

## Article

# From Granary to Arts Incubator: An Evolutionary Perspective on the Concept of *Food for Thought*

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**Abstract:** Does our *food for thought* come virtually from the internet? When we take a long view, the instant stroke of a keyboard pales in comparison to the centuries-old evolution of real food harvesting and the generation and exchange of ideas, which have resulted in creative capital. The vernacular architecture of the agricultural built environment has almost dematerialized in its transition from the ancient pre-industrial era to the post-truth world, to become almost only an imagined concept. The symbology of the common threshing terrace of a Portuguese remote mountain village can now be found in multiple spaces of the urban realm, including in the metaphor of a community arts incubator's *modus operandi* in Albany, New York (USA). How has the concept of *food for thought* developed and materialized? How has it evolved? And what are some of the expected ways it might be utilized in the future? The purpose of the paper is to trace the evolution of this concept and its elements via the BLC Framework. The methodology employs a time analysis of approximately three centuries to distinguish three distinct evolutionary phases: (i) the pre-industrial era, (ii) the industrial era, and (iii) the information-driven era. The key finding is an up-to-date discussion of the *food for thought* concept in two distinct geographical worlds and three-time eras, as well as a set of lessons learned according to a protest poem and a rock song. The results are presented in the form of five lessons learned with implications for public policy: the first two lessons pertain to issues of procedural justice as encapsulated in the anonymous 'The Goose' poem, while the last three result from a discussion of selected verses in Nick Cave's 'Fable of the Brown Ape' rock song.

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**Keywords:** working landscape; community prosperity; BLC framework; Northern Iberian Peninsula; US Northeast; New York

## 1. Introduction

One is tempted to think that our *food for thought* comes virtually from the great commons known as the internet [1,2]. However, when we take a long view, the instant stroke of a keyboard pales in comparison to the centuries-old evolution of food cultivation, storage, and sustainable consumption not only of real food [3], but also the generation and exchange of ideas, which have resulted in creative capital. *Food for thought* is commonly understood as an idea or issue to ponder; dictionary.com traces the evolution of this metaphoric phrase, transferring the idea of digestion from the stomach to mulling something over in the mind, to the late 1800s [4]. Ricoeur equated the symbol as a way to rise to thought or 'food for thought' [5] (p. 196). In the context of this research, the vernacular architecture of the pre-industrial era agricultural built environment has almost dematerialized in its transition from the ancient era to the post-truth world to become mostly an imagined symbolic concept.

The symbology of the common threshing terrace ('eira') of a remote Portuguese mountain village can now be found in multiple spaces of the urban realm, as well as in a semi-public and semi-private community arts incubator in Albany, New York (USA). How did the concept of *food for thought* first develop and materialize? How has it evolved? And

what are some of the expected ways it might be utilized in the future? These constitute the main research questions of this article.

The article's purpose is to trace the evolution of the *food for thought* concept and its associated elements via the BLC Framework (i.e., Building, Landscape, and Community) across the Atlantic Ocean. Central to the analysis is the evolution of granaries to barns, knowing that these built-up structures are unique examples of ingenious design and craftsmanship which pair form and function together and have the potential to influence community development practices. In the context of industrial farming, once ubiquitous agricultural buildings may now be considered endangered elements of working landscapes. Growing historic preservation efforts have recognized their picturesque character dotting bucolic landscapes throughout the countryside and the saved structures may be responsible for augmenting their aesthetic and emotional values in what has been referred to as the 'landscapes of heart and mind' [6].

Perhaps the most novel and significant contribution of the paper is the conjugation of more than three centuries of analysis, its territorial span, and the three unique elements of the BLC Framework. In particular, the explanation of how agricultural buildings have crossed the Atlantic Ocean and found new uses in the New World fills a gap in the existing literature on vernacular architecture and landscapes, which tends to either examine buildings and landscapes in Europe [7] or the United States [8], but not both simultaneously. The research relied mostly on qualitative methods, including visits to various vernacular architectural, built heritage, and community center sites since 2007 (fieldwork in Portugal, 2007; fieldwork in Buffalo, 2016); semi-structured interviews; literature and popular press reviews; and the discussion of lessons learned according to commons planning themes. The key finding is an up-to-date discussion of the *food for thought* concept in two distinct geographical worlds and three-time eras (XIXth, XXth, and XXIth centuries), as well as a set of lessons learned according to a protest poem and a rock song, The Goose and The Fable of the Brown Ape, respectively.

The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals a goose from off the common.  
But leaves the greater villain loose  
Who steals the common from the goose [9].

Farmer Emmerich went into his barn  
And found a cow suckling a serpent  
And a brown ape clanking a heavy chain  
Said Farmer Emmerich to the ape  
Never ask me to come into this barn again  
So Long Farewell So Long [10].

The paper is in five parts. Following this introduction, part one is the analytical mechanism with a background review of the evolution of the granary/barn building, its substantive theories, and emblematic geographical examples from across the Atlantic Ocean. Part two is the methodology and materials section. Part three provides some background on these three case study sets: set #1: Soajo and Lindoso in the Alto Minho region of Northern Portugal; set #2: the states of Connecticut and New York; and set #3: the Albany Barn in Albany, New York. Some of the background features under scrutiny include geographic location, relevance to the research study, unique features, basic statistics, conservation status, attention in professional practice, and scholarly literature. Part four is the comparative analysis and discussion of the case studies according to the BLC Framework. And finally, part five is the conclusion and implications section of the study.

## 2. Analytical Mechanism—Prologue and Background

### 2.1. A Prologue on Time Scales, Geographical Regions, and Transitions of the Study

Granaries are thousands of years old [11]. This paper is mostly concerned with the recent history of farm buildings, from the late XVIIIth century onwards, and their implications for community development. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that the sustainability of food resources has enabled civilizations not only to survive but to thrive. Of these, corn cultivation has played a very important role in the world's economy since at least the end of the XVth century. Corn was taken to the United States by European explorers and spread in the south and Midwest regions of the country [12]. From the XVIIIth century onward, the vastness of the fields together with new industrial farming techniques enabled the widespread cultivation of this crop. In a sense, corn is a very versatile crop as it prospers in many environments, it provides high nutritional value, high yields, and it is relatively simple to cultivate, store, and process [13]. Corn and other grains became essential to feed not only humans but also domestic animals. However, the farming frontier in North America has been pushed, in many cases, to its ecological limits in what is known in ecological history as resource overshoots. For instance, it is believed that the Hohokam civilization of the US southwest exhausted its natural resources, leading to its subsequent disappearance before the arrival of the Europeans.

