

Scienze del Territorio / Territorial Sciences

Vol. 13, no. 2: “Long term territorial structures facing contemporary material and cultural extractivism”

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Call for papers – deadline: February 28, 2026

In territorialist jargon, the term "long-term structures" refers to the set of morphological, spatial, and anthropic elements resulting from the co-evolution over time—between nature and culture—of the territory and the landscape, which has defined and continually redefines its identity.

In the territorialist approach, this long-term identity must be nurtured, interpreted, and enhanced, embracing territorial heritage as a fundamental element for self-sustaining development, capable of generating well-being without the need to colonize and exploit other territories.

The main components of long-lasting structures, in general, can be summarized as follows:

- a) a geomorphological support and/or a natural ecosystem fruitfully modified by humans during the territorialization phases.
- b) metahistorical rules (e.g., in hilly areas, the greater resistance of ridges) or historical rules (e.g., the primary road system located on ridges and never halfway up the hillside), compliance with which also defines the structure's duration and persistence.
- c) the relationships between physical and spatial aspects of the territory and landscape, and the actors or actants who inhabit it, care for it, and transform it daily with their active presence.
- d) the relationships between the individual spatial and living elements that make up the structure, and the relationships between different structural levels.

The importance attributed to these characteristics and components developed from a critical reflection on the strictly functionalist reading and interpretation of the territory in the era of industrialization. Limitations of this approach have led to widespread areas of hydrogeological instability, extensive land consumption characterized by low-quality urbanization and environmental problems, transforming what was considered the ‘garden of Europe’ into a series of fragmented landscapes, interrupted by degradation and trivialized.

In recent years, while the new attention to the landscape seemed to have produced, in Italy too, the recognition of the fundamental role of the depth of the territory as the basis of its heritage, at the same time an extractive attitude has emerged with respect to long-term structures. On the one hand, this tends to expropriate the inhabitants from their customary use, to extract immediate financial profits for tourism or more generally for real estate investment. On the

other, it disconnects the elements that together constituted systems of complex functional and value-based relationships, in interaction with the different inhabitants, transforming them into commodities, according to external logics. In a territory that has become unstructured, lacking internal relationships, and therefore more malleable and marketable, this 'expropriation' is often justified by the urgency of ecological transition, based not on the identifying characters and structures of each territory (as theorized by the bioregional model) but on the new "green extractivism". Several PNRR (financed by Next generation EU program) projects, but not only those, seem to take this perspective, which once again disregards contexts and their long-standing structures in the name of supposed progress, whose beneficiaries are always fewer in number and further away, while the repercussions of the damage are unfortunately close at hand and obvious.

Based on the considerations outlined above, the call invites applicants to illustrate, using concrete examples:

- significant advances made in the interpretation of long-term structures inspired by the territorialist approach as a basis for urban and regional planning;
- tensions and conflicts emerging between interpretations/representations of long-term structures and current extractive policies or practices.

Illustrations that clarify the content are welcome.

Contributions exceeding 25,000 characters (including spaces, notes, and bibliographical references) will not be accepted, with a maximum of 30,000 characters if strictly necessary to fully discuss the issues addressed.

Submission deadline and procedure

Articles – written and to be published, once accepted, in Italian, English, French, or Spanish – must be submitted exclusively via the dedicated online platform, accessible, upon registration, from <https://ojs.unica.it/index.php/sciter/about/submissions>.

The deadline for submission is February 28, 2026.

Articles must strictly comply with the guidelines, which can be downloaded from the URL <https://www.societadeiterritorialisti.it/2024/01/02/submission-guidelines/> including the section concerning the obscuring of personal data, and contain any additional elements requested therein. An abstract is required from the first submission.

For any further information, write to: rivista@societadeiterritorialisti.it.