Terra*” (the Land) and that architectural forms “result from the conditions imposed on the material by the function it is obliged to perform and still from a spirit proper to the one who acts on the same material” and that contemporary houses will have to be the result and representation of the necessities, conditions and circumstances of today.⁴ He explains:

“It is indispensable that in the history of our old or vernacular houses the conditions that created and developed them should be determined, whether they be man’s conditions, and the way the materials were employed and how they met the needs of these times. The vernacular house

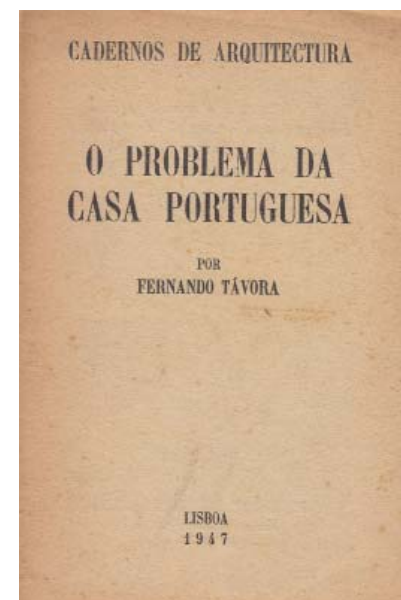


Fig. 2.4. Cover of Fernando Távora’s manifesto

will give us great lessons when properly studied,
for it is the most functional and the least fanciful
[...]"⁵

Távora clearly demonstrates the desire for architecture to be a representation of its time, and not a mere imitation of the past based on aesthetics elements extrapolated from vernacular architecture. However, he recognizes the importance of the vernacular as a way of understanding the conditioning factors, both social and material, that shaped architecture. In summary, Távora values the vernacular house and its analysis as a point of departure to innovate and add to the past something new – continuity and not stagnation.

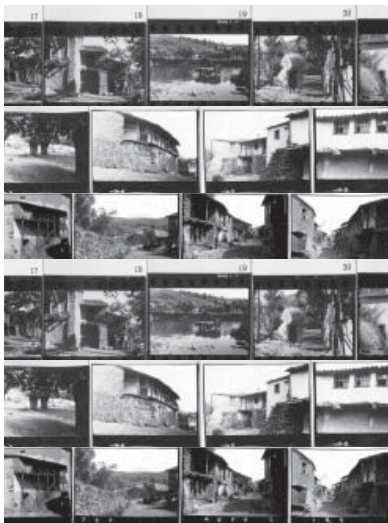


Fig. 2.5. Cover of the national survey entitled “Arquitetura Popular em Portugal”

Fig. 2.6. Photographs of the survey

The polemic debate surrounding the Portuguese house eventually led to the *Inquérito à Arquitectura Popular Portuguesa* (Survey of Vernacular Portuguese Architecture) in 1955. Leading the nationwide survey is Portuguese architect Francisco Keil do Amaral (1910-1975) and the Syndicate of Architects in Lisbon. This national survey of vernacular architecture extended across Portugal and aimed to characterize and document the regions being studied, including topography, geology, and climate; division of property; built fabric; economy; history and culture; and to analyse typologies of individual and agglomerated vernacular buildings: programme, materials, construction process, and any other information pertaining to the immediate built setting.⁶

After three months, thousands of pictures, and pages filled with notes and sketches would all serve to create the two volumes entitled *Arquitetura Popular em Portugal* (Vernacular Architecture in Portugal), in which Keil de Amaral publishes the following conclusion: “There doesn’t exist, at all, a Portuguese architecture or a ‘Portuguese house’.”⁷ The incredible diversity of vernacular typologies, situations and conditions encountered across Portugal completely debunked the notion of a “national vernacular” or of a “*Casa Portuguesa*.” In accord with Távora, the Survey of Vernacular Portuguese Architecture demonstrated that the vernacular houses were a product of their region, climate, materials and social conditions.

Similarly, thirty years later, under entirely different political circumstances (as the revolution of 1974 had ended the dictatorial regime in Portugal) a survey of vernacular architecture was done in the Azores. The report came to comparable conclusions: each individual island has a wide variety of typologies. Furthermore, this analysis serves to denounce certain notions that direct relations could be made with continental typologies brought over by the first settlers. The reinterpretation in an insular context ended up blurring any existing relationship to the different regions of continental Portugal.⁸ The vernacular architecture in the Azores also confirms

what was established by Távora and Keil do Amaral: the vernacular is the result of a region, available materials, and its people.

Although it became evident that there was not and could not be such a thing as a “national vernacular,” and that Portuguese architecture was not an assembly of aesthetic elements, Keil do Amaral would eventually identify, in his opinion, the most unifying factor of Portuguese vernacular architecture to be: “the ‘ability to overcome the material bases’, that is, the ability to, from greedy programs, poor materials, cramped spaces, to achieve buildings of great emotional content and, from them, clusters of rare beauty.”⁹

In conclusion, the vernacular architecture of Portugal is an inseparable part of the architectural heritage of its people and its region and can provide valuable insight for contemporary domestic architecture. However, how this architectural heritage evolves and is incorporated into the contemporary rural and urban fabric will certainly be dependent – as it was for its development – on the current regional, social and economic conditions in which it is found.

(Right)
The fado “Uma Casa Portuguesa”
(A Portuguese House), 1953,
composed by Artur Fonseca and
song by the world renowned
fadista Amália Rodrigues became
throughout the nation and is still
widely recognized today.

Although one cannot attribute
the composition of the song to
the influences of Salazar’s New
State, the nationalist ideal of the
Portuguese house is evident.

Uma Casa Portuguesa A Portuguese House

*Numa casa portuguesa fica bem
Pão e vinho sobre a mesa
E se à porta humildemente bate alguém,
Senta-se à mesa com a gente
Fica bem essa fraqueza, fica bem,
Que o povo nunca a desmente
A alegria da pobreza
Está nesta grande riqueza
De dar, e ficar contente*

In a portuguese home, it looks good
to have bread and wine on the table.
and if someone humbly knocks at the door,
we invite them to sit at the table with us
This frankness looks good, so good,
the frankness which people never deny
the joy of poverty
is this great richness
of being generous and feeling happy

*Quatro paredes caiadas,
Um cheirinho à alecrim,
Um cacho de uvas doiradas,
Duas rosas num jardim,
Um São José de azulejo
Mais o sol da primavera,
Uma promessa de beijos
Dois braços à minha espera
É uma casa portuguesa, com certeza!
É, com certeza, uma casa portuguesa!*

Four whitewashed walls,
a sweet smell of rosemary,
a bunch of golden grapes
two roses in a garden,
a statue of St. Joseph in ceramics
and the sun of the spring
a promise of finding kisses
two open arms waiting for me
This is a portuguese home, certainly!
This is, surely, a portuguese home!

*No conforto pobrezinho do meu lar,
Há fartura de carinho
A cortina da janela e o luar,
Mais o sol que bate nela
Basta pouco, pouquinho pra alegrar
Uma existência singela
É só amor, pão e vinho
E um caldo verde, verdinho
A fumejar na tijela*

In the humble comfort of my home,
there is the plenty of affection.
and the curtain of the window is the moonlight,
and also the sun, that shines on it ...
Just a little is enough to cheer
such a simple existence
It's simply love, bread and wine
and the cabbage soup, so greenish
smoking from the bowl.

*Quatro paredes caiadas,
Um cheirinho à alecrim,
Um cacho de uvas doiradas,
Duas rosas num jardim,
Um São José de azulejo
Mais o sol da primavera,
Uma promessa de beijos
Dois braços à minha espera
É uma casa portuguesa, com certeza!
É, com certeza, uma casa portuguesa!*

Four whitewashed walls,
a sweet smell of rosemary,
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a statue of St. Joseph in ceramics
and the sun of the spring
a promise of finding kisses
two open arms waiting for me
This is a portuguese home, certainly!
This is, surely, a portuguese home!

*É uma casa portuguesa, com certeza!
É, com certeza, uma casa portuguesa!*

This is a portuguese home, certainly!
This is, surely, a portuguese home!

ENDNOTES

Part Two: From the “Casa Portuguesa” to the “Inquérito”

- 1 João Leal, *Arquitectos, Engenheiros, Antropólogos: Estudos sobre arquitectura popular no século XX português* (Porto: Fundação Instituto Arquitecto José Marques da Silva, 2009), 6.
- 2 Paulo Tormenta, “Fernando Távora – Do problema da casa portuguesa, à casa de Férias de Ofir, *DC Revista de crítica arquitectónica*, no. 9-10, (2003): 63.
- 3 “*O arquitecto portanto, bom conhecedor do idioma do seu país, terá de ir criando no emprêgo desta linguagem plástica os neologismos necessários, e tratará do aportuguesamento das formas cuja importação é inevitável na evolução de todas as coisas. Não usará de arcaísmos mas opor-se-á a tudo que tenda à desnacionalização da nossa arquitectura domestica.*”
Raúl Lino, *Casas Portuguesas – alguns apontamentos sobre os arquitectar das casas simples*, 3.^a ed. (Lisboa: Valentim de Carvalho, 1943), 70.
- 4 Fernando Távora, “O Problema da Casa Portuguesa,” *Cadernos de Arquitectura*, Lisboa, 1947, 8-9.
- 5 “*É indispensável que na história das nossas casas antigas ou populares se determinem as condições que as criaram e desenvolveram, fossem elas condições do homem, e se estudem os modos como os materiais se empregarem e satisfizeram as necessidades de cada momento. A casa popular fornecer-nos-á grandes lições quando devidamente estudada, pois ela é a mais funcional e a menos fantasiosa [...]*”
Ibid, 11.
- 6 Francisco Caetano Keil do Amaral, Irisalva Moita, e Ana Tostões, “Keil do Amaral e o Sindicato dos Arquitectos,” in *Keil do Amaral: o arquitecto e o humanista* (Lisboa: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, 1999), 117.
- 7 “*Não existe, de todo, uma arquitectura portuguesa ou uma ‘casa portuguesa’.*”
Ibid, 118.
- 8 Ana Tostões et al., *Arquitectura Popular dos Açores*, 2.^a ed. (Lisboa: Ordem dos Arquitectos, 2007), 541.
- 9 *a “capacidade de superação das bases materiais”, ou seja, a aptidão para, a partir de programas avaros, de materiais pobres, de espaços exíguos, conseguir edifícios de grande conteúdo emotivo e, a partir deles, conjuntos de rara beleza.*
Keil do Amaral, Moita, e Tostões, *Keil do Amaral*, 118.

MIGRATORY EXPERIENCE

Fig. 2.7.

NORTHERN PORTUGAL

Vernacular House:
left behind by
emigrants

Urban House:
in destination
country
(France)

Dream House:
new house built by
returning emigrants
(Village of origin)



Vernacular House:
left behind by
emigrants

Urban House:
in destination
country
(Ex: Toronto)

Dream House:
house acquired in
destination country
(Suburbs)

Return Migration

AZORES

THE MIGRATORY EXPERIENCE AND THE “DREAM HOUSE”

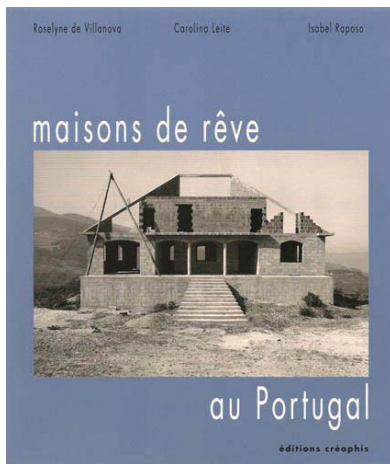


Fig. 2.8. Cover of “Maisons de rêve au Portugal”

“Maisons de rêve au Portugal” (Dream Houses in Portugal), co-authored by Roselyne de Villanova, Carolina Leite and Isabel Raposo, documents and analysis the phenomenon of emigrant architecture in the rural towns of Northern Portugal in the second half of the 20th century, providing invaluable insight into the entirety of the construction process of these houses, from the migratory experience to the typological analysis – going far beyond the aesthetic critique.

Emigration throughout the twentieth century from Portugal has not only been an important part of the country’s history, but has had a profound impact on the urban and rural area’s architecture. Many thousands of Portuguese men and women from the rural areas of continental Portugal emigrated to countries like France, Germany and Switzerland with the objective of returning to Portugal to build their house. The new houses being built by the returning emigrants were very different from the traditional vernacular models – in size, shape, typology and materials – often sparking debate based solely on their aesthetic value. The “House of the Brazilian”, built by Portuguese emigrants returning from Brazil and the predecessor of the “House of the French”, was initially critiqued by local authorities and professionals for being too visible, too decorated and incongruous with the surrounding rural landscape.¹

Social critique followed the aesthetic and formal critique of the house, where the way of life of the returning emigrants became the object of criticism for no longer coinciding with the dominant rural lifestyle.² In effect, many emigrants were choosing to build on new plots of land located on the periphery of their native village. There was indeed a willingness to break certain ties with the lifestyle and vernacular architecture that was left behind: the house of the emigrant – the house that motivated emigration – was the crystallisation of the change to a better lifestyle and ascension in social status.³ Many returning emigrants argued for the right to build a house that reflected their desires. Consequently, the rehabilitation of traditional or vernacular houses was rare.

Roselyne de Villanova, Carolina Leite and Isabel Raposo argue and demonstrate in their book *Maison de rêve au Portugal* (Dream Houses in Portugal) that the purely aesthetic and social critique ignores the migratory experience of the emigrants - the new urban practices gained, and rural practices retained – that shaped their new “dream houses”. As Vilanova explains:

“We wished to go beyond the esthetic point of view of an object of limited use (some houses remain closed eleven months out of twelve) to find a good filled with values, not only financial, but where are crossed influences of rural and urban cultures, artisanal and industrial techniques, traditional and modern uses.”⁴

What their study demonstrated is that the migratory experiences lead to an accumulation of both rural practices and urban practices, which manifest in the “dream houses” that were built in Portugal. These houses were not only the aesthetic manifestation of a change in lifestyle or social status, but embodied new urban domestic spaces and comforts as well as new materials and influences from the destination country of the emigrant.

There are many parallels to be drawn between the emigrants of northern Portugal in France and the Azorean emigrants in Canada. As demonstrated in *“Maison de rêve au Portugal”*, the emigration from rural areas and arrival in urban centers does not erase rural practices. In fact, groups of Portuguese women that lived in apartment urban centers like Paris often rented small plots of land to keep vegetable gardens, not for economic reasons but for the enjoyment or habit of contact with the earth.⁵ Similarly, the transpositions of rural habits are seen in Portuguese and Azorean communities in Toronto. Emigrants that traveled back to their homeland or home-island would often bring back seeds for flowers and vegetables to plant in their small front or back yards, recreating the Portuguese rural atmosphere in which they could maintain a close contact with the earth and use their agricultural skills.⁶ North American urban rules allowed for a greater freedom in terms of cultural expression than in France. In Kensington market, many of the houses of Portuguese and Azorean emigrant could be identified by their bright colours, vegetable and flower gardens, as well as religious iconography.

The passage through urban life also significantly marks the “dream house” built by the emigrants in northern Portugal, beyond the eclectic aesthetics of the new constructions. Raposo explains:

“The migrant generally knows what changes he wants for the interior in contrast to the rural house where he lived before leaving. He wants a spacious and comfortable dwelling; he chooses to introduce all the functional changes that will give it urban characteristics. He wishes to keep

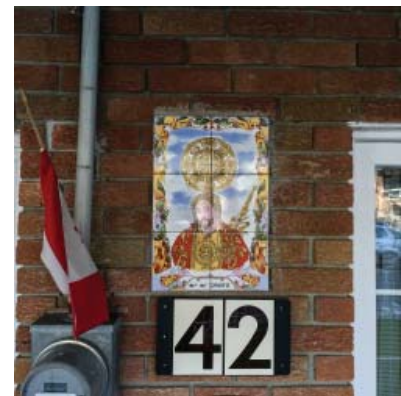


Fig. 2.9., Fig. 2.10. Traditional Portuguese tiles depicting saints in Little Portugal, Toronto

the ground floor, characteristic of the country's rural houses, but for new functions, including a large garage. On the first floor, he wants an entrance that opens on to a vestibule or a hallway that reaches all the rooms of the house. He wants a spacious and luminous living room, with a corner for the fireplace, the couches, and a dining area for the dining room furniture. He always wants a big kitchen, well lit, with modern equipment. Finally, he wants large bedrooms that are well lit, and a modern bathroom.”⁷

It is clear that life in the destination country provides the returning emigrant with new urban practices, which manifest themselves in the spatial organization of the new houses. New spaces are created that did not and could not exist in the old vernacular houses. Certain regional characteristics or spaces are kept or changed to accommodate new functions. However, the introduction of new ‘urban spaces’ in the new ‘dream house’ does not remove the need for ‘rural spaces’ to cater to the rural practices that are retained. In effect, certain spaces will be doubled in order to cater to both urban and rural need: a kitchen that is used daily where the products of the garden can be taken, and a kitchen for guests that is rarely used; an entrance that is most commonly used in daily life that leads to the kitchen, and an entrance that leads into the living spaces. If these rural needs are not met in the new house, annexes and additions will be built after the house is complete.



Fig. 2.11. Azorean immigrants in fully renovated basement dining room

Retention of rural practices is also manifest within the Azorean immigrant community in Canada through the acquisition and ownership of a ‘dream house’ in the suburbs; homeownership and property ownership were amongst the biggest priorities of Azorean and Portuguese immigrants in Canada.⁸ After the more spacious house, with more green space or larger back yard, was purchased, the renovation of the basement followed. A second kitchen – the one most used – was often added to the basement, as well as a wine cellar, bar and a living area in which many Portuguese families would spend most of their time.⁹ Furthermore, the ‘dream house’ in the suburb became the material and symbolic rooting in the destination country.¹⁰

This is perhaps the biggest contrast between the emigrants from northern Portugal who went to France and the Azorean emigrants: the emigrants from northern Portugal that left with the intention of returning to Portugal to build their dream house could do so while still living in France and going back and forth with relative frequency to build their house bit by bit, while the Azorean emigrants that left the Azores – to improve their quality of life and

not necessarily to build their dream house – acquired their ‘dream house’ in Canada due to the geographic distance between the Azores and North America. This is not to say that Azorean immigrants have no desire to have a house in the Azores. In fact, many chose to keep their properties in the Azores before emigrating, the result of which is hundreds of decaying houses, and many are applying their savings when returning to the Azores to purchase or maintain current property.¹¹

(Right)
Traditional fado that speaks to the
desire to die in Portugal.