North American agriculture has been more than a production system. It comprises agricultural activities that have evolved over many centuries. The current agricultural system comprises land resource utilization and conservation, labor force, farming and industrial facilities, operations, distribution and logistics, and the commercialization of a whole array of products to satisfy the needs of growing domestic and international markets in a global economy. The food system and its associated agricultural practices are critical to understanding ancient settlements, working landscapes, and the evolution of societal relationships. Of these, domestication resulted from a selection of seeds and the growing of animals for human consumption and to help in farming. Herbaceous, woody plants and cultigens were subjected to husbandry, which involved seed selection to improve productivity. In this sense, farming had a civilizing effect which served to affirm land rights, differentiate gender roles, and strengthen propinquity relationships.

The populations in the growing metropolis of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco required food staples at an increasing rate, of which, prior to modern refrigeration techniques, grain was just one food staple that could be transported long distance without deteriorating. Grain was also utilized to feed domestic and later industrially produced animals throughout the countryside. Grain elevators were used to store and transfer cereals from industrial silos to trains, boats, and later trucks (Figure 1a). Famous grain elevators can still be found in Buffalo, New York (Figure 1b) [14]. Modern refrigeration and logistics technologies have enabled food to be transported by truck and even by plane over thousands of miles. This long-distance hauling of food is responsible for increasing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental costs [15], when a more locally produced and locally consumed philosophy which is a lot more in-tune with the earth's seasons could be practiced.

This study is concerned with how buildings evolve, landscapes change, and socio-economic processes transition among places and their fundamental changes as they do so, including increasing and or decreasing in size, acquiring new forms, and developing new types of functions. In a post-truth reality and in the case of size, it is opportune to invoke Schumpeter's perspective on '*Small is Beautiful*'. A growing disillusionment with industrial era farming and a certain longing for almost bygone ecologically sustainable farming techniques and the memorialization of rich cultural heritage throughout the landscape is partially responsible for a renewed emphasis and transition to more sustainable consumption practices [16].



**Figure 1.** (a) Front page of the American Elevator and Grain Trade newspaper, 15 June 1904 [17]; (b) commemorative sign of the birthplace of the grain elevator in Buffalo, New York.

## 2.2. Theoretical Background on Barns and Examples

The barn building has been undertheorized and under-analyzed in the literature of vernacular architecture and landscape ecology [18]. Housing, religious and military buildings, public infrastructure, public buildings, offices and other commercial buildings, theatres, and sports facilities have received increased attention over the years [19]. The dominant architecture styles of early eras evolved from gothic and baroque to modernism and post-modernism. Forms and typologies have also varied from low-rises to mid-rises and skyscrapers. Some architects gained notoriety for their designs. However, most of the built environment has relied on regularity and ease of duplication.

It is easy to understand why farm buildings did not receive as much attention in the literature as other building types. Their nature was secondary to habitation, praying, managing public affairs, and entertaining and/or being entertained. However, as urban landscapes become increasingly more homogeneous and the rural countryside receives increased attention as a site for reconnecting with one's hinterland and roots, surviving farm buildings, such as barns, are increasingly being preserved for their intrinsic value and original, as well as new, functions [20].

The granary commonly found in Northern Portugal and Spain, under the name of '*espigueiros*' and '*hórreos*', respectively, dates to the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries [21,22]. This typology of grain storage containers is known for its urn-like volume raised on pilotis with round caps to keep rodents at bay. This agricultural building represents one of the most unique typologies of vernacular architecture on the Iberian peninsula. Stone granaries have many variations in terms of size and openings. Some have vertical slats of granite or wood to ventilate the interior. Others have slotted slabs, and the pitched roofs are tiled or covered in stone pavers. Similarly to barns, '*espigueiros*' possess nobility and practicality and a timeless quality to them. Usually, they have a cross at each end, giving the structures the look of small funerary chapels [22]. The most refined solutions resemble ancient *sarcophagi*, raised above ground. Some seem to approach stylistic and formal architecture and others approach archaic matrix represented by prehistoric ash urns from northern Europe.

These structures can be found individually adjacent to residences or in groups near threshing floors. Two common characteristics to both are their construction with granite and elevation from the ground to prevent soil moisture and rodents from damaging the stored grain. In the case of group granaries, their location on the edge of an agglomeration and within walking distance of the agricultural fields reflected a certain proximity to a locality's threshing floor with the intent to minimize transport costs. Their geographic location is deeply influenced by the size of the fields and, above all, the topography of the terrain. The mountainous regions of Northern Portugal (Alto Minho) and Spain (Galiza) supplemented their limited agricultural production with animal husbandry. Herds of sheep, cows, and horses were moved by shepherds to different locations to enable pastoral

activities. Animal sheds were utilized to house flocks overnight. In certain cases, those animal sheds also served as storage spaces for animal fodder when the owner cultivated the nearby fields.

The typical North American barn evolved from English barns (and likely also from the Dutch and German equivalent structures, as well as from southern European granaries, broadly defined) as it was an integral part of the Roman Empire during the European conquest two thousand years ago. Many of the 20,000 or so English settlers who relocated to Massachusetts Bay from England during the Great Puritan Migration (1630–1642) likely were familiar with barn technology. However, it has been recognized that ‘English barns were too small to be of much use in the New World’ [23] (p. 95). Furthermore, big farms produced big harvests and cold winters required shelter for livestock. The agricultural shed still commonly found throughout the northeast of the country dates to the XVIIIth, XIXth, and early XXth century.

