

the wood under a whitewash coating. The timber framing is roughcast with *pisé* made of clay and straw or hay on split lathwork. The wood of the roof structure may be of different kinds, given the shortage of high quality timber. The appearance of an upper storey is a recent phenomenon which was first introduced at the time of the Second Empire. In the same period walls entirely made of fired bricks made their appearance. They were to become the main building material in the 20th century, particularly in those sectors rebuilt after the two World Wars.

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#### 2.III.5.p Provençal (France, SE)

Bordered on the west by the Rhône and on the east by the ancient County of Nice, Provence forms an amphitheatre with its lower tiers stretching from the littoral plains to the higher tiers on the Alpine range. Besides the coast dotted with a few fishermen's settlements, four distinct areas can be distinguished. Western Provence consists of plains, whose resources are founded on sheep- and bull-rearing in the waterland of the Camargue and in the Crau, and on market gardening in the Comtat Venaissin (by the Durance valley). A pattern of widely dispersed habitations prevails here. Inner Provence has hills whose ancestral balance used to lie in the traditional trilogy of Mediterranean cultures (vineyards, olive trees and cornfields). It is an outstanding example of an area of large closely built villages with a small town ambience. In Upper Provence, sheep rearing and extensive cereal farming are carried out with lavender growing and processing. Alpine Provence has a loosely knit habitat composed of hamlets whose pasturelands are used in summer by local flocks and herds as well as by transhumant flocks of sheep that winter in the Camargue and in the Crau.

Throughout this region stone is the predominant building material. This 'petromania' betrays itself in various ways: the choice of rocky sites as preferred settings for both high-perched villages and scattered dwellings; the abundance of troglodyte dwellings; the presence of stone buildings in areas devoid of lithic material (for instance in the Camargue where the estate owners' farms, locally named *mas*, are made of free-stones brought in along the Rhône) or in sites that should have called for a timber-based architecture (for instance Alpine Provence that yields timber material but where dwellings and summer cabins have stone walls); the prevailing, even exclusive role played in the building process by the mason who also does the carpenter's work in a rustic way in keeping with the Provençal style (there is no truss but only a series of purlins supported by exterior walls and cross walls). Quite significantly the best examples of vernacular architecture are dry stone constructions, widely known as *bories*, and locally called *cabanes*, and particularly numerous in the mountain of Vaucluse (Upper Provence). The *bories* present some typological variety. The tunnel-shaped ones were, most of the time, built over a curved timber frame that was moved along as the work was executed, but the cupola, dome or capsized hull-shaped ones were built without support by gradual corbelled layering to the apex. These stone constructions were used as out-buildings (shepherds' cabins, sheds, and so on). In contrast



Dwelling hut between two *bories* (*cabanes*) used as pigeon houses, Haute-Provence.

the stone walls of country abodes are covered with a blend of lime and naturally pigmented sand, which gives a striking variety of red, ochre, and orange hues to the facades of the local houses. The only exception to this rule of the roughcast can be explained by geographical and social factors. On the one hand, in the high country, climatic conditions are unsuited to preserving the external coating: in most houses the stones are not roughcast, but loosely jointed together. On the other hand, most of the estate owners' farms display their free-stones, as they are a distinctive feature of the architecture of the nobility.

Only the buildings associated with lower social status were not built of stone: such is the case in the Camargue with mounted 'cowboys' (*gardians*) huts whose apsidal gabled walls offered a higher wind resistance, and that had a structure of willow or elm poles intertwined with sheaves of reeds which are also used to cover the roofs. This was also the case for poor peasants' houses erected on the sedimentary soil of the Rhône and Durance valleys; those were built in *pisé*, locally named *tâpi*, a term closely linked to the catalan *tapia* or the Arab dialect *tabya*, from Maghreb.

The other predominant material in local architecture is baked clay, both used in the paving of floors – square or hexagonal tiles – and in the covering of the roofs. The hollow tile replaced the Roman tile in the Middle Ages and plays at the same time the parts of coverer (the one above) and covered (the one under). It also contributed to creating an original feature in Provençal architecture, seen ever since the 17th century, 'the *génoise*', a cornice made of one or two rows of shortened tiles, aimed at protecting the facade from streaming rain-water. Only in some border areas were roofing materials other than tile to be seen: stone slates (*lauzes*), schist slates, and timber slates from larch trees in Alpine Provence.

As a rule in this area open to the icy blasts of the northwest wind, the *mistral*, the facades look into the south. Side walls and back walls are most often blind, which allows lateral or back extensions from the main body.