It is evident that the passage through urban life and social ascension resulting from emigration has had a profound impact on the new houses built by returning emigrants in Portugal. It is essential to recognise the cumulative knowledge gained through the migratory experience to understand the nature of these new houses beyond the aesthetic critique, and to be able to cater to the needs and desires of returning emigrants, especially in rural areas. As Leite notes:

“[...] these houses respond more to a situation of compromise between the imprints of a lived rural experience and the elements of a different economic and cultural world, that of emigration. These rural links are so strong that they will rarely allow for a definitive rupture of the motherland.”¹²

In effect, even though the distance caused by emigration – particularly in the case of the Azorean emigrants – and the social ascension brought on by stronger economic condition may have caused the rupture of certain rural ties, many rural practices have remained with the cultural and emotional ties to the homeland.

Prece Prayer

<i>Talvez que eu morra na praia Cercada em pérfido banho Por toda a espuma da praia Como um pastor que desmaia No meio do seu rebanho</i>	Perhaps I'll die on the beach Surrounded in a perfidious bath Of all the foam on the beach Like a shepherd faints In the midst of his flock.
<i>Talvez que eu morra na rua E dê por mim de repente Em noite fria e sem luar Irmã das pedras da rua Pisadas por toda a gente</i>	Perhaps I'll die on the street Finding myself suddenly On a cold and moonless night Among the rocks on the street Trodden by everyone.
<i>Talvez que eu morra entre grades No meio de uma prisão E que o mundo além das grades Venha esquecer as saudades Que roem meu coração</i>	Perhaps I'll die between bars In the middle of a prison Because the world beyond the bars Will forget the longing That gnawed at my heart.
<i>Talvez que eu morra no leito Onde a morte é natural As mãos em cruz sobre o peito Das mãos de Deus tudo aceito Mas que eu morra em Portugal</i>	Perhaps I'll die in bed Where a death is natural Hands crossed over my chest From God's hands I accept all As long as I die in Portugal.

ENDNOTES

Part Two: The Migratory Experience and the Dream House

- 1 Roselyne de Vilanova, Carolina Leite, et Isabel Raposo, *Maison de rêve au Portugal* (Paris : Editions Créaphis, 1994), 172-173.
- 2 Ibid, 182.
- 3 Ibid, 68.
- 4 « Nous avons voulu dépasser le point de vue esthétique sur un objet à usage limité (certaines maisons sont fermées onze mois sur douze) pour retrouver un bien chargé de valeurs, pas seulement financières, où se croisent les influences des cultures rurales/urbaines, des techniques artisanales/industrialisées, des usages traditionnels/modernes. »
Ibid, 15.
- 5 Ibid, 91.
- 6 Carlos Teixeira and Robert A. Murdie, “On the Move: The Portuguese in Toronto,” in *The Portuguese in Canada – Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed., ed. Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 191.
- 7 Vilanova, Leite, et Raposo, *Maison de rêve au Portugal*, 136.
- 8 Carlos Teixeira, “A Comparative Study of Portuguese Homebuyers’ Suburbanization in the Toronto and Montreal Areas”, *Espace, populations, sociétés*, 2006/1 (2006): 121-135.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 John Warkentin, “Reflections on a Society in Rapid Transition,” in *The Portuguese in Canada – Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed., ed. Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 290.
- 11 Gilberta Pavão Nunes Rocha, Eduardo Ferreira, and Derrick Mendes, *Between Two Worlds – Emigration and Return to the Azores*, trans. Nuno Pavão Nunes (Azores: Government of the Azores, 2011), 130.
- 12 “(...) ces maison répondent davantage à une situation de compromis entre les marques d’une expérience rurale vécue et le éléments d’un univers économique et culturel autre, celui de l’émigration. Ces liens ruraux sont forts au point d’admettre rarement la rupture définitive avec la terre mère. ”
Vilanova, Leite, et Raposo, *Maison de rêve au Portugal*, 182.

For the many Azorean emigrants still have property on their home islands, the many years of life away from the Azores has resulted in the advanced degradation the properties and houses. The emigrants that are now returning to the Azores are generally, in contrast to the Portuguese emigrants of northern Portugal, not seeking to build their dream house, but have a vested interest in taking care of their property or purchasing a new house.¹

The greater proportion of returning emigrants identify themselves as retired, and the return may follow various formats: only to spend holidays, to spend the winter months or half of the year, and in some cases permanent return is done in one trip. Their expectations are not dissimilar to that of the returning emigrants of northern Portugal. The migratory experience through the urban North American context has given new urban practice and contemporary expectations of comfort that Azorean emigrants will project, not on a dream house, but on the properties that were left behind: vernacular houses in advanced stages of decay.

These expectations may seem irreconcilable with their properties, much like it proved to be for some of the continental emigrants who did not wish to return to their small traditional houses.² Azorean emigrants may feel that the only alternatives that are presented to them is to demolish the traditional houses that currently stands on their property – in whatever state they may be – and built a new house to their contemporary taste, or leave the property as it is and buy a new plot of land unto which a new house can be built. In the first scenario, the Azores are confronted with the loss of a great part of their architectural heritage. In the second scenario, the Azores are left in a similar condition as the current one: thousands of abandoned houses in the Azorean rural fabric, and in both cases new houses are built that will most certainly end up being constructed with the same mistakes.

The scenario of historical restoration is less than likely: based on the case-study of continental emigrants, restoration of

traditional homes was almost never a chosen option³, and in the Azorean context where the traditional houses have undergone significant decay, the chances are even less likely. Historical restoration – a restoration to the state of the house at the time of emigration – would in effect ignore and dismiss the cumulation of urban practice gained through the migratory experience. However, this is not to say that the current vernacular houses hold no value or potential to cater to some of the needs of the returning diaspora.

In 1903, Austrian art-historian and philosopher Alois Riegl (1858-1905) wrote an article entitled “*The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and Its Development*” discussing the values systems regarding the conservation of architecture and monuments. Riegl outlines three types of monuments: the intentional or deliberate monument, the unintentional or historical monument, and the age value monument. In the case of the abandoned vernacular houses of the Azores, the third category is of particular interest. Age value, as defined by Riegl, arises from the effects of time and decay on the completeness of an object, resulting in incompleteness and dissolution.⁴

Furthermore, Riegl argues that age value provides “aesthetic satisfaction not from the stasis of preservation but from the continuous and unceasing cycles of change in nature”⁵ and is therefore made accessible as a value system to everyone since it does not require historical or scientific intellect.⁶ Thus, the abandoned vernacular houses in the Azores could be attributed an age value, not based on aesthetic principles as outlined by Raul Lino, but perhaps closer to Fernando Távora’s appreciation of continuity, contemporaneity and the vernacular’s ability to be the result of material and social condition. In this case, the decayed aspect of the houses have been conditioned by the material nature of the houses and the long period of vacancy due to emigration.

The challenges posed by the application of age value on the abandoned houses is in the amount of decay a house can undergo before achieving complete ruination and losing a level of recognition: the control over decay. Age value also finds itself challenged in the desire for new materials or new constructions. “Newness value”, as per Riegl, is the appreciation of what is new and complete and consequently avoids at all costs any signs of age or decay.⁷ However, newness value is difficult to achieve in the Azorean context because of established cycles of occupation, and the inability of new materials to age well, or gain “age value” since they strive for the opposite. An example of the latter can be understood through the “contemporary ruins” that have little to no age value appeal because they have not yet undergone the temporal transformation that is required to give them the aesthetic appeal of

aged vernacular homes. Instead, they speak to the premature death of a project that was meant for permanence – the association is made to a death that is still of the observer’s own time and not to times long gone.

Historically, preservation has proved to be problematic with the integration of the new urban practices brought back with the returning emigrants – aesthetically and socially - as it usually only addressed historical restoration, or imposed restrictions on interventions made to traditional buildings. Legislations were put in place by rural municipalities to address the loss of cultural heritage, built heritage, and character of the rural landscapes.

The ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) have, since the early 1930’s, written charters on conservation and restoration. The *Athens Charter of 1931* addresses the restoration of historic monuments and attempts to establish the legislative measures that should be implemented in regards to restoration and conservation. The charter also recommends the occupation of buildings to insure the continuity of use of the building but recommends that the buildings or monuments be used for purposes that respect their historic character⁸, much like Riegl’s “use value”. However, Riegl’s use value only speaks to practical use and does not specify the nature of use – whether it respects the historic character or not – but does say that from the standpoint of use value only, anything can be done to the building as long as it remains used.⁹

In regards to the restoration of monuments, the Athens Charter does advocate for the use of new materials and modern techniques. A shift occurs from the monument, to the monument and its context in *The Venice Charter of 1964* and *Washington Charter of 1987*. In fact, the first article of the Venice Charter states:

“The concept of a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event. This applies not only to great works of art but also to more modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.”¹⁰

This simultaneously extends the value and concern for the monument beyond itself and recognizes the value of its context, echoing what is established by the *Inquérito à Arquitectura Regional Portuguesa* – the vernacular house being inseparable from its conditioning region, climate and social context – and reiterates Riegl’s principles of age value. The Washington Charter, specifically

addressing the conservation of towns and urban areas, extends its principles and objectives to the natural and man-made environments and their harmonious adaptation to contemporary life.¹¹ Both charters encourage the integration and addition of contemporary elements insofar as they entertain harmonious and balanced relationships – from parts of the building to the surroundings.

Finally, conservation and preservation of vernacular architecture and place are addressed in the *Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage* in 1999 and the *Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place* in 2008. Like the previous charters, the charter of 1999 addresses the inevitability of change and developments. The charter states that contemporary work should respect cultural values and traditional character of the vernacular buildings, and establishes that the introduction of new materials and any adaptations made should respect the integrity of the structure, its form and character.¹² Furthermore, the charter states: “The vernacular embraces not only the physical form and fabric of buildings, structures and spaces, but the ways in which they are used and understood, and the traditions and the intangible associations which attach to them.”¹³ This principle not only reiterates the thoughts of Fernando Távora and Francisco Keil do Amaral, but also confirms the value of rural/urban practices and social constructs established in the case study *Maisons de rêve au Portugal*. The Québec Declaration of 2008 affirms that the intangible nature of monuments and buildings also extends to place – spirit of place – and that intangible cultural heritage is an inextricable part of heritage as a whole.¹⁴ The declaration defines spirit of place as:

“the tangible (buildings, sites, landscapes, routes, objects) and the intangible elements (memories, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colors, odors, etc.), that is to say the physical and the spiritual elements that give meaning, value, emotion and mystery to place.”¹⁵

In effect, the Québec declaration argues for the safeguard and transmission of spirit of place as essential in the efforts of conservation and preservation of built heritage.

Preservation and conservation principles can embrace the current condition of the decaying vernacular house in the Azores. Moreover, preservation and conservation intentions should not be limited to the tectonics of the house but expanded to embrace the intangible

cultural ties and practices associated with the spaces embedded within the house. Change and evolution can be embraced as part of attempts to preserve the architectural heritage, and in doing so, also cater to the returning migrants and their needs.

ENDNOTES

Part Two: Conservation, Preservation and the Vernacular

- 1 Gilberta Pavão Nunes Rocha, Eduardo Ferreira, and Derrick Mendes, *Between Two Worlds – Emigration and Return to the Azores*, trans. Nuno Pavão Nunes (Azores: Government of the Azores, 2011), 130.
- 2 Roselyne de Vilanova, Carolina Leite, et Isabel Raposo, *Maison de rêve au Portugal* (Paris : Editions Créaphis, 1994), 10.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Alois Riegl, “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and Its Development,” in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Nicholas Stanley Price, M. Kirby Talley Jr., and Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996), 73.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid, 74.
- 7 Ibid, 80.
- 8 ICOMOS, “Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments,” adopted at the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments (Athens: ICOMOS, 1931).
- 9 Riegl, “The Modern Cult of Monuments,” 79.
- 10 ICOMOS, “International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites – The Venice Charter 1964,” adopted at the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments (Venice: ICOMOS, 1964-65).
- 11 ICOMOS, “Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas – Washington Charter 1987,” adopted by the ICOMOS General Assembly (Washington: ICOMOS, 1987).
- 12 ICOMOS, “Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage – 1999,” ratified by the 12th General Assembly of ICOMOS (Mexico: ICOMOS, 1999)
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 ICOMOS, “Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place,” adopted at the 16th General Assembly of ICOMOS (Québec: ICOMOS, 2008).
- 15 Ibid.



Graciosa

Terceira

São Jorge

REOCCUPATION

Part Three



São Miguel

Santa Maria



MIGRATORY EXPERIENCE

Fig. 3.1.

NORTHERN PORTUGAL

Vernacular House:
left behind by
emigrants

Urban House:
in destination
country
(France)

Dream House:
new house built by
returning emigrants
(Village of origin)

- Design -



Vernacular House:
left behind by
emigrants

Urban House:
in destination
country
(Ex: Toronto)

Dream House:
house acquired in
destination country
(Suburbs)

Vernacular House:
reoccupation of the
house that was left
behind
(Azores)

AZORES

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

In considering the reoccupation of abandoned vernacular houses we must include the aspects of contemporary Azorean life, both in and out of the islands. While allowing for the retention of rural practices, the migratory experience has shaped the returning emigrants with new contemporary urban expectations. The interventions on decayed pre-existing houses must go beyond mere renovation or restoration. There must be a harmonious dialogue between old and new forms. When designing, materials must be carefully chosen to reflect both the existing context and the desire for rupture from what was left behind. Issues of sustainability and material cycles must be brought to the forefront of the design discourse.

The following architectural principles and strategies for adapting these vernacular ruins to support the returning diaspora, and future generations, are established based on the extensive analysis of current conditions, the acknowledgement of the migratory experience of the returning emigrants, and a desire to reimagine the mythology of the vernacular Azorean house, merging traditional architecture and cultural practices with contemporary expectations.

Rural and Urban Practices

As demonstrated by the emigrants of northern Portugal in France as well as the Azorean emigrants in Toronto and Montreal, rural practices are maintained in the destination country: the attachment to working the land will manifest in the planting of small flower and vegetable gardens even in the most urban of contexts. The retention of language and culture is also evident. The celebration of religious festivals, bands and philharmonic groups, socio-cultural associations all shape the Portuguese and Azorean communities abroad. Even the desire to own a house or property is tied to the rural notions of owning a piece of land. It is, however, through the renovations completed in new suburban houses in North America that we see best the manifestation of the persistent rural practices

and urban contemporary expectations of comforts.

The proposed design principles acknowledge that the pre-existing vernacular structures can accommodate many of the rural practices maintained by the returning emigrants, but also recognizes that many of the contemporary expectations cannot be met within the existing houses. Therefore, the program of the design interventions should reflect contemporary urban expectation of spaces (washrooms, laundry room, individual bedrooms, guest room, living rooms, contemporary kitchen, storage) but also include rural spaces (exterior cooking area or 2nd kitchen with door to the exterior garden, exterior eating area, shed or storage space, production space, garden or green spaces, 2nd entrance). This may take the form of single spaces that cater to both clean and work activities or the doubling of certain spaces (kitchens, entrances, work spaces). The traditional wood oven and chimney – almost always intact even in ruins at the most advanced stages of decay – is to be used in the interior cooking space or in an exterior cooking space. If used in an interior space, the chimney must be higher than the highest roof ridge. When appropriate, production spaces are to be kept active (cellars, workshops...) or built as annexes on the property (sheds), or agricultural spaces that no longer serve their purpose can be converted to living or private spaces. Dimensions of the spaces should aim to reflect contemporary expectations, in other words, larger spaces than traditional houses, and spaces should maximise natural light.

Old and New

The integration of supplementary volume is almost inevitable in any intervention upon pre-existing vernacular houses. This is not to say that there exists no vernacular houses in the Azores that can cater to contemporary, or North American, expectations of space. However, many rural houses can be as much as four times smaller than an average North American suburban house. Furthermore, many of the pre-existing program offers little private or communal space as a great portion of the vernacular structure was dedicated to agricultural program.

As the history of vernacular architecture in Portugal has demonstrated, the vernacular houses in the Azores, even in their state of decay, are an important part of the cultural heritage of the islands. New interventions must be harmoniously integrated, both in form and size, to the pre-existing built fabric. The dialogue between old and new should foster balance as opposed to contrast and new additions should not diminish the importance of the pre-existing volumes. The organic decay of the vernacular houses has revealed the passage of time, adding a rich patina of meaning and mythology. To cultivate the emotional and cultural ties that the

returning emigrants still have for their culture and home islands, an approach that encourages the layering of history is essential. As demonstrated by Távora, the vernacular should be a reflection of its time and the social conditions that shaped it. By maintaining the existing structure and current state of the ruin, we chose to embrace the narrative of emigration instead of negating it, and the addition of new volume reflects the richness of the life lived abroad. There should be no demolition of pre-existing construction, unless it is for a door between two interior spaces.

Materials

The Azores have an extremely rich pallet of materials: volcanic stone, clay and woods of many types. These materials have shaped everything, from public buildings and houses to pots and small tools. As evidenced by the survey of decaying buildings and the understanding of occupancy patterns, local materials lend themselves very well to what Riegl called “age value” – the ability for a material or object to gain value as it ages through weathering. One must also recognize that transatlantic travel has facilitated the access to new materials in the Azores and that many returning emigrants wish to manifest their success abroad through the integration of new materials.

In accepting and valuing decay and weathering as part of the cyclical nature of buildings in the Azores, the design principles promote the use of local materials as well as new materials that weather well in the Azorean climate. To encourage and foster local economies, traditional materials should be implemented when possible and used in new ways to stimulate innovation.