The English barn in Connecticut and New York has many similarities with those in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania [24], although the latter tends to be much bigger in size and number of stories. A barn’s function, size, location, material of construction, and durability depended on the topographical features, proximity to raw materials, namely forests, and size of the properties. The most popular construction material for northeastern barns was wood. Their main function was to house domestic animals, fodder, grain, and agricultural tools. The mechanization of agriculture and advances in farming and intense live stocking contributed to the growth of barn structures and their sophistication over time, such as the incorporation of grain silos. The rapid growth of the Sunbelt region of the United States after World War II, coupled with intense animal farms and other forms of industrial food production, required plant factory-like structures not compatible with the original barn typology of two hundred years ago.

Nonetheless, the barns of yesteryear can still be found throughout the northeast. They are still very iconic structures able to perform their intended original functions of providing protection against the elements of nature. Rehabilitated barns are now utilized for social gatherings, such as reunions, weddings, and other types of celebrations. In a post-modern world evermore uniform and homogenous in terms of visual cues due to modern architecture styles [25], urban conservation of heritage structures has gained interest in the context of historic preservation and community economic development [25,26]. However, as we are reminded, ‘the existence of historic resources is not enough to ensure community economic development outcomes’ [27] (p. 3). The rehabilitation and reuse of buildings, and even their functional changes, has occurred partly to prevent their demolition. Furthermore, ‘reuse[s] are richly embedded with heritage value and offer a conceptual challenge to established modes of heritage practice’ [28] (p. 6). In some cases the new uses perpetuate the uses found in the original structures and in other cases, they serve new uses, such as residential, commercial, and service functions [29].

It has been concluded that older and smaller buildings help foster Jane Jacob’s sense of urban vitality and vibrancy in urban settings [30]. So, instead of replacing them with new buildings, it might make more sense to simply adapt and rehabilitate them. A paradox might still persist where revitalized neighborhoods subsequently lead to gentrification and the displacement of existing residents [31]. The agricultural *leitmotif* has some traction even in urban settings, mostly to invoke a connection to a city’s hinterland and its agricultural interdependence. The conversion of urban farms to urbanization often leaves traces of the earlier uses in preserved buildings, agricultural instruments, or in the toponymy of those places. The emphasis on celebrating a working environment can be found in work/live studios, co-working spaces, business incubation centers, and attempts at fostering renewed levels of entrepreneurship and creative commercial activity. Therefore in the XXIst century, the barn metaphor has been exploited to brand-new real estate projects, ranging from exquisite produce and grocery stores to organic cooperatives, specialized gourmet shops, and community centers for artists [32]. This urbanistic trend has been motivated partly by growing concerns with urban sustainability.

In sum, critical fundamentals to understand the evolution of the farm building over various centuries are their vernacular architecture, their relationships with surrounding landscapes [33], and how they function as integral elements of suburban and peri-urban communities [34]. Regarding vernacular architecture, it is rather obvious that a barn's form follows its function and as the sizes of agricultural fields increased, a barn's main functions also widened in scope [35]. However, from the barn as a symbol of agricultural acumen and entrepreneurship, we moved to a phase where these structures became symbols of isolation, ruin, and abandonment. As the number of farms in the United States has continued to shrink, the area of farmland has increased due to levels of mechanization and intensive farming techniques. We also shifted to a more widespread attempt at integrating ecological landscape functions in various domains of the urban realm. The long-held Jeffersonian agrarian ideal tied farming to civic virtue. And this brings us to a community's sense of belonging and identity. Art incubators are also good examples of attempts at helping to foster creative capital [36–38]. The gathering of individuals to accomplish a certain task (e.g., *barn raising*) is likely to bring reward to all who partake in the activities conducive to its realization.

### 3. Materials and Methods

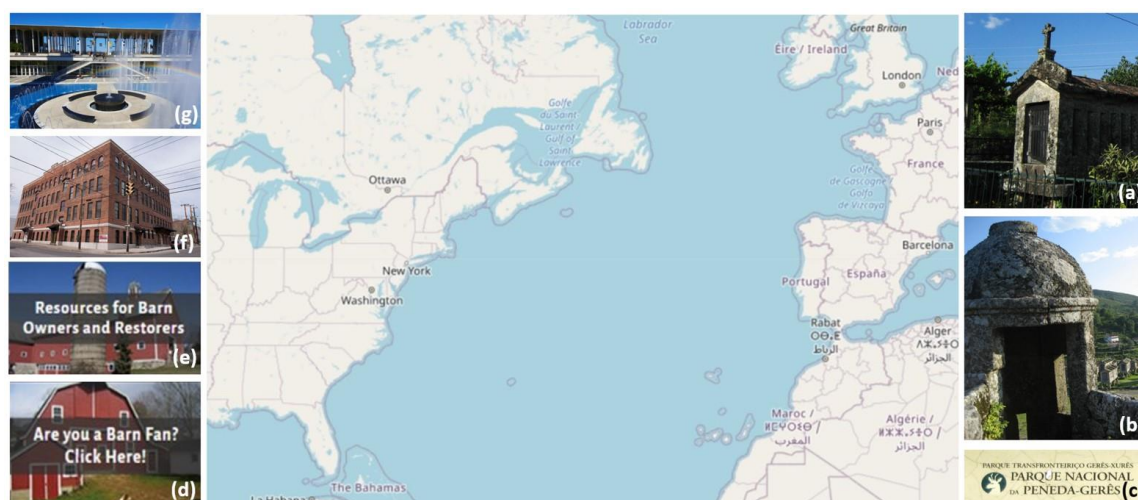
This paper comprises an evolutive analysis of the three-pronged BLC Framework. It employs a time analysis of approximately three centuries to distinguish three distinct evolution phases: (i) the pre-industrial era, (ii) the industrial era, and (iii) the information-driven era. These three phases parallel rather nicely, with the three periods of landscape architecture considered earlier as being: traditional landscapes, the landscapes of the revolutions, and the post-modern new landscapes [39]. Likely, accessibility, urbanization, globalization, and the impact of calamities have been different in each era and affected the nature and place of the changes experienced over time. This study also attempts to discuss a contrasting analysis of places in the 'Old World' (Figure 2) and the 'New World' in the hopes of emphasizing the migration of livelihoods across the Atlantic Ocean between places at approximately the same latitude (see Figure 3).