THE HOUSE OF THE GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

The Growing House

“CASA DA BISAVÓ”

The “*Casa da Bisavó*” is designed for the gradual return of the emigrant couple seeking to retire to Graciosa. The existing house, inherited from the emigrant’s mother, is slowly restored every year during the 6 months that the couple spends in the Azores. Since the property is fairly small, the existing shed of poor construction is demolished to make way for a garden. The first addition is built alongside the existing house: it maintains volumetric similarity to the existing volume, housing sleeping and living spaces. Formed concrete is chosen for the new volume for its weathering properties and plants are grown on the façade, creating a green wall that allows for the growing of fruits or flowers. Within the existing house, a contemporary kitchen is built incorporating the old wood oven and an exterior space is created within the existing house for dining and exterior cooking. As the grandchildren of the emigrants start spending their summers with their grandparents on Graciosa, a smaller wooden addition is built in the garden area. Every year, the roadside façade is repainted a new colour that fades and weathers over the year, marking the absence of the young visitors, who will one day inherit their grandparents’ house.

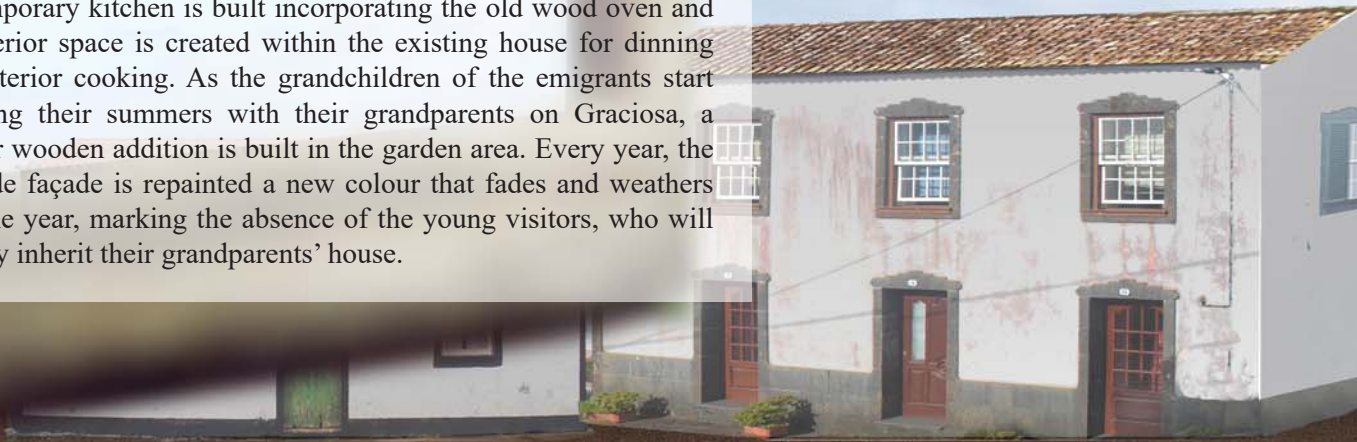






Fig. 3.3. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

Guadalupe

DATE OF SURVEY:

11 / 03 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Caminho das Grotas

CODE:

GD-CmG-003

TYOLOGY:

Linear with balcony

OBSERVATION:

- absence of entrance gate
- failure of roof structure
- damage to exterior stone walls
- remains of windows
- shed of poor construction
- overgrown vegetation

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

①

2

3

4

5



Fig. 3.4. Survey Information Sheet

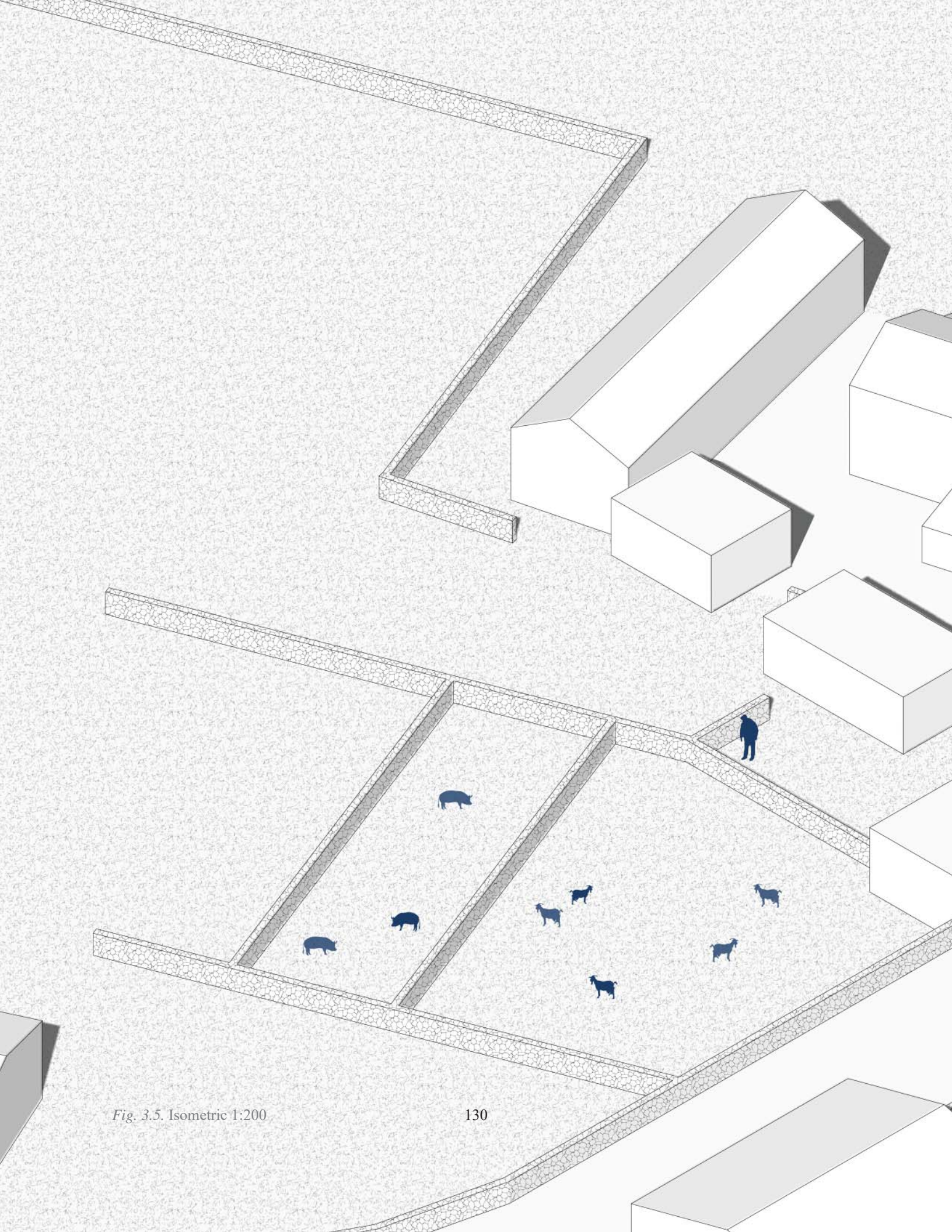
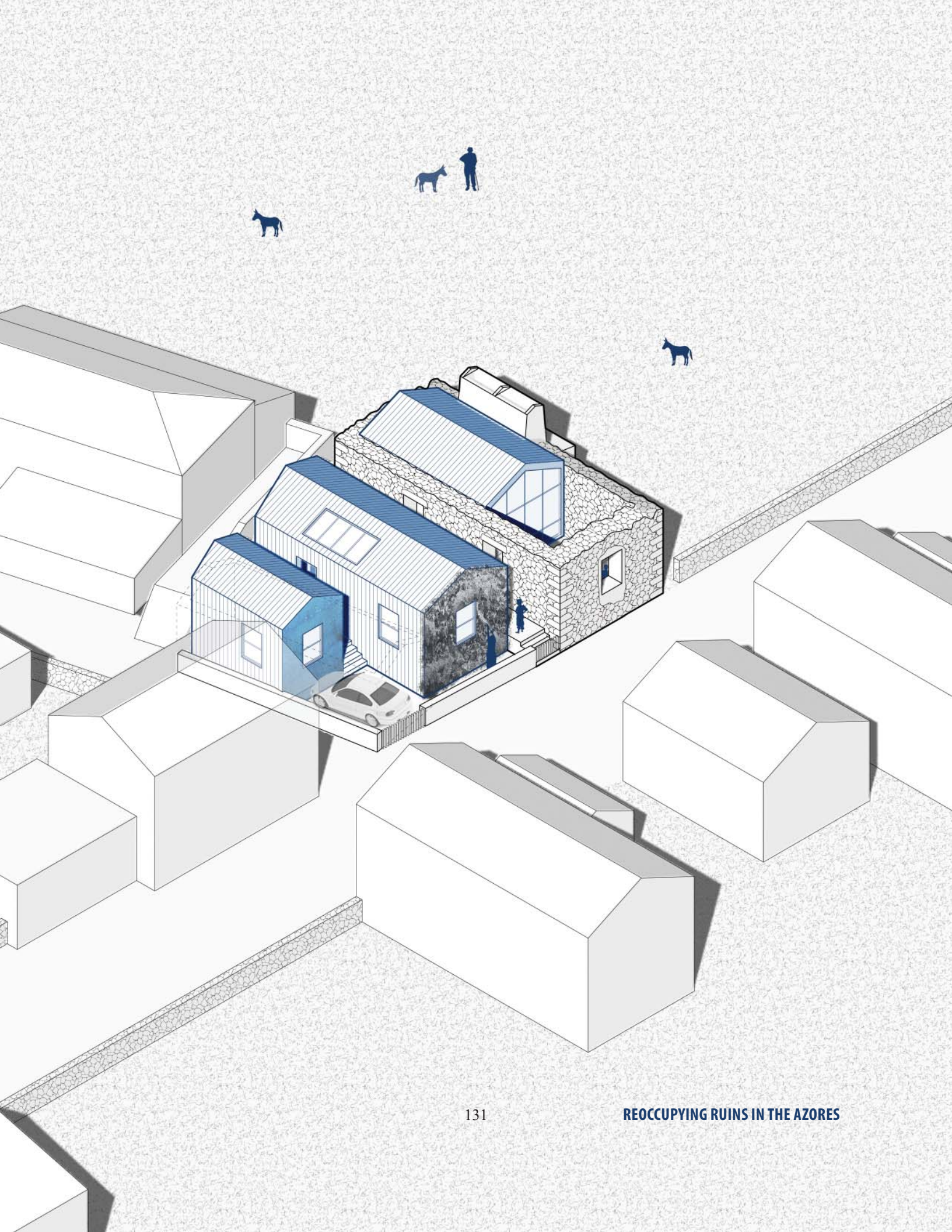


Fig. 3.5. Isometric 1:200



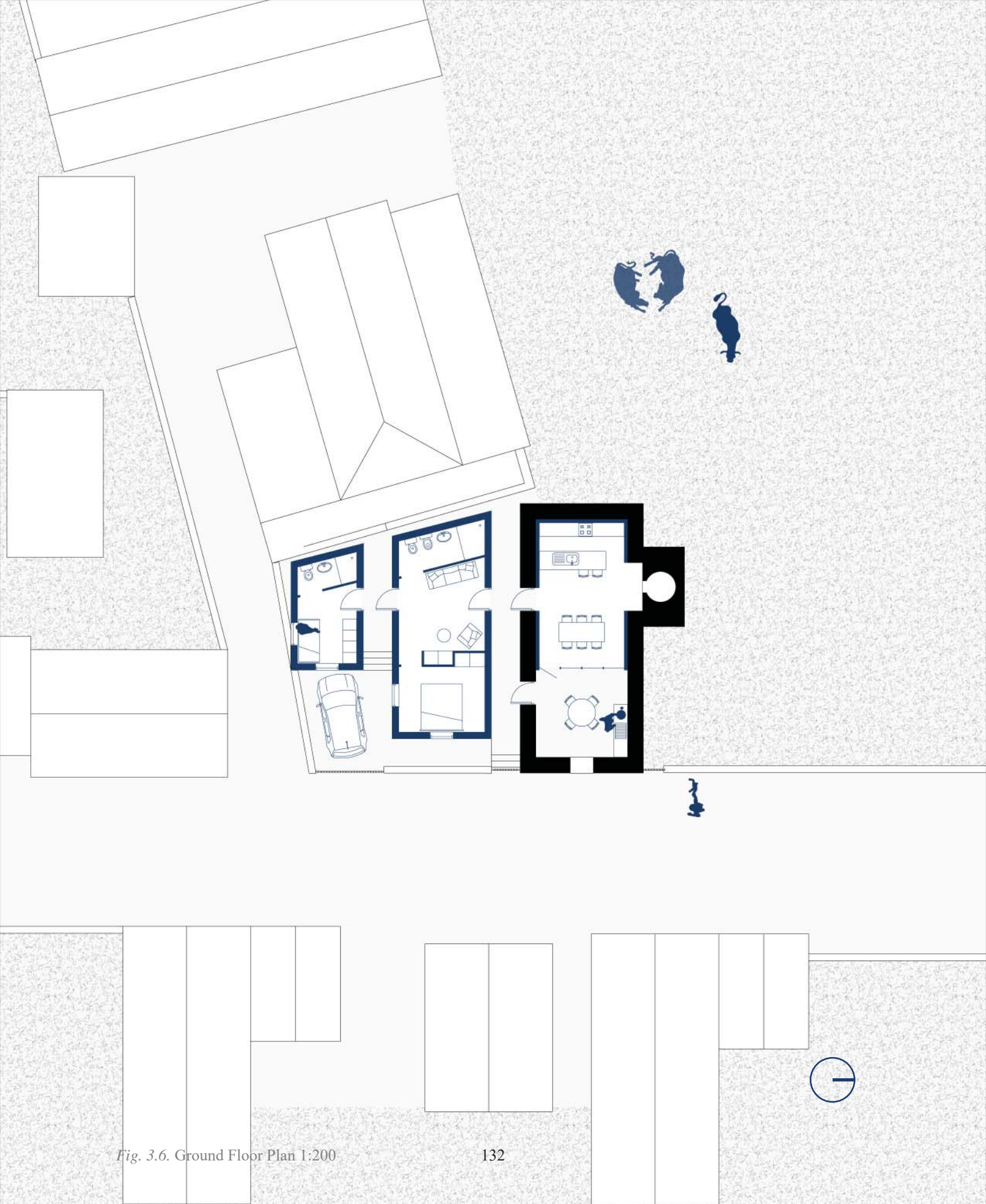


Fig. 3.6. Ground Floor Plan 1:200

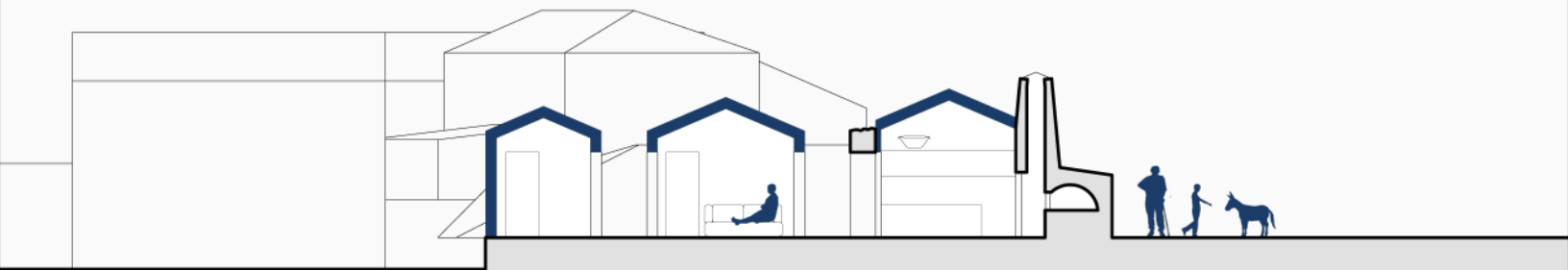


Fig. 3.7. Section 1:200

THE HOUSE OF THE GRANDFATHER

The Extension House

"CASA DO AVÔ"

The "*Casa do Avô*" is designed for the returning emigrant that wishes to retire to his homeland to pursue his passion: wine making. His life abroad never allowed him the leisure to grow and cultivate the grapes and figs needed to make wine and *aguardente*. A series of modular structural elements are added on the property to support the production of grapes as well as the additional production and domestic spaces required. Traditional tiles are used to create a new roof over the existing house: the roof changes from 4 slopes to 2, allowing more daylight into the existing volume. The wood oven is integrated into the contemporary kitchen. Wood is chosen to clad the new additional enclosed spaces: the wood is assembled and treated similarly to the barrels that hold the wine of the returning Azorean, and like the wine barrels, will age and weather to reflect its uses.



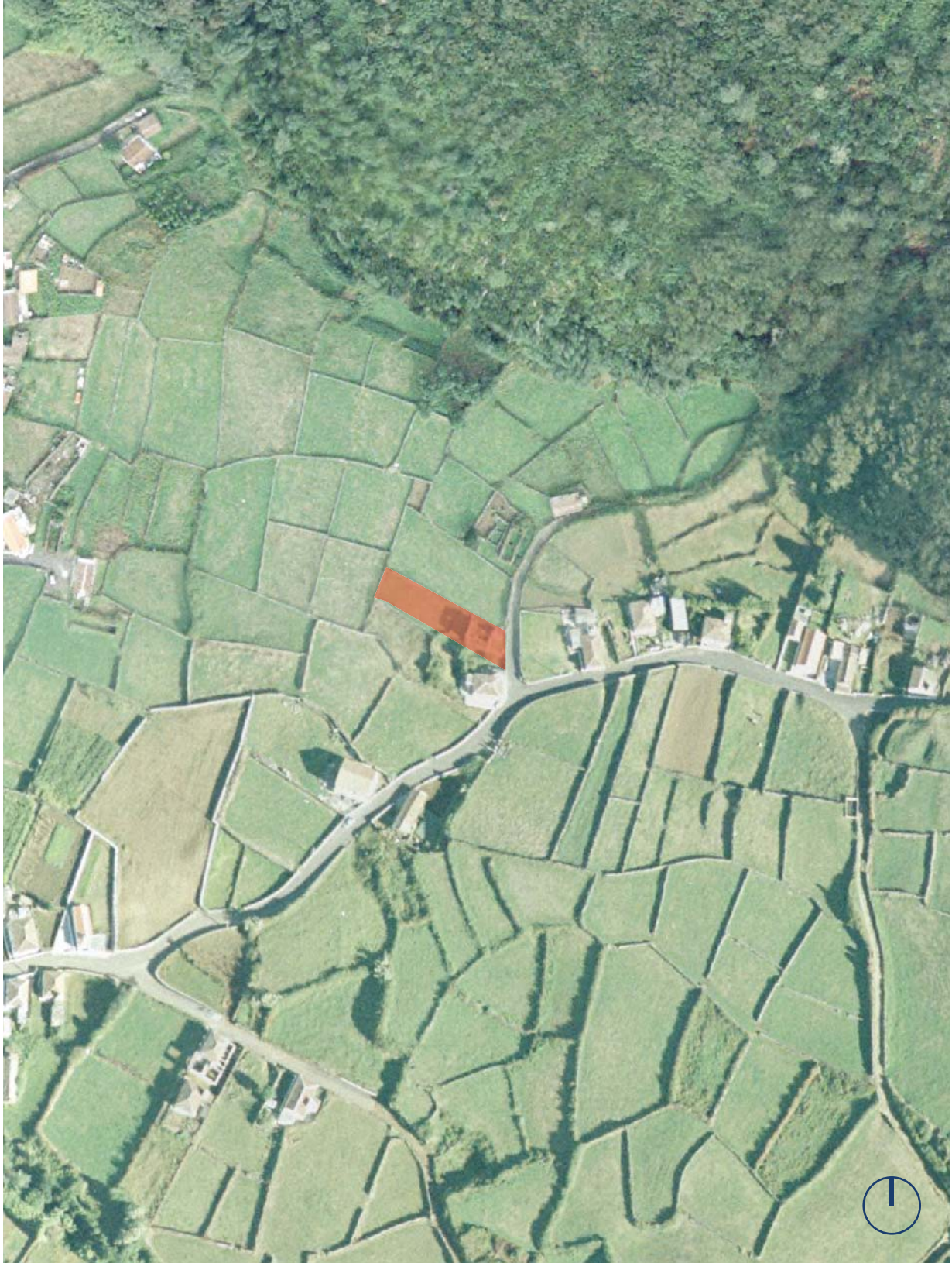


Fig. 3.9. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

Serreta

DATE OF SURVEY:

13 / 01 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Canada da Fonte

CODE:

SR-CnF-006

TPOLOGY:

Complexe, with int. shed

OBSERVATION:

- invasion by vegetation
- failure of roof structure
- stone construction
- absence of interior partition
- half story shed
- incredible view
- absence of entrance gate

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

1

2

3

4

5



Fig. 3.10. Survey Information Sheet

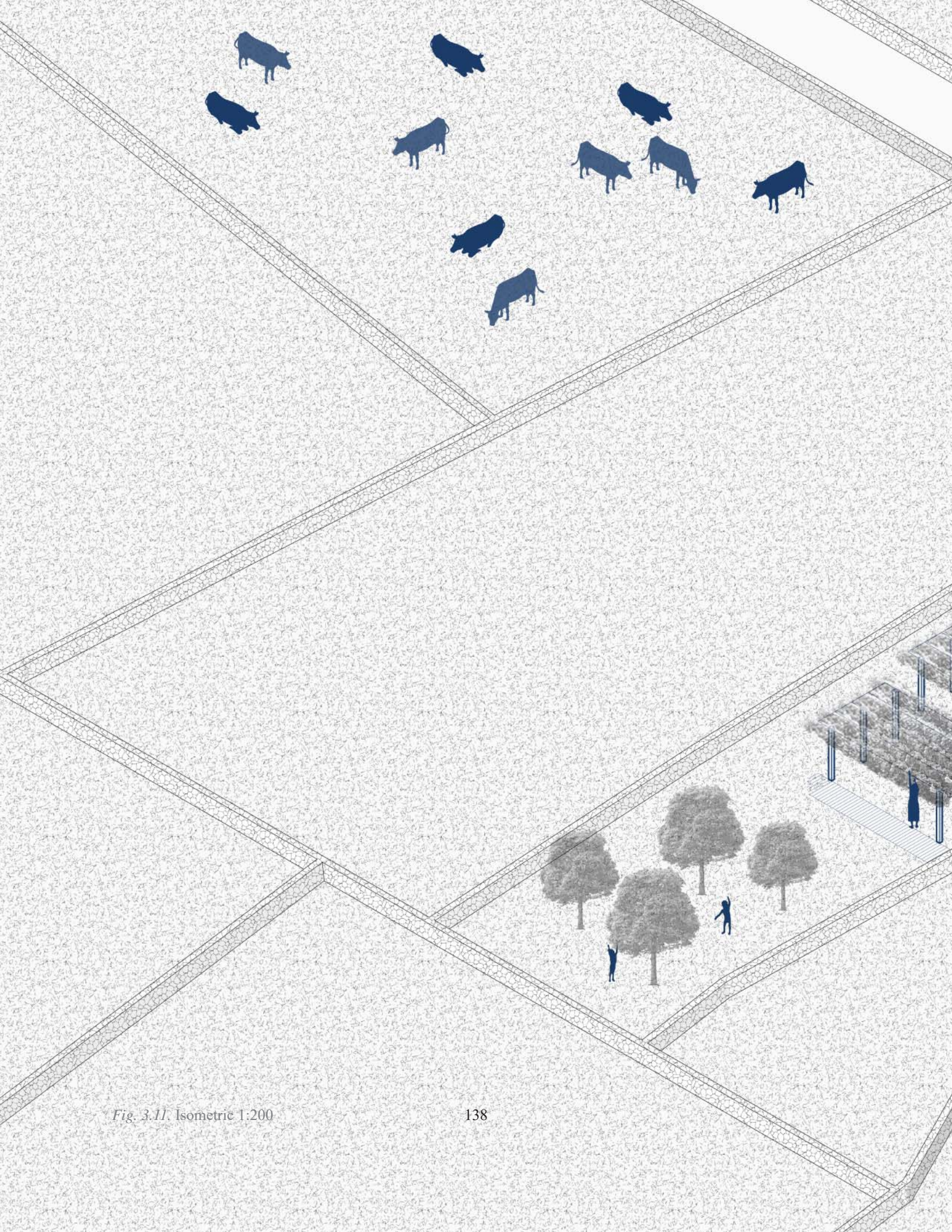
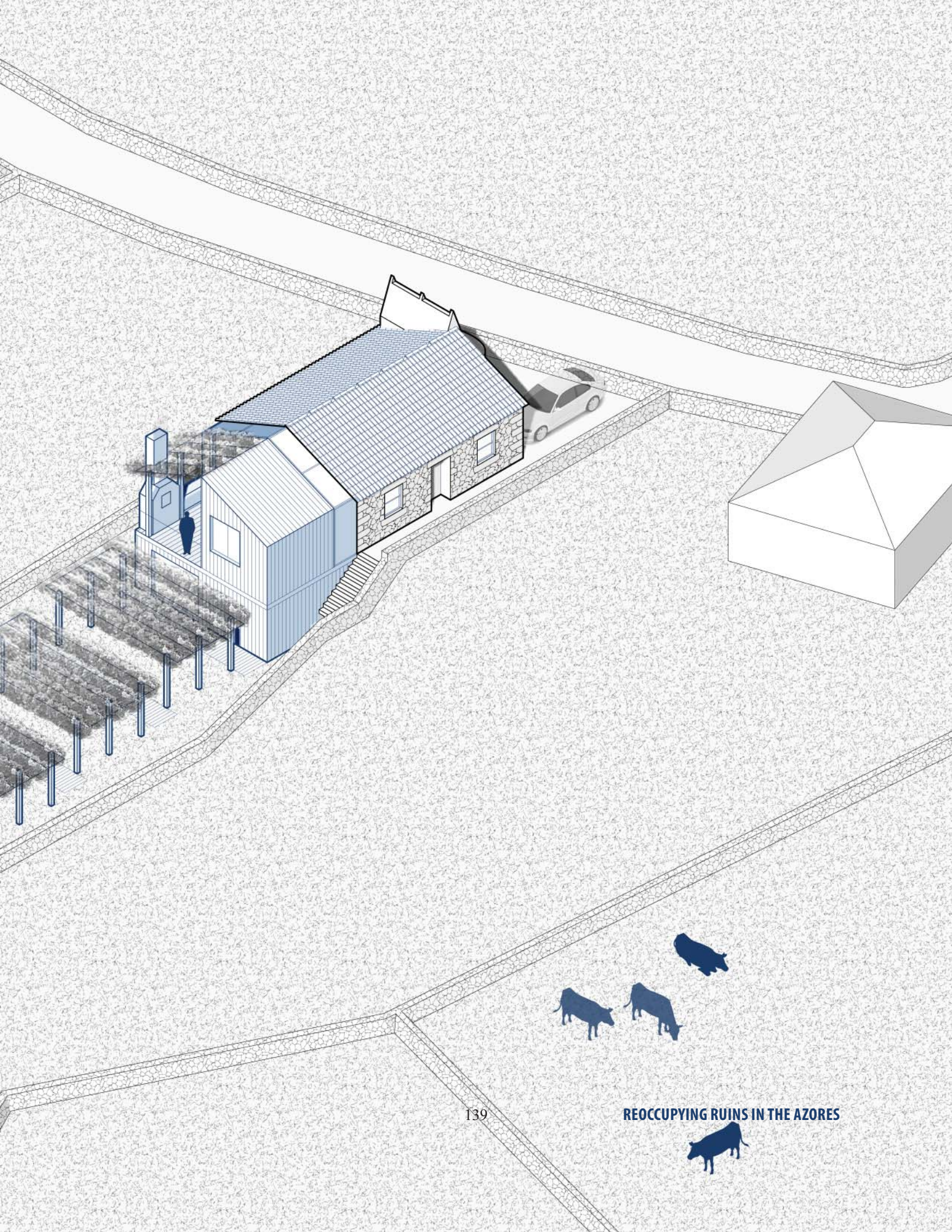


Fig. 3.11. Isometric 1:200



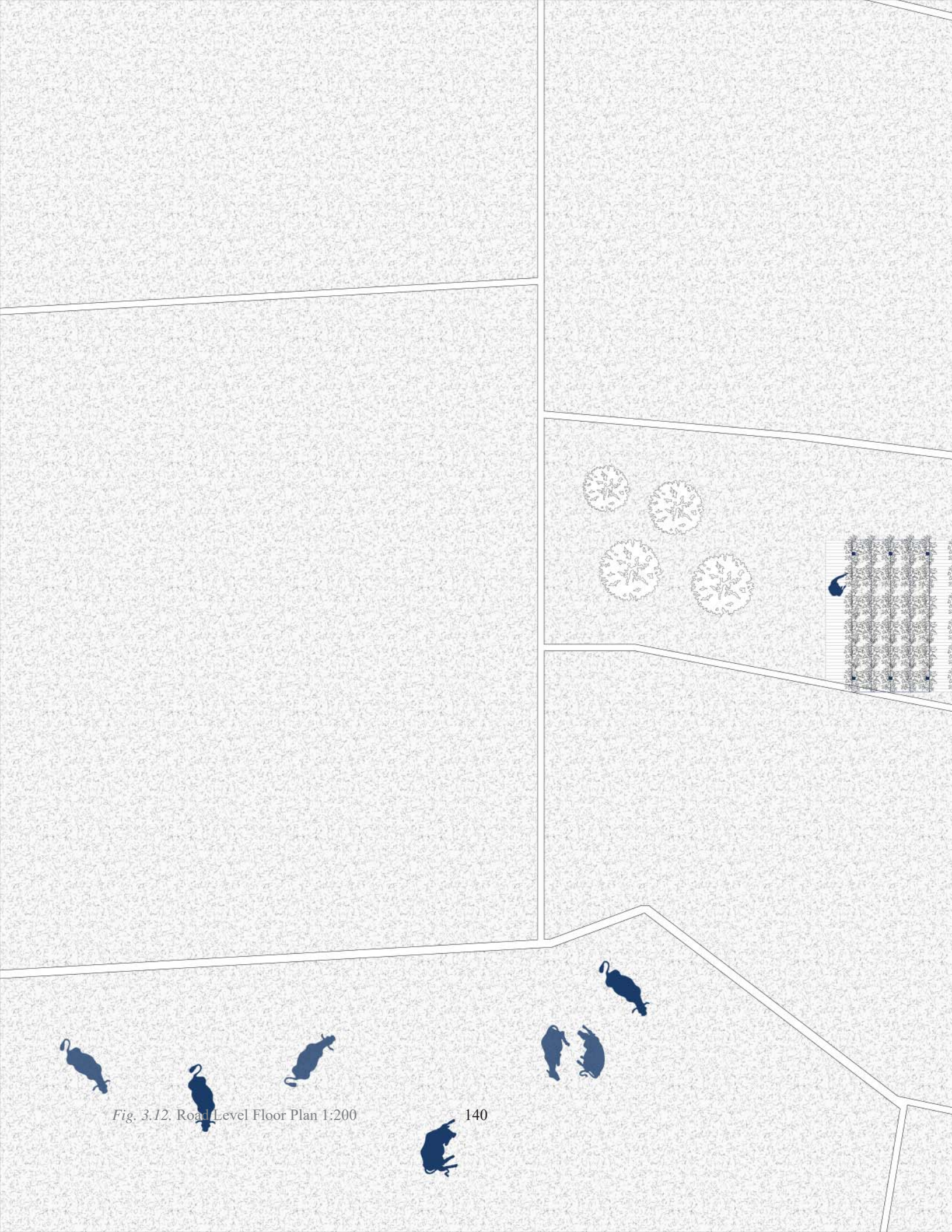
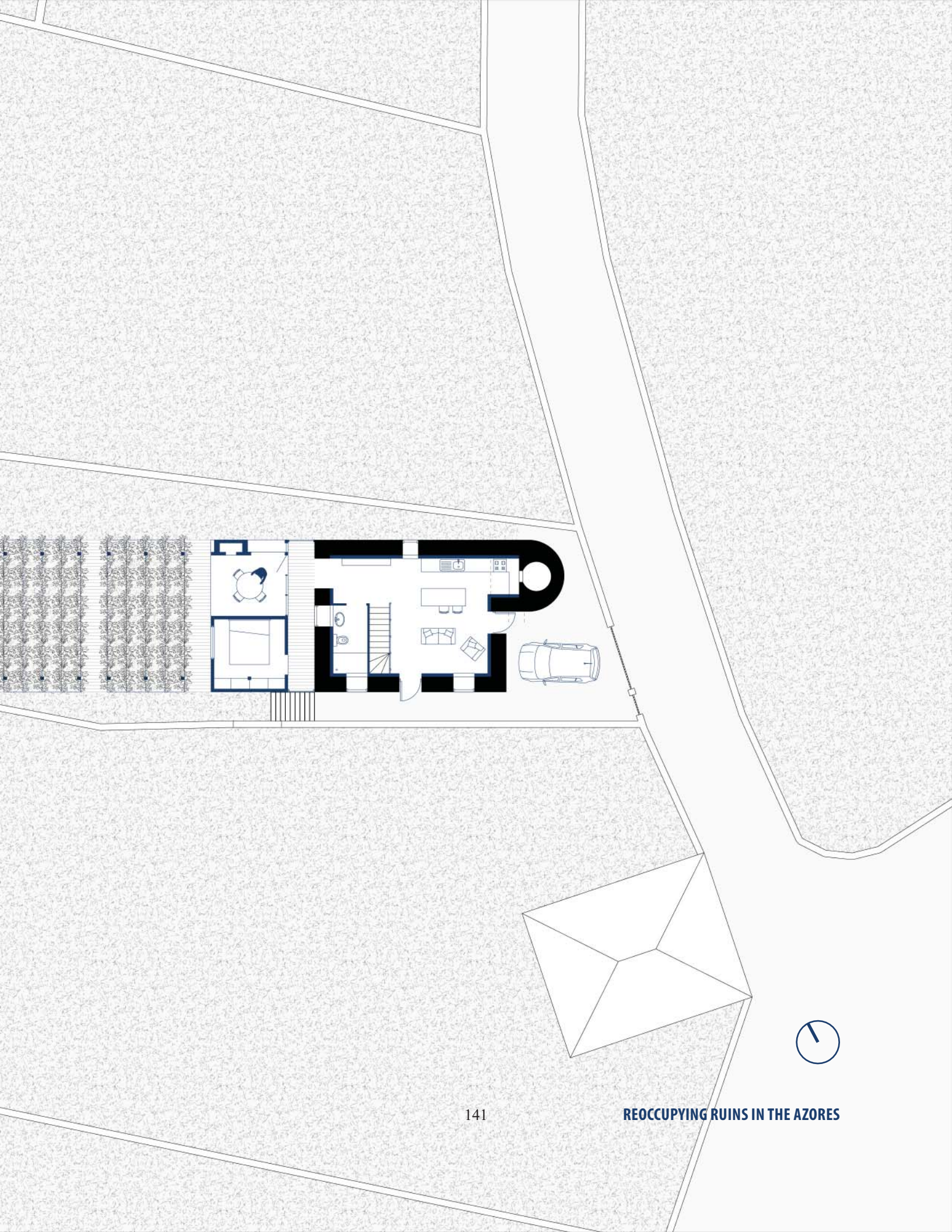