The research methods comprised *in loco* visits to all case studies, desk research of barn characteristics in a multitude of US states, the comprehensive study of built environments endowed with valuable cultural heritage, the review of arts incubators, 6 semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders of an arts incubator in Albany, New York, in-depth reviews of specialized literature and newspaper articles, and discussion of the lessons learned according to a protest poem (The Goose) and the lyrics of a rock song by Nick Cave: 'Fable of the Brown Ape.' The semi-structured interviews in Albany took place in the context of an arts and culture workshop at the Basilica in the town of Hudson (Albany Barn founder)—the Basilica is a renovated XIXth century forge and foundry for steel railway wheels turned into a non-profit multidisciplinary arts center in 2010, please see [40]; the teaching of a Community Development undergraduate course at the University at Albany in Fall 2017—Figure 3 (Albany Barn executive director); and regular visits to the Discover Albany Visitors Center, Quackenbush Square, downtown. On the one hand, this qualitative research strategy is justified in terms of the combat nature of the poem, which I find appropriate to discuss the usurpation of the commons and the search for more effective commons governance principles and rules, under a Common Pool Resources (CPR) framework. On the other, the rock song serves as an attempt at finding better ways to co-exist in more equitable, fair, and just ways (e.g., pooling resources from multiple sources via public–private partnerships (PPP) and establishing graduating sanctions, such as claw-backs in the contractual relations metaphor, i.e., the brown ape's heavy chain).





**Figure 2.** (a) Street signs showing directions to the stone granaries in Portugal. (b1) Artistic map of the Soajo village. (b2) Billboard of the Peneda-Gerês National Park. (c) Military fortress with stone granaries in the background.



**Figure 3.** World map (for illustration purposes; not to scale) depicting images of the ‘Old World’ with a (a) stone granary in Portugal, (b) a military fortification, and (c) a National Park’s logo, and of the ‘New World’ with images of (d), (e) barns in Connecticut, (f) the Albany Barn case study in Albany, New York, and (g) the University at Albany uptown campus [41].

The *in loco* method has been termed the “shoe leather” technique, an attempt at acquiring intimate, comprehensive, and meticulous knowledge of the phenomenon under study by literally going places, immersing oneself in the reality under study, talking to other participants, and searching for details and facts to reach a research design and implementation capable of eliminating rival explanations [42]. The purpose of “shoe leather” research is not to replace statistical modelling, but it is ideal in situations where data are difficult to acquire and make sense of through other readily available means [43].

All case studies were chosen based on the author’s familiarity with the selected sites, their cultural real and or perceived heritage value, rehab and conservation potential, and the sustainable entrepreneurial nature [44] of the most recent case study in the capital region of upstate New York. It is important to disclaim that the units of analyses range from sites with high concentrations of historic vernacular granaries in two nearby localities in Northern Portugal (24 stone granaries in Soajo and 50 in Lindoso), two US north-eastern states with a majority of XIXth and XXth century barns (around seventeen thousand in New York and eight thousand in Connecticut), some still in excellent state of

conservation, to a rehabilitated arts incubator building inspired by barn tradition in Albany, New York.

The discussion of the evolution of barns in the United States is restricted to only Connecticut and New York because the main barn typology in these two states did not migrate beyond the Appalachian Mountain range to the Midwest region, as happened with the large Pennsylvania barn typology [23]. While folklorists tend to study agricultural buildings as examples of material culture [8]; here, I attempt to establish connections with other aspects of the recent history of governance and public policy approaches to managing places at the intersection of vernacular architecture, landscape ecology, and community development. In a way, this is an effort at responding to a call for rethinking local heritage through microcosmic research of global awareness and impact [45]. This new interest in understanding the value of cultural landscapes surely emerged in Europe during the early 1980s and has more recently forced a reappraisal of countryside heritage [46].

There is a renewed emphasis in understanding the value of rural landscapes. It was also recognized that ‘the cultural dimension of landscapes has been neither adequately studied nor considered “mainstream” in contemporary landscape ecology’ [47]. Therefore, similarly to earlier arguments that buildings could be appropriate sources to trace the evolution of US agricultural policy history, and the potential in motivating change through sustainable design and behavior in the built environment [23,48], the goal of this study is to understand the evolution of the *food for thought* concept and to extract lessons learned with broad applicability to public policy scenarios.

#### 4. Case Studies

The case studies analyzed in this paper can be thought of as belonging to three distinct generations: (i) the stone granaries in the Soajo and Lindoso villages in Alto Minho correspond to the first generation of agricultural structures; (ii) the Connecticut and New York barns are emblematic of the second generation of farm buildings; and (iii) the Albany Barn is a fair example of the third generation, corresponding to the symbolic utilization of vernacular architecture in an urban setting. The Albany Barn, a USD11 million investment in a unique arts incubator in Albany’s Arbor Hill, was planned to give ‘an economic boost to one of the city’s poorest neighborhoods’ [49].

##### 4.1. The Stone Granaries of Northern Portugal

These two case studies are in Alto Minho, a bioclimatic region characterized by its temperate climate, cool weather, and high precipitation, which represents approximately 10% of the land area of the north of Portugal [50]. The Alto Minho is predominantly a granitic region with a total area of 871 sq.mi. (2255 km<sup>2</sup>). The wide availability of this material regionally propitiated its utilization in different building techniques. Alto Minho’s region incorporates an Atlantic coastline in the west, two fertile river valleys, and the country’s only National park, the Peneda Gêres National Park (PGNP). Over the years, the Alto Minho region has experienced a population exodus, which was particularly pronounced in the 1960s and 1970s. A consequence of the exodus was rapid population ageing, with a relatively small active working population [50] (p. 332).