Fig. 3.12. Road Level Floor Plan 1:200



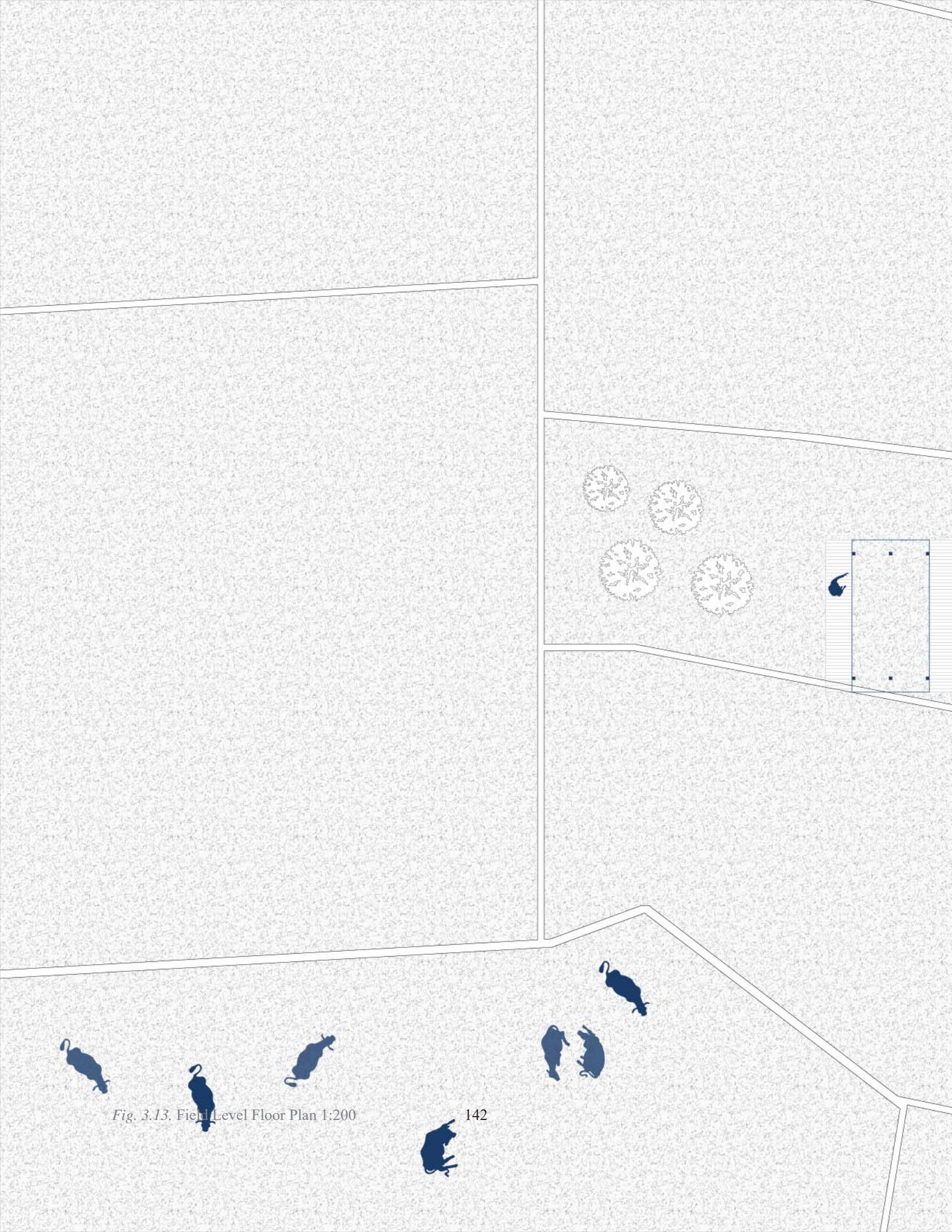
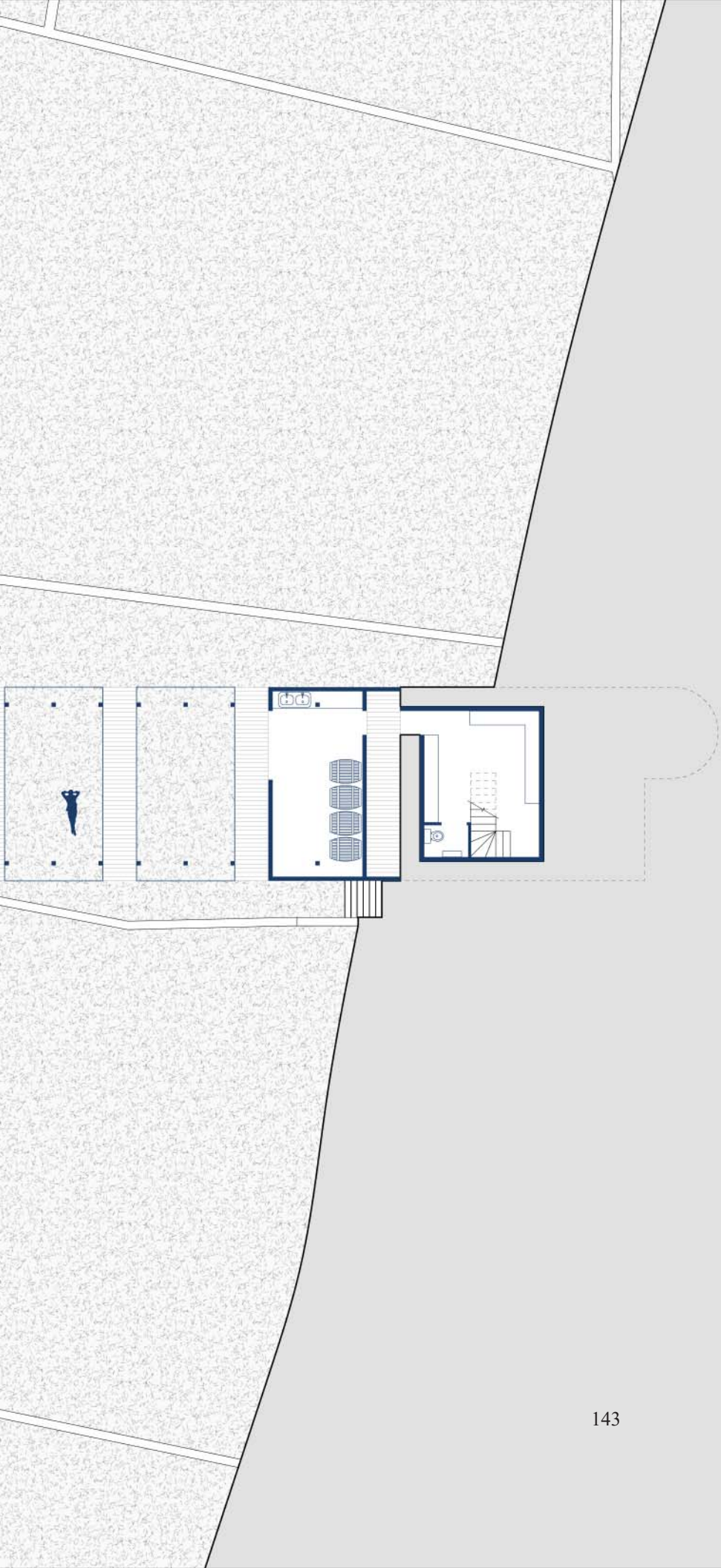


Fig. 3.13. Field Level Floor Plan 1:200



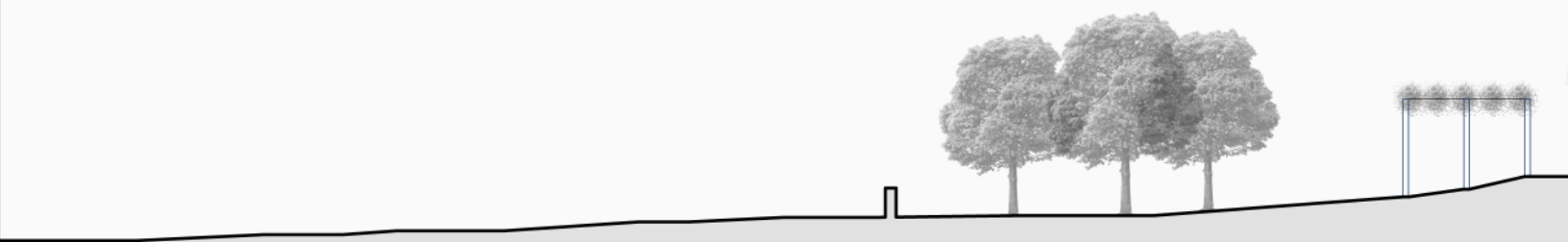
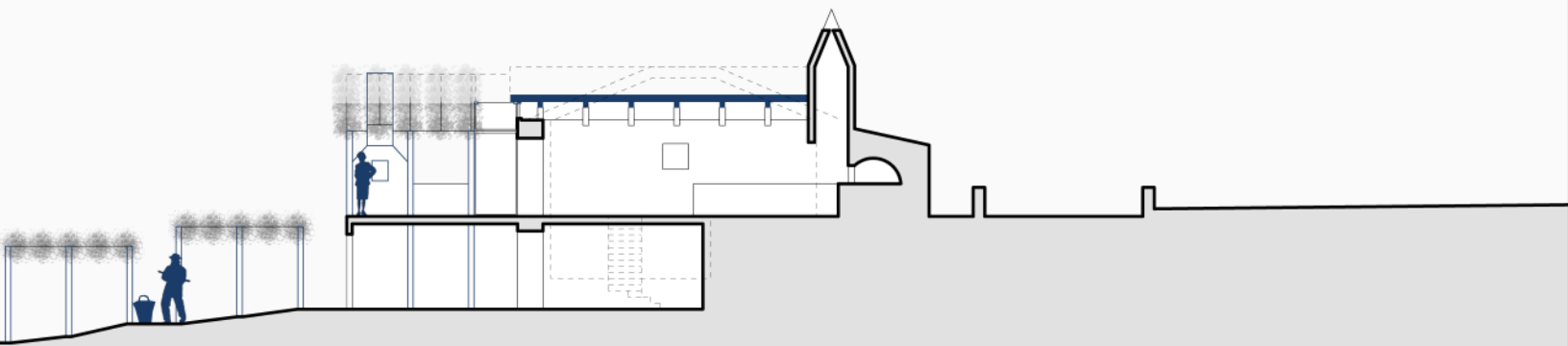


Fig. 3.14. Section 1:200



THE HOUSE OF THE TWIN SISTERS

The Half House

"CASA DAS GEMIAS"

The "*Casa das Gemias*" is designed for the family of one of two feuding sisters - now in their nineties - who have inherited the family home after having emigrated with their family over sixty years ago. Both sisters refuse to concede their share of the property. The house has long fallen into disrepair due to the incessant family dispute, until the day one family decides to rehabilitate their half of the property. The new family vacation home is built within the existing walls of the large house. The wall built along the "internal property line" is made of reflective glazing, reflecting the untouched exterior space. From within this exterior space the existing walls are reflected on the new façade, giving the impression of being within a "completed" house space. Nothing permanent is built in this second half, but the space is used for cooking and dining, particularly for events such as the annual *matança*.





Fig. 3.16. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

Guadalupe

DATE OF SURVEY:

11 / 03 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Canada do Pontal

CODE:

GD-CnPt-012

TPOLOGY:

Complexe, 2 storeys

OBSERVATION:

- overgrowth of vegetation
- failure of the roof structure
- stone construction
- invasion of vegetation inside
- remains of paint on frames
- absence of doors and windows

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

1

2

3

4

5



Fig. 3.17. Survey Information Sheet

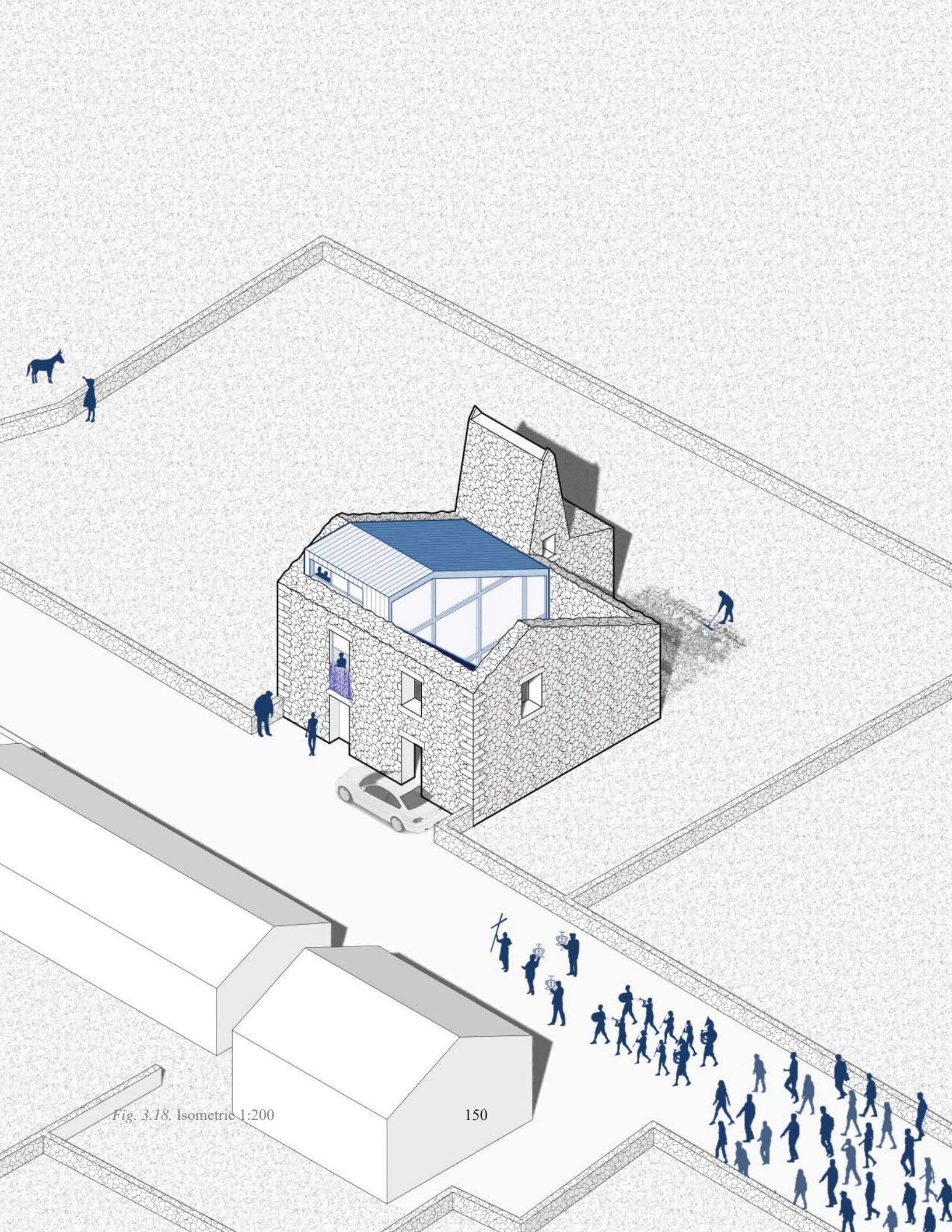


Fig. 3.18. Isometric 1:200

150



Fig. 3.19. Rendering

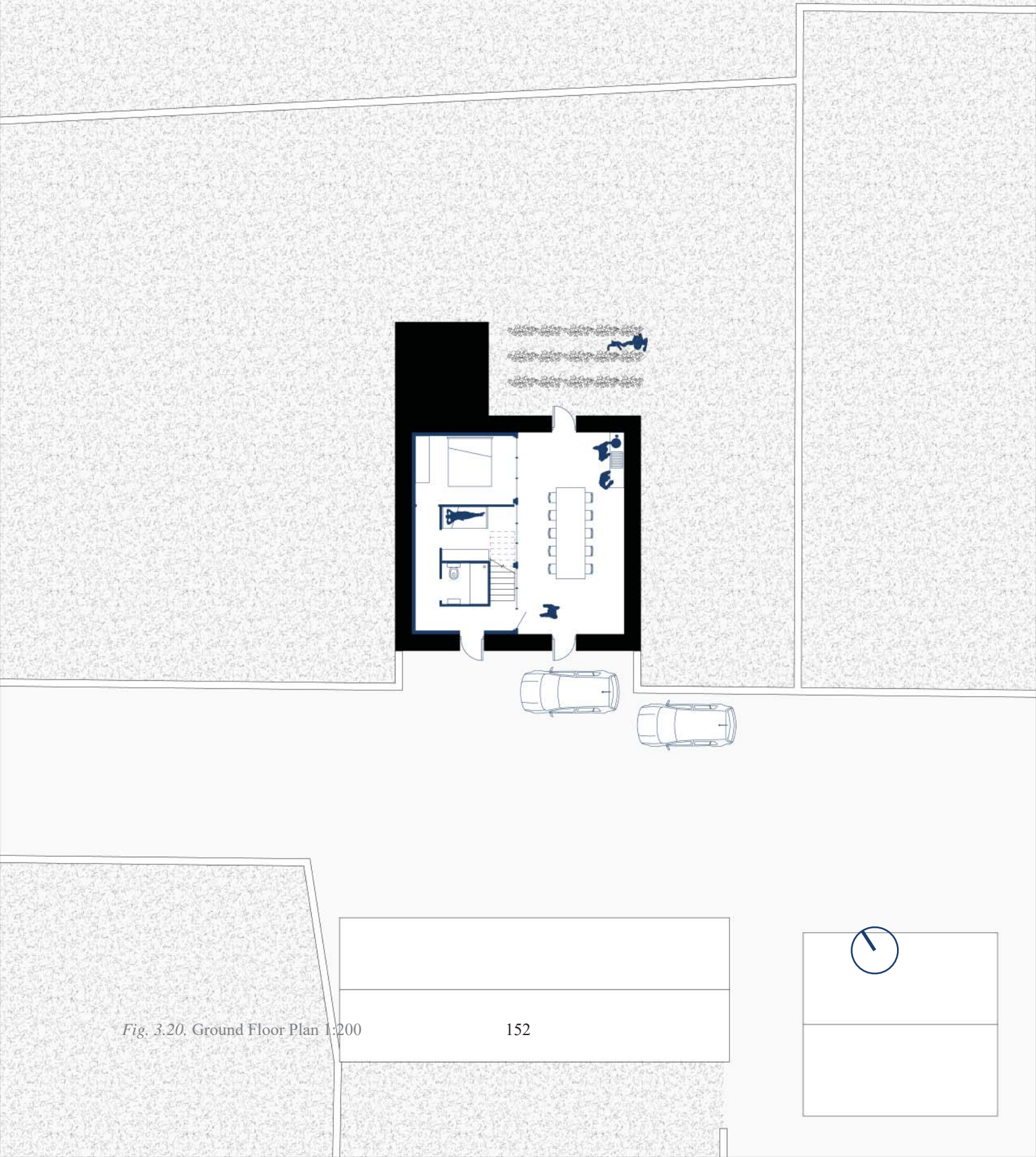


Fig. 3.20. Ground Floor Plan 1:200

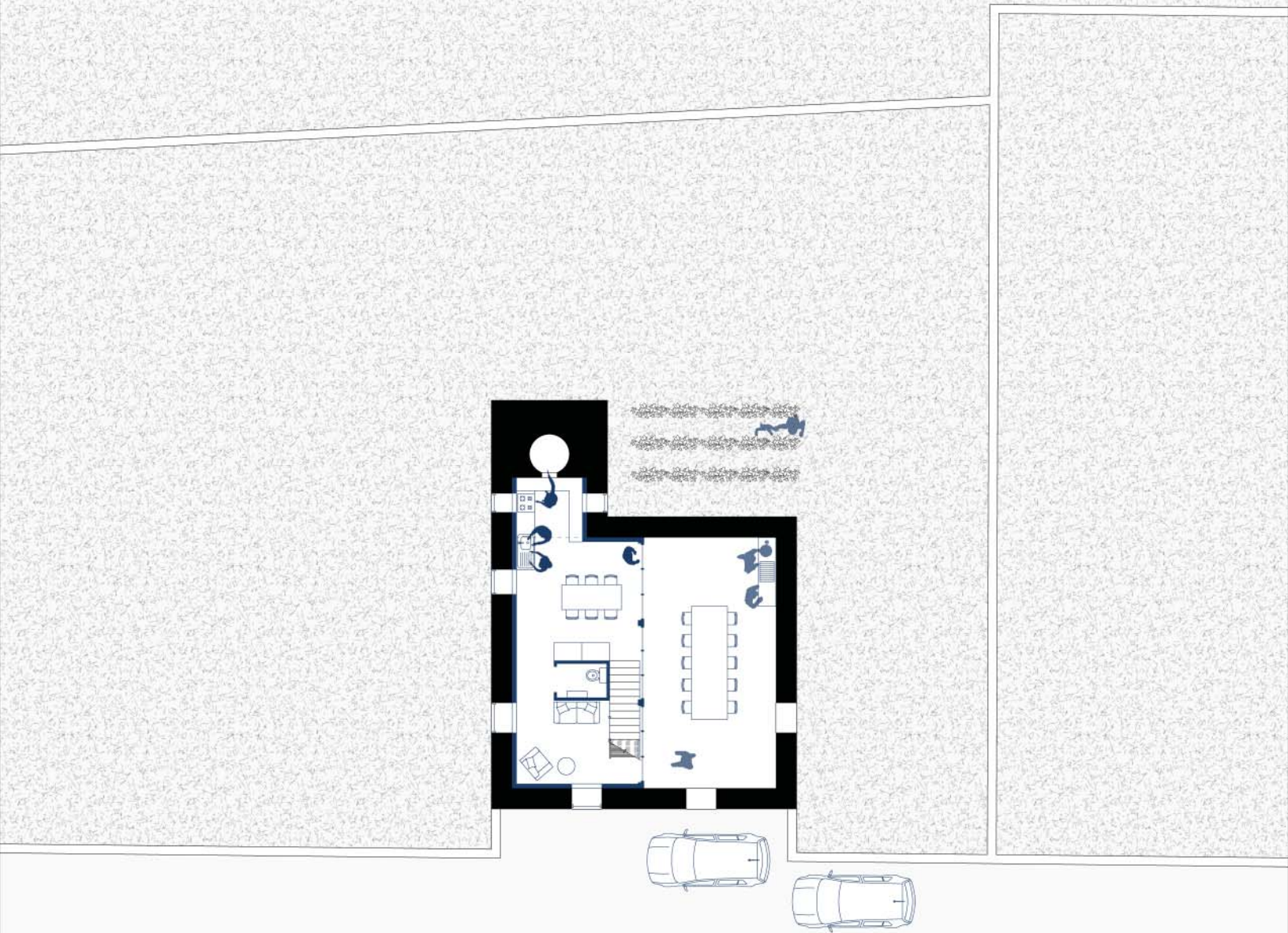


Fig. 3.21. Second Floor Plan 1:200



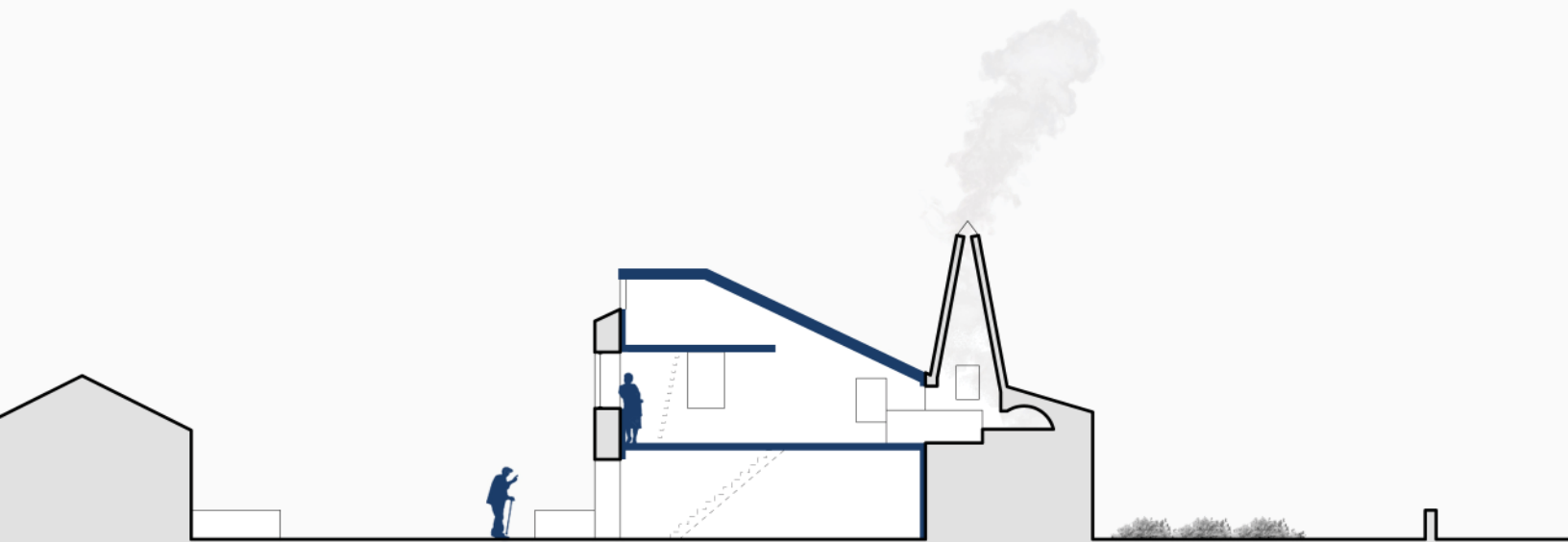


Fig. 3.22. Section 1:200

THE HOUSE OF THE COUSINS

The Floating House

“CASA DOS PRIMOS”

The “*Casa dos Primos*” is a design for the many inheritors of a single property. The existing single storey house is kept in its current condition: an additional volume is added above the existing stone walls to provide the necessary bedrooms and create new interior living spaces below. The original wood oven and kitchen areas become an exterior cooking and dining space and remain the entrance spaces onto the property. A contemporary kitchen is created under the new volume within the existing house walls. The living areas are situated behind the existing house and under the new volume. The property maintains a space of production: vegetable garden, fruit trees. A space for a vehicle is dedicated in front of the existing house and below the new volume. The new volume is clad in fire-treated wood – the existing stones walls are left as found. The house maintains its cultural and rural relationships as its occupation fluctuates throughout the year.







Fig. 3.24. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

Serreta

DATE OF SURVEY:

13 / 01 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Estrada Nacional

CODE:

SR-EN-007

TYOLOGY:

Linear house, (roof type)

OBSERVATION:

- access in ruins, no entrance gates
- invasion by vegetation
- failure of the roof structure
- exposed constructive material
- stone construction
- remnants of paint on door and window frames
- remnants of interior divisions
- oven and chimney partially intact

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

1 ② 3 4 5



Fig. 3.25. Survey Information Sheet

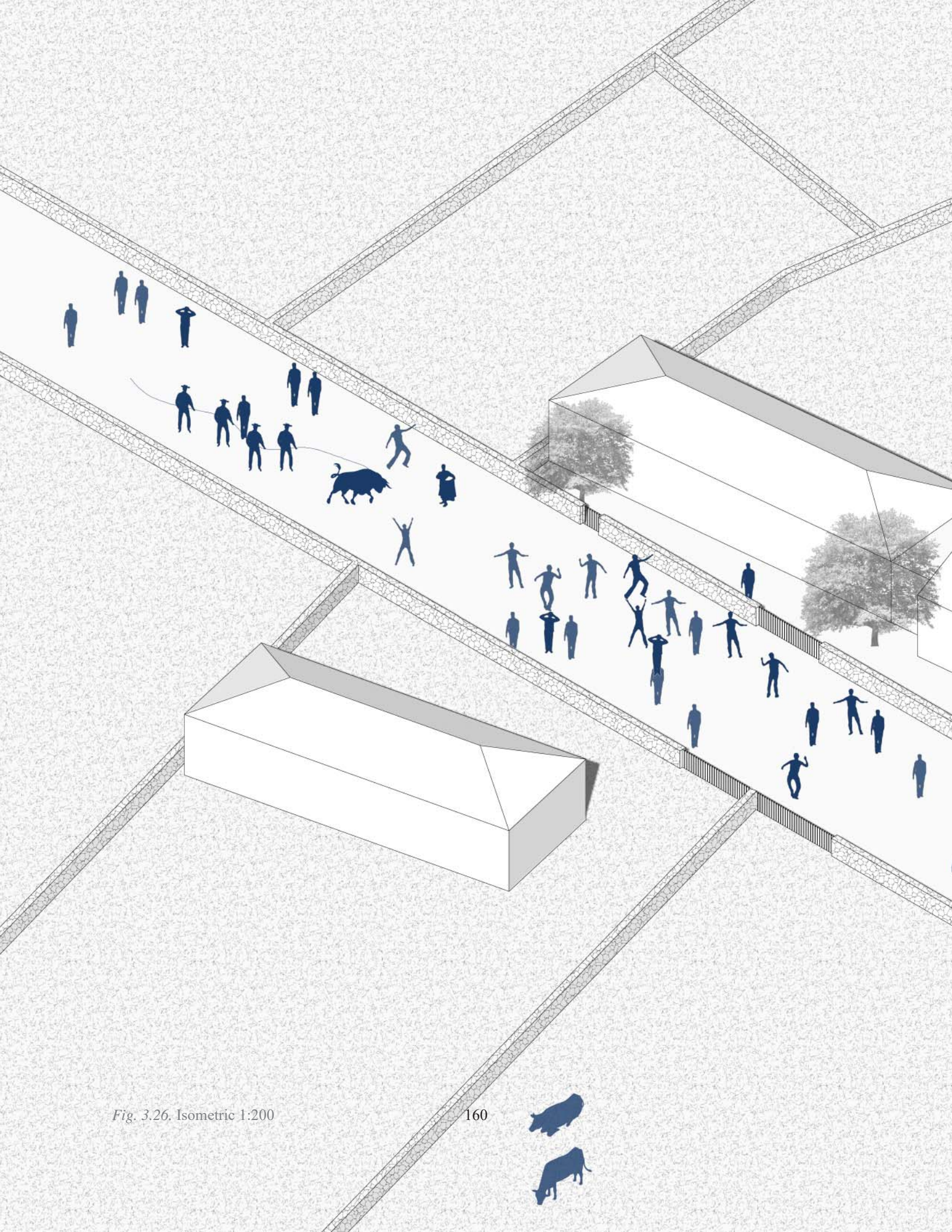
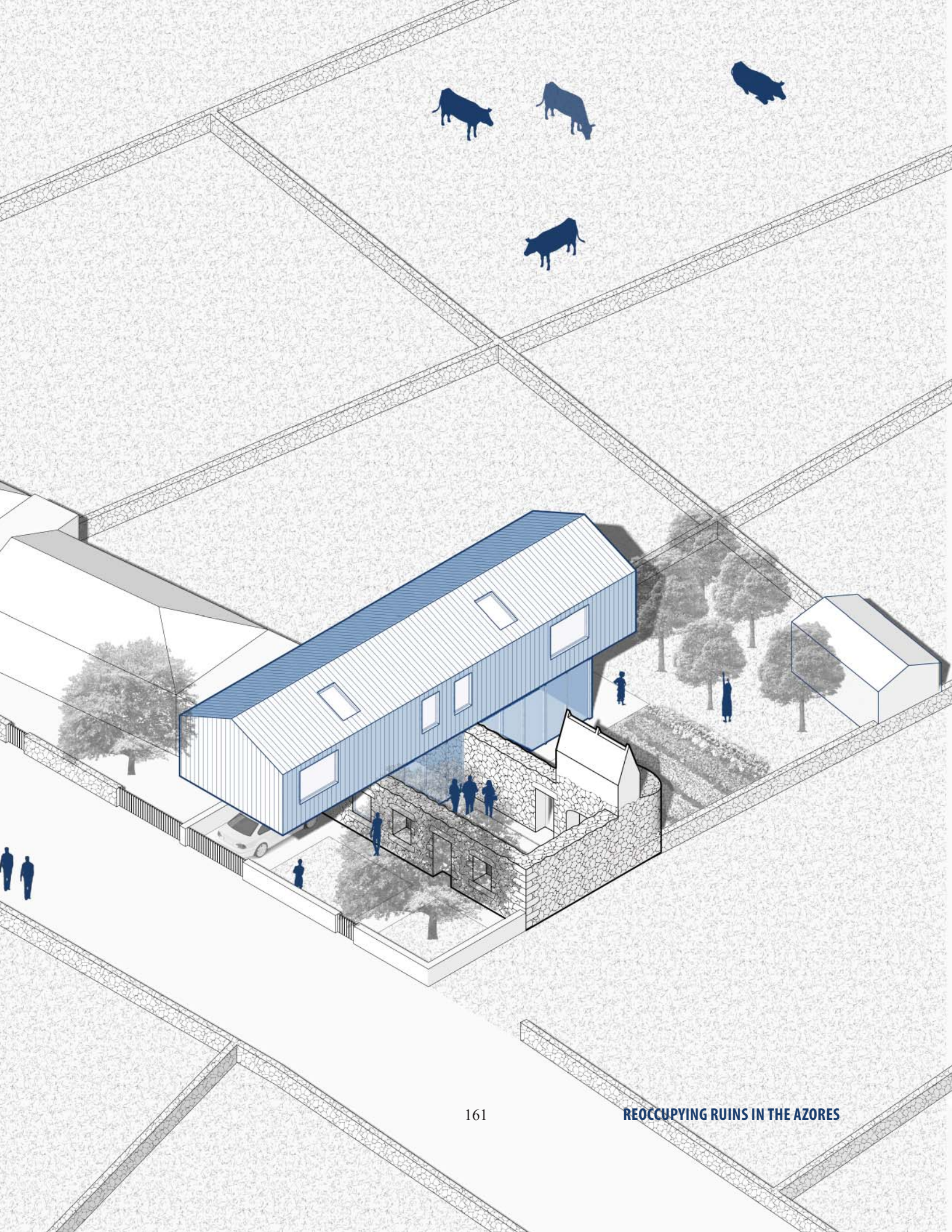