The small mountainous villages of Soajo and Lindoso (population c. 1000 people each) in Alto Minho’s Northern Portugal are located within the PGNP’s precinct (Figures 4 and 5). Since 1971, the park has been a top protected area located in one of the most underpopulated regions of the country. The park’s 271 sq.mi. (702 km<sup>2</sup>) consisting of a mostly granitic mountainous region aims to preserve biophysical ecosystem services such as biodiversity, watershed regulation, and landscape aesthetic and cultural values. Alto Minho’s patrimonial heritage consists of four main elements: (i) built heritage (religious buildings, manor houses, granite built maize stores—Espigueiros); (ii) a small rustic landscape, a pattern of landholding in which ownership comprises a series of small plots (<0.5 ha or <1.2 acre) scattered around village settlements; (iii) the many markets, fairs, and festivals; and (iv) the region’s gastronomy [50] (p. 334). The region’s landscape is



characterized by irrigated agriculture, forming a green landscape with dense and diverse vegetation, ideal for vineyards and pasture, and growing vegetables, olive trees, and diverse crops including maize, a crop introduced in Portugal during the XVIth and XVIIth centuries from Brazil, with cultural and social implications [51]. Traditional agropastoral communities combine the incipient agriculture with more prominent cattle-breeding and exploration of forest resources. Cattle breeding has benefited from extensive uncultivated lands. A common feature is that herds graze loose unattended or guarded, according to a communal practice of *vezeiro* [51] and interviews with residents in the Peneda-Gerês National Park].



**Figure 4.** Bird's eye view of Lindoso's locality with its stone granaries and communitarian threshing floor.

The two rural villages of Soajo and Lindoso are surrounded by crop fields, forest areas, bushland, and communal lands. These remote villages possess a strong communitarian tendency, powerful sense of communing, and a Dionysian collective character. Their proximity to the frontier with Spain explains their relative peripheral and conservation status. Both Soajo and Lindoso are classified as protected sites of historic interest (*Imóvel de Interesse Público*). In fact, the national park provides a level of protection and marketing that could not otherwise be accomplished by the villages' own means. Each of the two localities has individual stone granary complexes near a common infrastructure: the threshing terrace (*'eira'*). All stone granaries in Soajo were renovated in 2000. Lindoso also has a ruined medieval castle, which represents a loss of cultural landscape. The threshing terrace doubles as a working site and a gathering place. Both stone granaries are located on the villages' edges. This facilitates the agglomeration of residences and of granaries, according to economies of scale, approximately halfway between the fields and the localities.

Working fields are often delimited and protected by stone walls. The vernacular architecture of stone granaries is aimed at providing grain storage without the risk of the cereal being stolen by rodents. The ventilation shafts enable air circulation without the accumulation of moisture. Both Soajo and Lindoso's small village environment represents the vernacular architecture of the remote countryside, while the working landscapes are patently visible in the nearby pre-industrial cultivation fields and in the apparatus created to clean and store the cereal.



**Figure 5.** View of Soajo's stone granaries.

It has been recognized that the stone granaries have 'a solemnity and grace that eludes most contemporary builders' [22] (p. 98). Furthermore, the same author affirmed that '[c]ows graze and hens nest among the pilotis, making the complex an organic extension of the land and the perpetual hard-scrambled existence of its residents' [22] (p. 98). The 'Vernacular Architecture Prize Espigueiros and Hórreos: Stone Granaries in the Iberian Peninsula (Portugal and Spain)' was awarded to both locales in 2009 at the 11th edition of the International Stone Architecture Award Competition. Finally, the communitarian social capital can be observed in the millenary knowledge of farming, the preparation and storing of cereal, and the ensuing socio-economic capital generated and utilized to advance the prosperity of each locality.

#### 4.2. The Northeastern Barns

Upon arrival in North America, the early settlers rejected the European village model of co-habitation and adopted a farmstead rural existence instead [23]. The former would require farmers to walk from the village to the field and then walk back at night. Furthermore, the farmstead created a sharp slip between farmers and townspeople, 'which persists in America even to the present day' [23] (p. 95).




Cereal cultivation is widespread throughout certain regions of the United States. Abundant fertile land and ample water supplies for the irrigation of fields are critical to productive cultivation activities. Besides the two remote mountain villages in southern Europe, this study also analyzes agricultural developments in two states in the northeast region of the country, mostly due to their relatively high concentration of family-owned land and major bodies of water. Farming in the northeast occupied a central place in the initial settlement of the country, although it rapidly lost some of its protagonism to the vast Midwestern prairies, the southern plantations, and the fertile lands of central California. Many of these bioclimatic regions also developed their own distinct vernacular architectural heritage. By the first half of the XXth century, the United States accounted for about one-half of the world's corn production. American corn output accelerated even further after World War II, with a growing percentage devoted to feeding domestic livestock [13].

Figure 6 shows how the main characteristics of US barns evolved over time from their subsistence existence to the corporate market typology. This evolution also shaped the farms' building technology and structures mostly due to a radical change of emphasis from family farming to commercial exploration. The most striking difference is the incremental transition from the regular farm building and barn to an almost conglomerate of pre-fab structures comprising multiple agricultural buildings and silos [6] (p. 5).

As mentioned above, the scope of this study is restricted to the northeastern states of Connecticut and New York. Both states have created organizations to lobby for the preservation of agricultural barns, of which the Historic Barns of Connecticut and the New York

State Barn Coalition are some of the most vocal and well-known ones. Outside of the large and mid-sized northeastern cities and towns, the relatively small parcels of family-owned land resulted in deeply atomized landscapes dotted by rural villages, hamlets, and dispersed farms. Connecticut is the southernmost state of New England. It is a small state (population c. 3.5 million, 2020; area: 5543 sq.mi. or 14,356 km<sup>2</sup>) in comparison with New York (population c. 19 million in 2020; area: 54,556 sq.mi. or 141,299 km<sup>2</sup>). Nonetheless, it possesses a high degree of parcellation of land, with a relatively high dispersion of small and mid-sized barns. The state's coastal area to the south is protected by Long Island's portion of New York state.