Fig. 3.26. Isometric 1:200



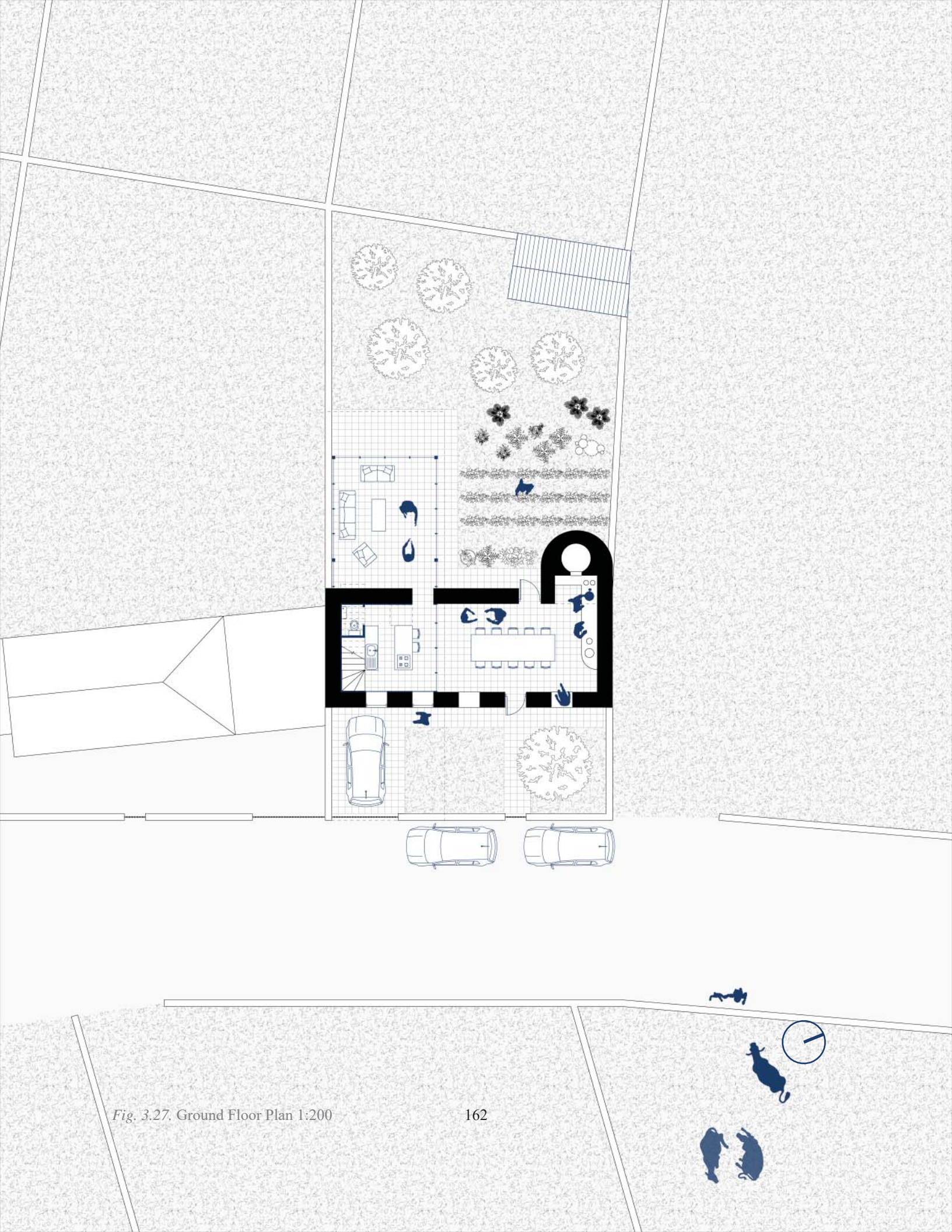


Fig. 3.27. Ground Floor Plan 1:200

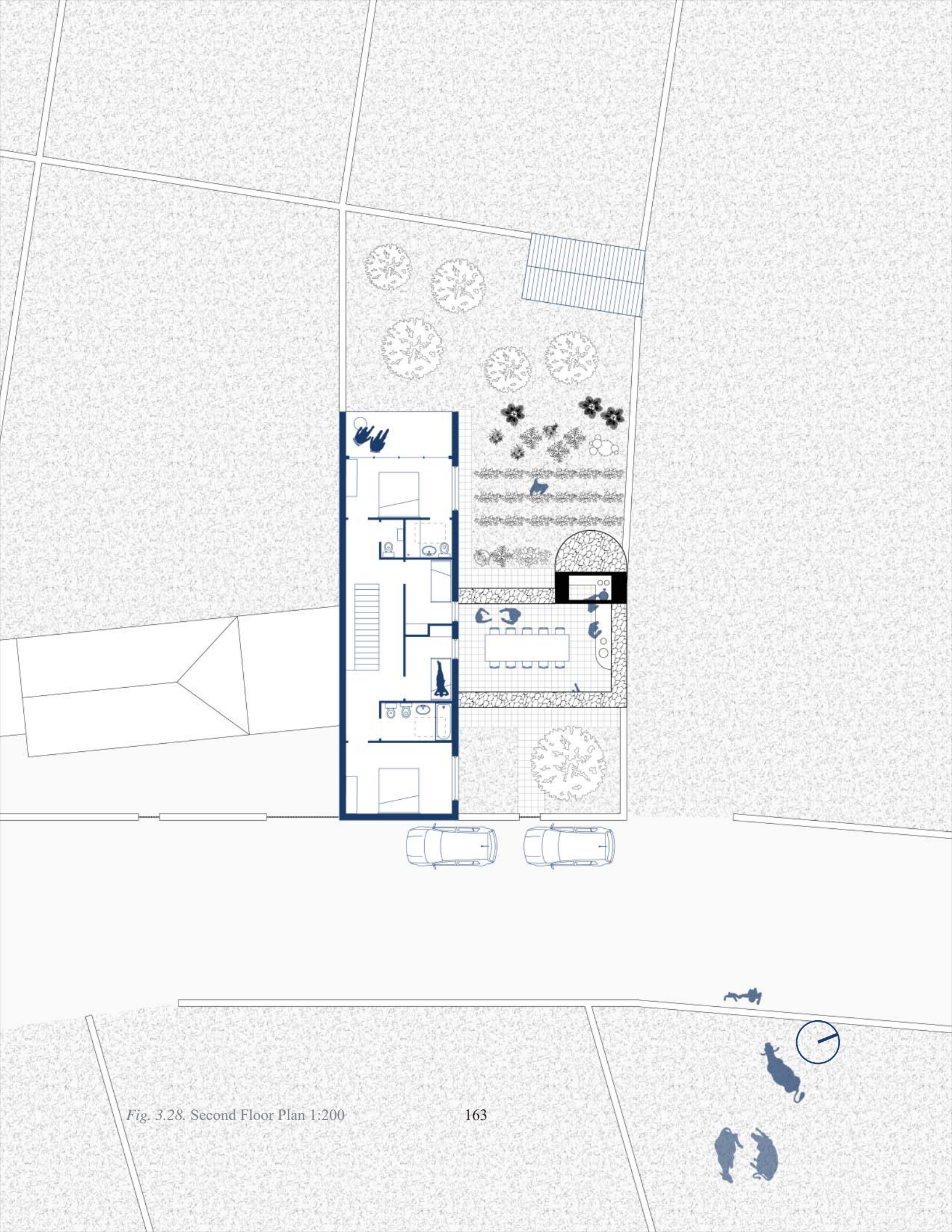


Fig. 3.28. Second Floor Plan 1:200

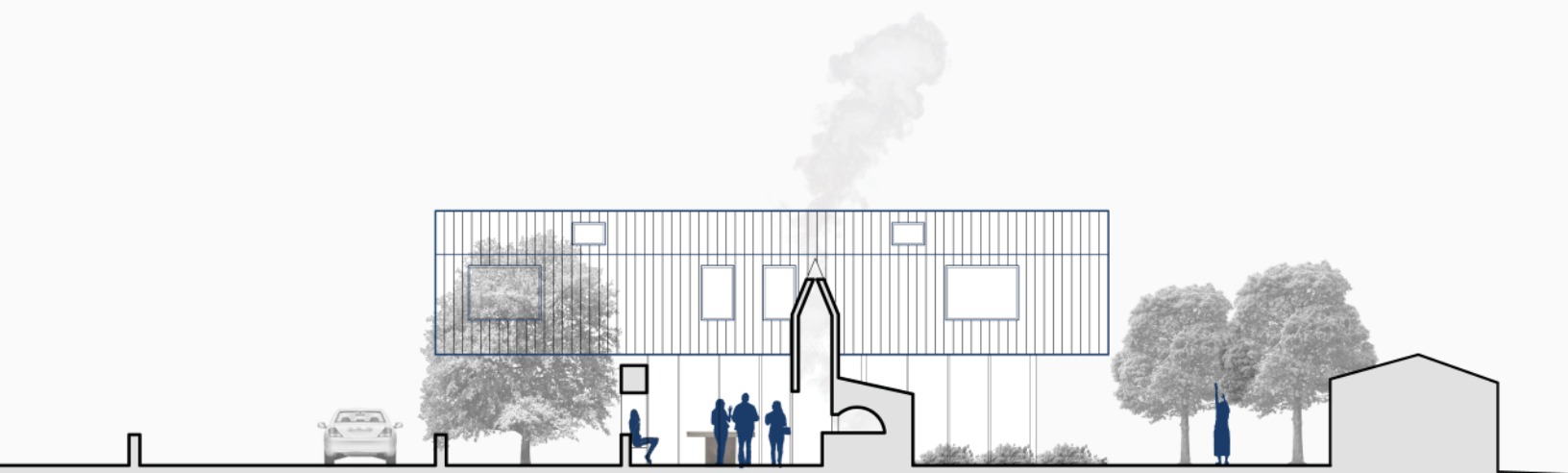


Fig. 3.29. Section 1:200



THE HOUSE OF THE COUPLE

The Mirror House

"CASA DO CASAL"

The "*Casa do Casal*" is designed for the emigrant couple who has made their life in North America, and is now returning to their native village. A new house is built in front of the existing house, mirroring its form and shape. A contemporary kitchen, living room, bedroom and guest room make up the program of their new home. Traditional local materials are used in new ways to build the volume: smaller volcanic stones are used in the construction of gabion walls. The façade facing the existing construction is made of a reflective glazing. The existing house's exterior is left in its current state, but the interior is converted into an exterior cooking and dining space. The wood oven remains the anchoring element of exterior cooking area where traditional meals and breads can be prepared: *Alcatra*, *Feijoada*, *Linguiça*, *Pão de milho*, *Massa Souvada*... From inside the existing house, the owners can look out the window openings onto their new house: a reflection of their past onto the success of a life spent working for a better life, and from the comfort of their new home they can look at what they left behind.





Fig. 3.31. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

São Bartolomeu

DATE OF SURVEY:

22 / 02 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Canada do Funchal

CODE:

SB-CnF-003

TYOLOGY:

Linear

OBSERVATION:

- invasion by vegetation
- independent shed in ruins
- failure of roof structure
- stone construction
- remains of paint on frames
- attic window

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

①

2

3

4

5



Fig. 3.32. Survey Information Sheet



Fig. 3.33. Isometric 1:200



Fig. 3.34. Rendering

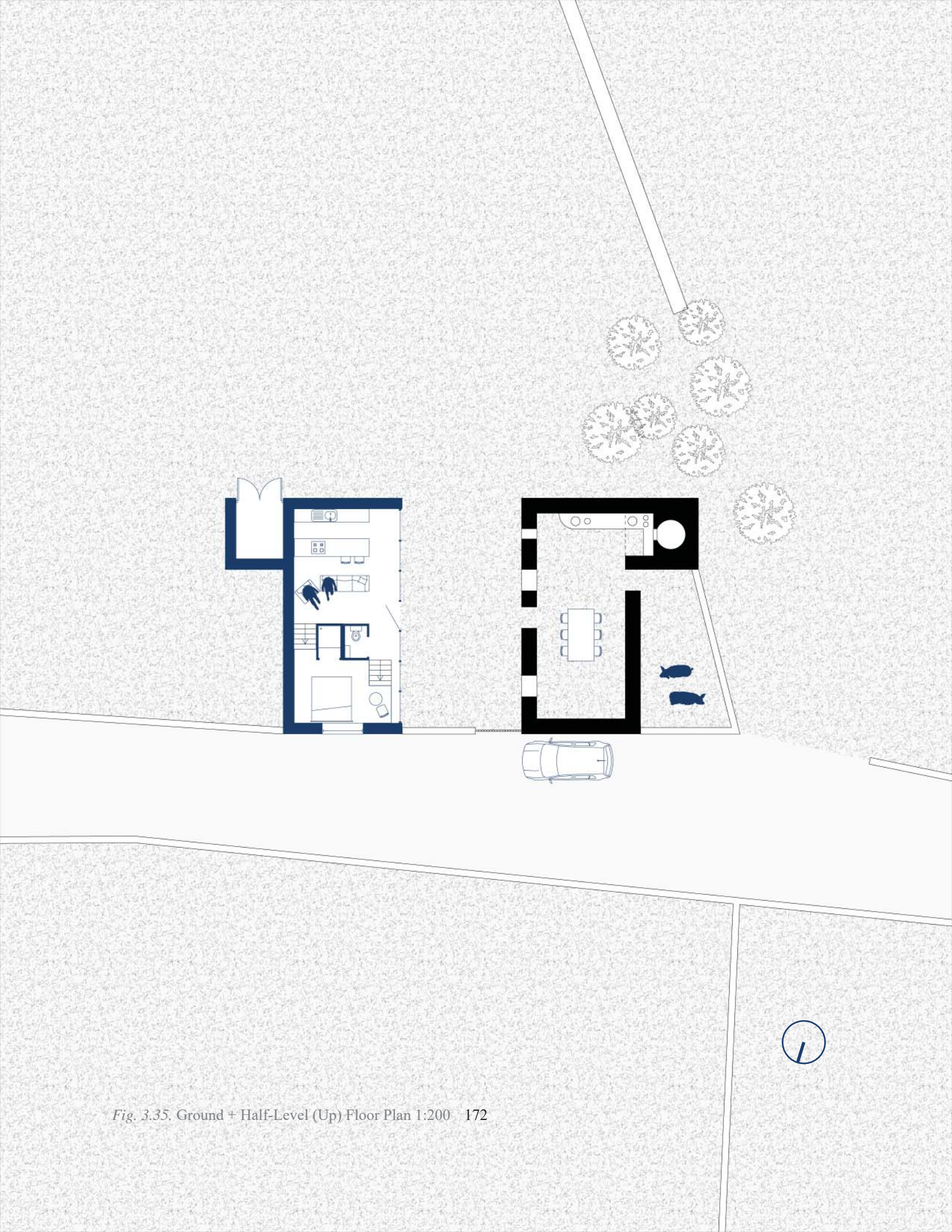


Fig. 3.35. Ground + Half-Level (Up) Floor Plan 1:200 172

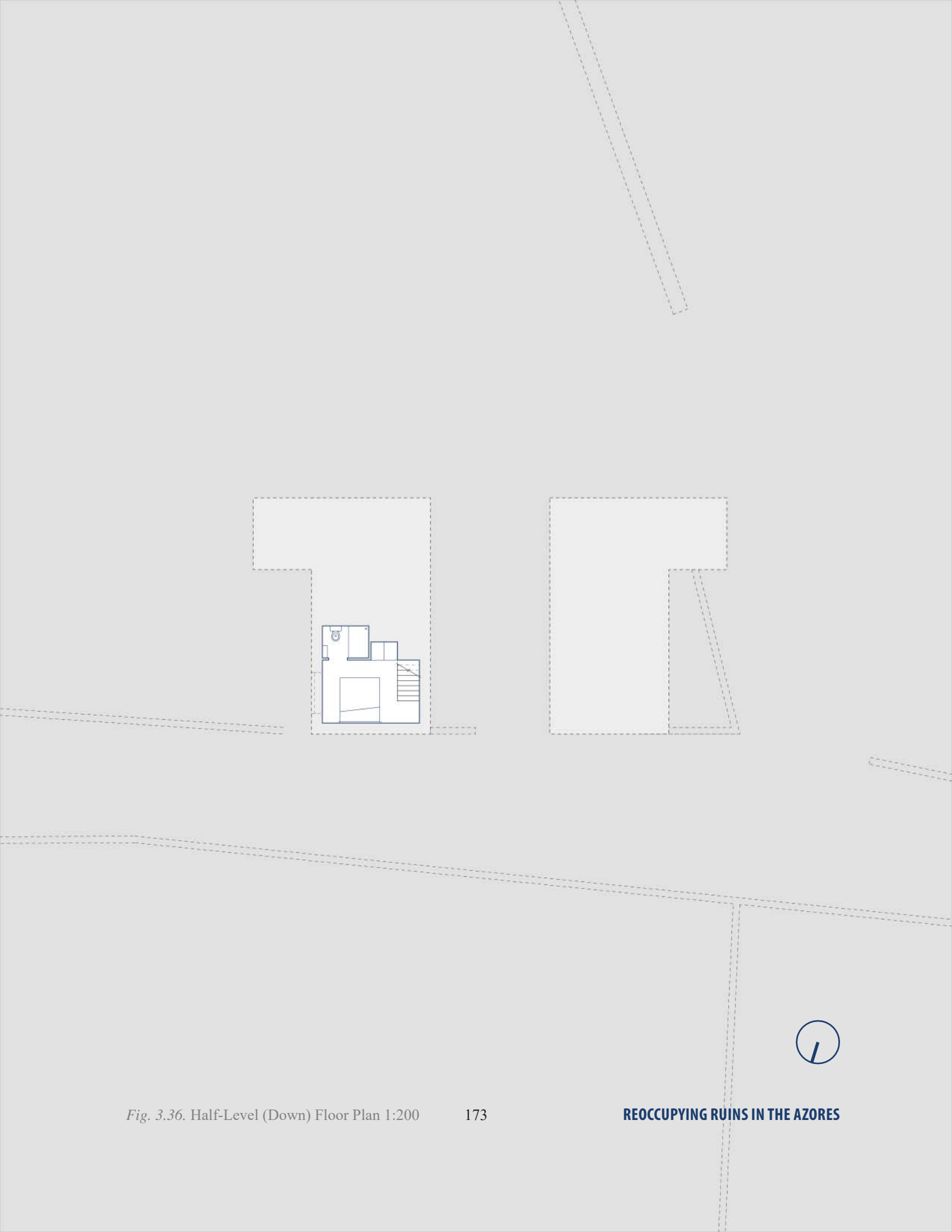
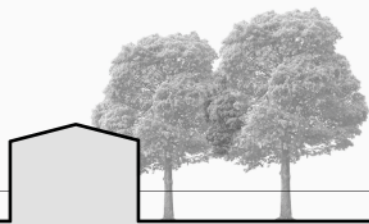


Fig. 3.36. Half-Level (Down) Floor Plan 1:200



Fig. 3.37. Section 1:200



HOUSE OF THE GRANDCHILDREN

The (Re)Insertion House

"CASA DOS NETOS"

The "Casa dos Netos" is designed for the children and grandchildren of the diaspora, those who were born and raised in North America. The house "inserts" the new contemporary spaces within the bounds of the existing buildings. This house is organized to provide all the tools and spaces necessary to learn and explore Azorean culture. The old stone shed is used to provide the sleeping accommodations. The existing stone house is used to provide the "active" living spaces: a double height space library, a contemporary kitchen that also utilizes traditional equipment. Other interior spaces on the ground floor include a living room as well as a cellar / cold room space. An exterior cooking and dining space links the two volumes, and the existing exterior space is structured to hold a vegetable garden. The new materials added to create the roof over the interior spaces use a combination of solid and transparent cover to allow more natural light in spaces where traditionally windows were limited or non-existent. As the newly established family grows, smaller houses may eventually be built on the large property.