The report entitled 'Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: An architectural and historical overview' produced for the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation identifies these four phases in the evolution of barns in the state: (i) The Connecticut Colony 1635–1780; (ii) Agricultural Economy 1780–1850; (iii) Consolidation and Decline 1850–1930; and (iv) the Agricultural Renewal phase [52]. Moreover, 'the oldest type of barn, the so-called 'English barn,' is still the most common form standing in Connecticut today' [52] (p. 5). Many of these barns were enlarged or otherwise reconfigured over time. The Historic Barns of Connecticut entity has categorized the state's barns according to form, purpose, and construction (Figure 7). Form refers to English, New England, Connecticut, Polygonal/Round, and Gambrel. The purpose dimension refers to one or more of these dominant uses: Tobacco, Onion, Dairy, Poultry, and Sheep. And finally, the construction dimension varies from Scribe Rule framing, Square Rule, Balloon framing, and Pre-Fab, to Pole barn. Dedicated volunteers have inventoried approximately eight thousand barns throughout the state of Connecticut.

Time / Char.	Markets	Labor	Farming	Structures	Building Technology	Pictorial representations
Survey 1818	[1] Subsistence	Shared labor Labor intensive, Normal power	Family farming	Log cabin Simple barn	Timber from land, hand cut	
Statehood 1837				Farmhouse Grand barn Granary Chicken coop Woodshed	Field stones Hand forged nails Milled lumber Machined nails Pine siding	
Civil War 1865	Local	Farm intensive	Scientific	Gambrel roof Silos (1875)		
1900	[2] Regional	Mechanization	Specialization	2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> house	Wind, stonex concrete silos	
WWII 1945	[3] National		Commercial	Pole barn "Harvesters"	Pole barns, industrial, pre-fabricated components	
1975	[4] International	Scientific – field/fertilizer				
1987	[5] Corporate				Pre-fab structures	

**Figure 6.** Evolution of barns' characteristics in Michigan (and United States) [6] (p. 5).



New York state may be well-known for having the largest city in the country. Nonetheless, the state possesses some very fertile agricultural regions such as the Hudson and the Mohawk River valleys, as well as prime agricultural land in the west [53]. Active farms still account for ‘7 million acres of land, just less than a quarter of the state’s total area’ [24] (p. x). According to the same author, the percentage of farmland (24 percent) is slightly higher than in Connecticut (13 percent) [24]. New York state ranks second in the nation in ‘acreage planted in corn for silage and third in the value of sales of milk and other dairy products’ [24] (p. x). New York state possesses rolling hills with some large property estates, where barns located adjacent to the family home play an important role in sheltering domestic animals, their fodder, and agricultural tools and machinery. It is a well-known truism that the average size of the barn reflects the size of the property, which also come in various types. These multiple built-up structures also vary depending on their proximity to terrain features, water bodies, and access roads. In both Connecticut and New York, the vernacular architecture of isolated buildings satisfies their function relatively well but does not necessarily contribute to creating economies of scale as the farm estate is reduced to habitation and storage quarters (i.e., one pairwise home/barn per farm, not a set of barns located together on the edge of a small village).

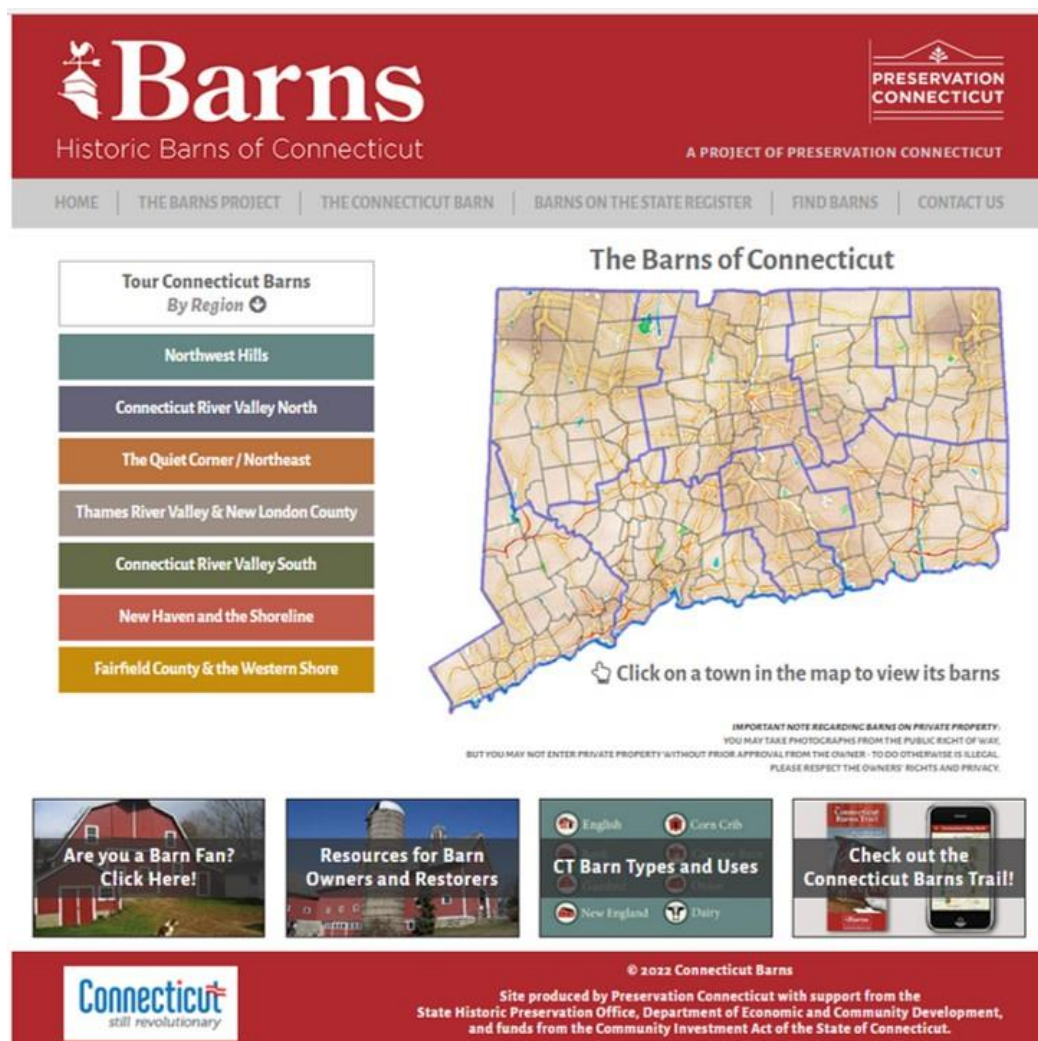


Figure 7. Historic barns of Connecticut [54].