Fig. 3.38. Material Elevation





Fig. 3.39. Site Plan 1:2000

INVENTORY INFORMATION SHEET

PARISH:

Raminho

DATE OF SURVEY:

28 / 01 / 2016

ROAD / STREET:

Estrada Nacional

CODE:

RA-EN-009

TPOLOGY:

Complex, shed and balcony

OBSERVATION:

- large independent shed
- failure of the roof structure
- stone construction
- entrance and access in ruins
- invasion by vegetation
- remains of windows

FUNCTION:

Dwelling

STATE OF CONSERVATION:

1

2

3

4

5



Fig. 3.40. Survey Information Sheet

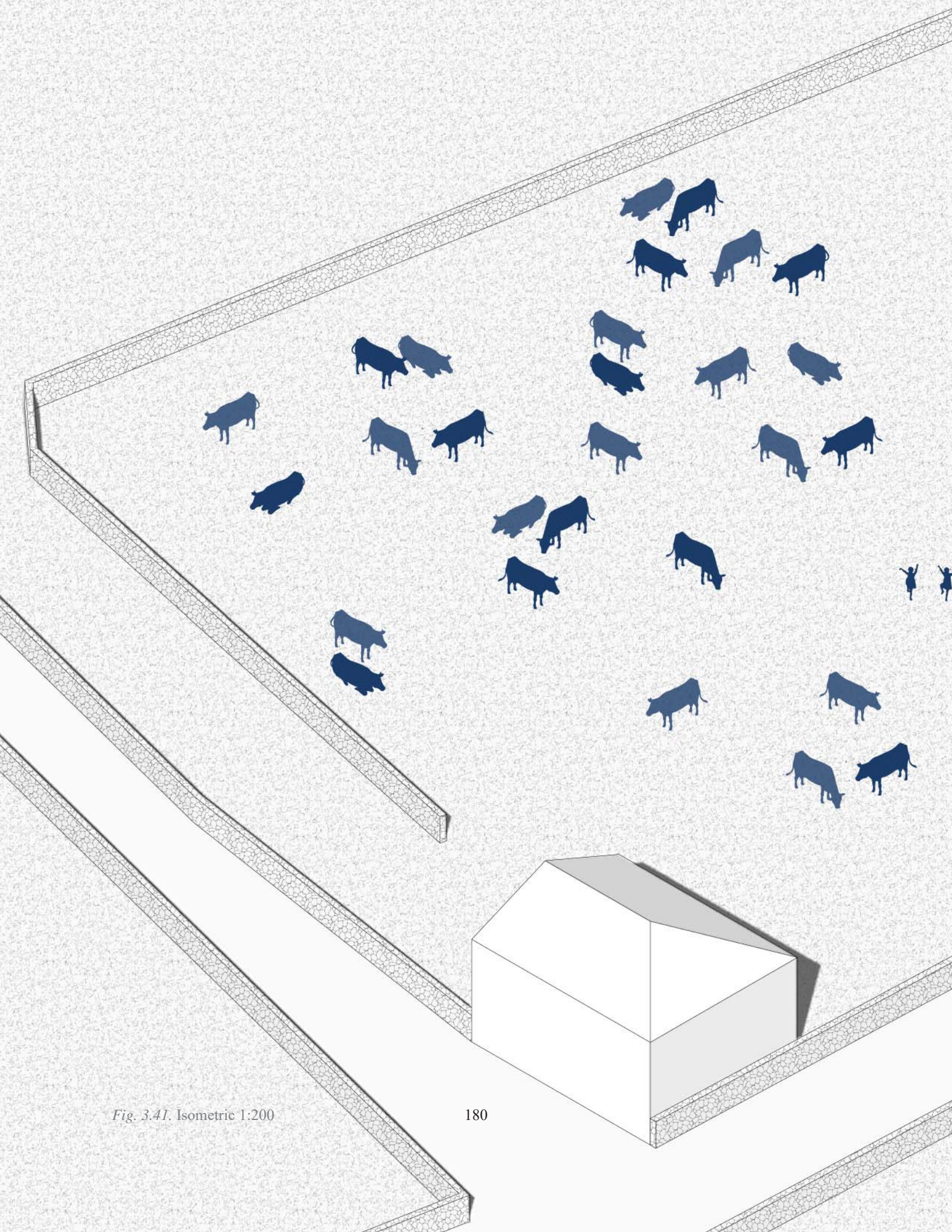


Fig. 3.41. Isometric 1:200

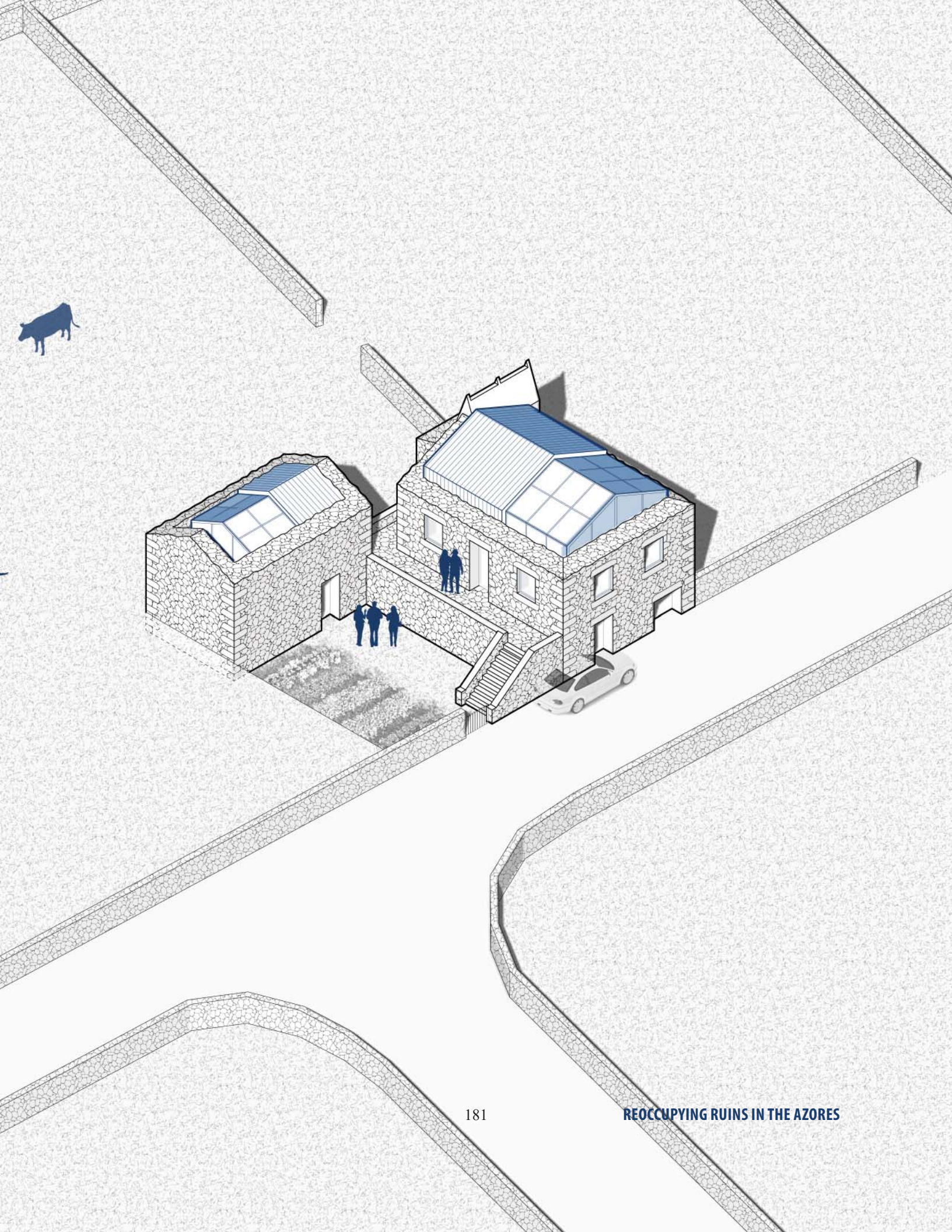




Fig. 3.42. Second Floor Plan 1:200

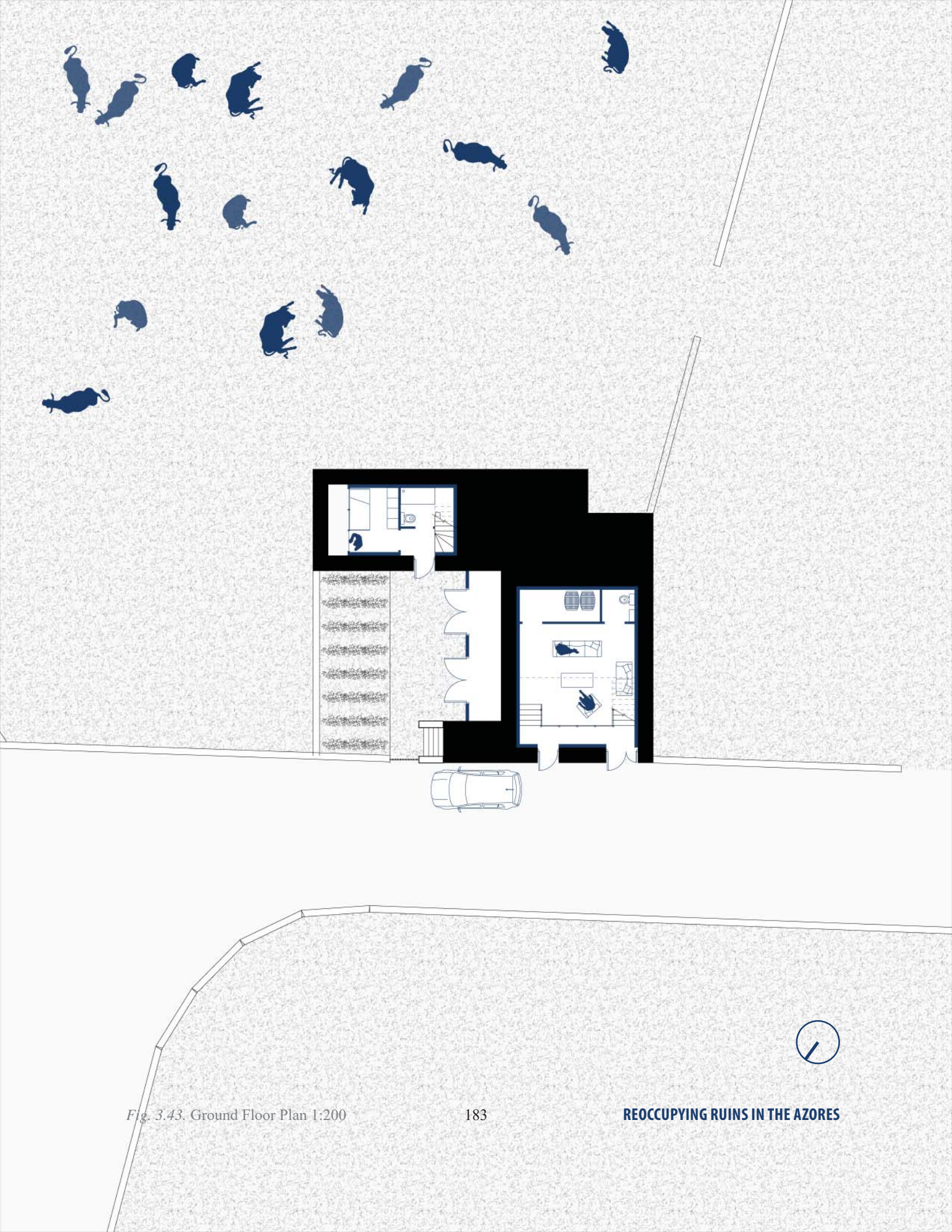


Fig. 3.43. Ground Floor Plan 1:200

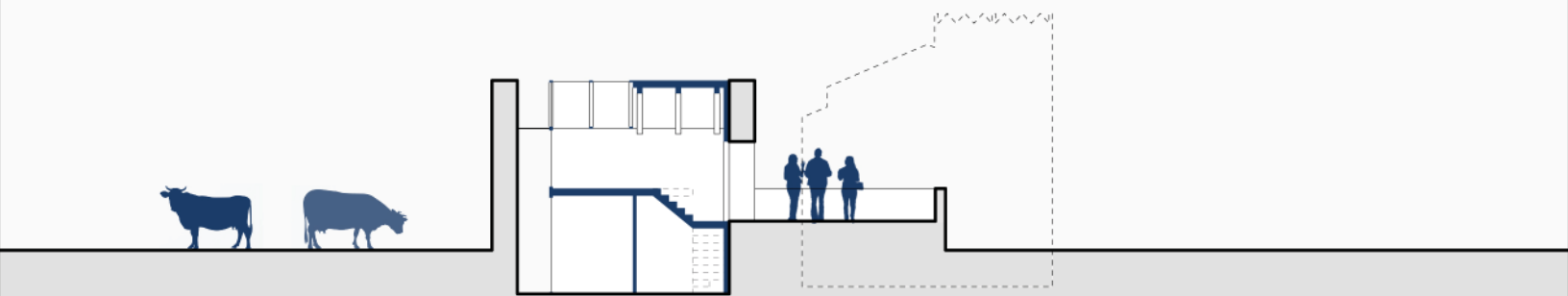


Fig. 3.44. Section through Sleeping Quarters 1:200 184

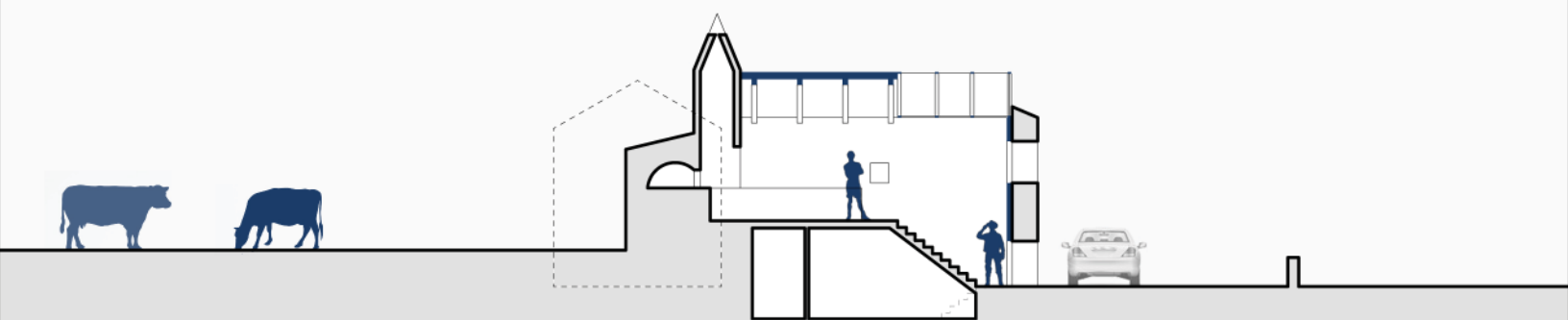


Fig. 3.45. Section through Living Quarters 1:200



Fig. 3.46. Ruins of a house on Graciosa

CONCLUSION

This thesis has been an exercise in documenting the existing conditions of the decaying houses in the Azores, reacting to the effects of population migration in an insular context and exploring – through design experiments – the new realities that could come of reoccupying the ruins of Azorean vernacular architecture. Through the documenting process that took place over the course of a year, I gained an understanding not only of the extent of decaying and vacant properties in Terceira and Graciosa, but insight into the transatlantic cultural ties that still exist today between the archipelago of the Azores and North America. These ties – cultural, emotional and even legal – fundamentally redefine the preconceived notions of isolation due to insularity, especially in a time where air travel has become more accessible to the general population. The potential active reintegration of the diaspora in Azorean context and the reoccupation of vacant and ruined properties create new and fertile opportunities for the future of the rural built fabric of the Azorean landscape.

While the thesis situates the vernacular and its importance over the last century in Portugal; it recognizes that vernacular architecture is far from stagnant or fixed in time. As demonstrated by the modernist architects in Portugal, vernacular architecture is a result of context, social conditions and its time. The design experiments proposed in the thesis situate the vernacular as a key player in a changing contemporary Azorean context. Like the traditional vernacular homes, the new homes emerging from the design explorations are a reflection of a transatlantic context, new social conditions and reflect the diversity of the contemporary Azorean population.

Understanding the migratory experience of the emigrants is crucial for the projections of design interventions and reoccupation of abandoned houses. Case-studies like “*Maisons*

de rêve au Portugal” expose the complex relationships between the migrant and its native context. It is imperative to recognize the retention of rural practices and the inevitable accumulation of new urban practices if we are to envision the reintegration of the emigrant population in rural areas. The preoccupation of local authorities and architects must go beyond the simple aesthetics of the emerging projects if there is to be a harmonious dialogue between new and existing contexts. Although this thesis does not explore how the individual house interventions impact or changes to the larger landscape, the question remains an interesting one.

This thesis chose to explore the reoccupation of pre-existing buildings that required interventions beyond simple renovations, challenging notions of conservation and preservation. In a context where conservation requires more occupancy than is available and the climate causes materials to require more maintenance than is possible, preservation of cultural practices – as opposed to conservation of form or materials – becomes a more stimulating avenue. The design principles anchor themselves in the belief that decay is part of the cyclical nature of things and that there is value in preserving not only the individual building but the forces that helped shape it.

Reoccupying Ruins in the Azores is geared both to local Azorean municipalities, policy makers and architects, and the diaspora who left the islands but remained the owners of property in the Azores. This investigation is invaluable to the local authorities in order for them to understand the extent of the situation, as there are currently no such documents. With the adequate qualitative and quantitative information, the local municipalities can help guide the policy makers and architects – and maybe even real-estate companies – towards the best course of action. The design principles and design experiments are in effect proposals in how the interventions upon the ruined vernacular architecture might take shape. Municipal development plans could be established to focus on areas at higher risk of decay. With the advent of tourism, small neighborhoods – *aldeias* – and even parishes could reoccupied with the intention of catering to temporary visitors, adding a new layer to types of occupancy. Laws could be changed to make the land acquisition process or land reoccupation easier for the emigrants living abroad. Local economies could benefit from the use of local materials. Architects could be better equipped to respond to the desires of returning emigrants and be more present in rural areas. Similarly, this work projects a new, contemporary vision of the Azores: one with the potential of a future that was not possible when the

emigrants left. Perhaps one of the greatest frictions of this thesis is the reconciliation of the world that was left behind and the expectations of a successful life abroad. Many emigrants, especially those who were not able to return, cannot picture a contemporary Azorean life. It has been to goal of this thesis to demonstrate that reoccupation is possible and that old and new create the richest of dialogues.

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