Therefore, the rural landscape of these states’ countryside is deeply agricultural, dotted with single cells constituting interspersed working and extractive landscapes of land cultivation and forest land. A sense of pride is still felt by those who cultivate the land;

however, outside of punctual cooperative arrangements, it is difficult to identify a community spirit as farmers tend to compete amongst themselves. The relative self-isolation of living and working on their own farms, together with a system of private ownership of land, tends to create a clear demarcation between urban and rural environments. The high levels of agricultural specialization tend to drive production. Mechanization has also greatly reduced the number of people working the land [55]. Despite these tendencies, the state of New York still possesses more than seventeen thousand barns constructed prior to 1960 [24] (p. xvii).

### 5. The Albany Barn

The concept for the Albany Barn arts incubator in Albany, New York (Figure 8a–c) was initially inspired by the movement Rock2Rebuild, when following the 2004 South Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina (interview with Albany Barn founder), a group of local individuals fundraised an event to sponsor relief efforts [56,57]. Those who spearheaded the fundraising assembled some local and regional visual artists and musicians and together they organized a concert to raise money. The artists' willingness to dedicate their talent to a good cause rapidly inspired others in Albany. In the words of the Albany Barn's executive director, artists were passionate about doing something bigger than themselves, but they were typically unable to do this, because of the difficulty to pay rent and make a decent living while paying to work in a shared studio and work on their own artistic projects [57] (p. F1).



**Figure 8.** (a) The Albany Barn building; (b) artistic sign on the building's façade emphasizing the agricultural barn symbology; (c) detail of the façade's notable architecture of the renovated St. Joseph's Hall rechristened the Albany Barn [58–60].

Since its inception in 2014, the Albany Barn has served as 'a place of stability for artists and the community' [56] (p. F1). According to the same source, the Albany Barn serves as a new community anchor for the whole Arbor Hill neighborhood [56] (p. F1). It offers 'a space and the tools for people to engage in a conversation about revitalization, to set goals, and to celebrate art and culture' [56] (p. F1). The Albany Barn involved the rehabilitation of a cultural heritage building (i.e., the former S. Joseph Academic School—Figure 8c) on Swan Street in Albany's Arbor Hill neighborhood [61,62]. This community economic development resulted from a partnership between the Albany Housing Authority and a private developer. This unusual venture is an example of an entrepreneurial real estate project that converted a public school into an arts incubator with potential spin-off effects beyond the site where it is located. A long history of demolishing neighborhoods to either house a government complex or its public infrastructure, such as highways and



expressways, has left a toll on Albany's residents [63]. Therefore, rehabilitating buildings of historic significance seems to be a welcomed practice, not only by elected officials and real estate developers, but also by the community itself.

The Albany Barn was modelled on AS220 in Providence, Rhode Island; 'a small collective of artists who found an abandoned warehouse building, took out a traditional mortgage and had a couple of anchor tenants on the ground floor' [64]. One of the main differences between the Albany Barn and AS220 seems to be the public-private partnership between the Albany Barn and the Albany Housing Authority. According to Holler, the name Albany Barn stands for the idea of '*raising a barn*', 'the community coming together to raise a structure that ultimately benefits everyone, not just the folks who inhabit it' [64] (p. E2).

The urban intervention comprised the rehabilitation of an old form to enable new functions. School classrooms, offices, and a gym were converted into 22 apartments and approximately 17,000 square feet (1579 square meters) of space for work studios, rehearsal suites, performance space, a digital media center, retail space, and offices for the professional artist community [65]. This twenty first century landscape urbanism approach entailed a new community center for the Arbor Hill neighborhood and a whole pilot project for the whole city of Albany—a place capable of leveraging the neighborhood's assets, while helping to foster stronger and enduring connections across the mostly African American neighborhood. From a community perspective, artists reside and work near each other (interview with Albany Barn executive director, Fall 2017). This has high potential to generate and expand creative capital throughout the neighborhood and the metropolitan area. Examples of arts and culture initiatives at the Albany Barn have included activities by photographers, painters, musicians, illustrators, and actors. Two theatre companies also keep the arts incubator bustling. The Albany Barn also offers grant writing workshops, career and marketing coaching, and collaborative networking [65] (p. D1). The Albany Barn was supported by a multitude of state and local sources, including the Capital Region Economic Development Council, the Empire State Development, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, the Albany Housing Authority, and the City of Albany.

## 6. Comparative Discussion

### 6.1. Building

The first criterion of the BLC Framework is *Building*. It basically operationalizes the vernacular architecture feature of the selected case studies. To understand the importance of a building typology, one must examine its location, construction, uses, form, function(s), internal organization, access, and relationship(s) with the adjacent exterior space. As explained above in the first generation, the location of the stone granaries in the two villages is on the edge of both localities. In most of the second-generation case studies, it is on the edge of most farms by the access road. And in the third-generation barn, it is on a local street, a block away from an East-West main street arterial road. These multiple locations (almost autonomous small mountainous villages' edges, isolated farms' access roads on fertile river valleys near patches of forest land, and in the first inner-ring residential suburb adjacent to downtown) partially explain how the construction materials capitalized on available resources, such as: granite stone (first generation), wood (second), and prefabricated bricks (third). The relatively low cost but also low durability of wood shows why it was the material of choice in relatively isolated farms near abundant forest resources. On the contrary, the toughness of stone and the high malleability of the use of prefab bricks demonstrate the initial intentions of those who designed and built the stone granaries in Portugal and the school building in Albany, New York, respectively.

The main uses, forms, and functions have evolved from the exclusive storage of cereals, and storage of various farm products (i.e., grain, fodder, and farm tools and instruments) and animal husbandry, to daily utilization, initially for teaching and learning, and

later for artists' co-habitation in live/work environments. This is emblematic of a form that follows function mantra in the first two generations, and the internal conversion of a sizable building to new uses in the third generation. The interior space of the main built-up structure under analysis evolved from an elevated and undivided ample space (first generation), and a ground level partitioned space, in some larger cases a two-story-high building (second generation), to a four story-high building with mixed private and common spaces.

Regarding the facility's access (entrance and egress), this was limited to one elevated door with air vents but no windows (first generation), to multiple doors of variable sizes and locations, and almost none to a limited number of windows (mostly openings to be used as elevated doorways rather than to let sunshine in) (second generation), and a main doorway and side entrances likely to be used as service access (third generation).

Finally, the relationship(s) with the adjacent exterior space range from the structure's placement in high places for ample solar insulation and easy air ventilation to facilitate the drying of cereal (first generation), to the complete separation from the farm estate building, but within relative proximity for easy access (i.e., insulation from animal noises and odors), to a relative central location within a first-ring suburban neighborhood. The vernacular culture of the case studies under analysis has been protected by a national park's legislation in Portugal, public funds, and common interest coalitions. Professional networks have been created to help preserve the rich cultural patrimony of vernacular architecture specimens and their unique landscape settings [66]. For instance, Historic Barns of Connecticut has been dedicated to the preservation of barns in the state since 2004. As of 2012, this organization had nominated 200 barns and conducted research capable of enabling future nominations to the State Register of Historic Places [52].

## 6.2. Landscape

The second criterion of the BLC framework is *Landscape*. This criterion serves as a contextual variable to analyze the broader relationships between the natural and human-made worlds and the vernacular architecture of the built-up structure under analysis. Landscape was defined above as a conceptualization utilized to refer to a unit of observation and an analysis comprising natural and or human-made value and the characteristics and potential use of a site, field, area, neighborhood, city, or region.

It has been argued that a landscape modification gradient is helpful 'to reflect on the increasing human influences on the structure and functioning of landscapes' [67] (p. 1149). A rural landscape's main emphasis appears to be on sustainable agriculture and attempting to apply restorative justice to ancient production modes. Emergent agriculture is based on the philosophies of sustainability, local production, and small-scale farming [68].

The elements of durable societies include environmental stewardship, social justice, economic viability, and ethical behavior. Critical principles of sustainable agriculture are the integration of biological and ecological processes and the minimization of the use of non-renewable inputs, while making productive use not only of farmer's knowledge and skills, but also of people's collective capacities to solve common agricultural problems.

The main landscape elements in the three generations presented above evolved from the central role of the common threshing floor, the farm fields themselves, and the most proximate town common as a place to market and exchange goods, to the arts incubator as one of the most recent places of neighborhood centrality and identification. The exclusive working landscape character of the first generation—albeit with a clear separation of agricultural production, cleaning and storage, and living quarters—gave place to a high degree of naturalness in the farmed fields, with cereal preparation and storage occurring partially inside or near each farm's barn. The third generation is characterized by a hybrid urbanscape of creative cultural capital, which takes place in the live/work environments and co-working spaces of the Albany Barn facility.

With the transition from a mostly 'public' working landscape in the first generation and a rather 'private' working landscape in the second, the landscape urbanism emphasis

evidences a return to functions traditionally found in the town common, such as those of a gathering place and a place of exchange, although now not in an open-air environment, but inside a building and only after being granted formal admission. The more urban setting of the third-generation vernacular architectonic structure creates adequate conditions for interactions among artists and between these and the community members who attend events at the arts incubator. This shows a distancing from the natural world so easily found in the first two generations toward a more urbanized context, celebrated no longer as idyllic livelihoods but as almost exclusively urban existences of dwelling and skill [69].

### 6.3. Community

Finally, the third criterion of the BLC Framework is *Community*. Community refers to the aggregate number of individuals in each of the two villages under analysis in the Portuguese case studies, the family and household of each farm in Connecticut and New York, and the totality of individuals who reside, work, own, visit, and operate the arts incubator in Albany. A set of lessons learned has been identified to achieve a balance between preservation and development: ‘Involve residents, find assets in local needs, transfer lessons rather than replicating other’s work, create opportunities for ownership, if it does not exist invent it, and balance culture and commerce’ [25] (p. 28). Most of these community economic development strategies appear to also resonate with the third generation of vernacular architecture under analysis.

To recap, the first generation is bound together by a pre-industrial rudimentary economy of scale, where production and consumption occur near each other and reciprocal help is given in turns to accomplish rotating agricultural shores, albeit with high coordination of schedules to utilize the threshing floor’s common infrastructure. The depopulation of the remote villages in Portugal is creating a conundrum between habitation and tourism [70]. The household community in the second generation possesses great freedom of schedule and of doing tasks at their own pace as production and exchange (selling and buying) occur in different places: the fields and the town common, respectively. In the third generation, residents of the arts incubator live relatively independent lives with relative freedom of schedule, which enables them to do their creative work either individually or collectively if they so wish. Nonetheless, they also require some coordination to jointly promote, sell, and or perform their artistic wares and creations. In fact, the selling of artistic goods and cultural performances tend to occur near each other to also optimize economies of scale.

It has also been argued that ‘it is both possible and preferable to advance an urban economic development strategy based on the local cultural assets that exist in urban neighborhoods’ [25] (p. 28). And a four-pronged approach to historic preservation centered on ‘gauging, protecting, enhancing, and interfacing historic resources with community economic development and sustainability’ has also been suggested [27] (p. 1). There is some evidence to validate both approaches in the case of the Albany Barn. In synthesis, community creative capital has been exchanged in the form of ideas and reciprocal labor on the threshing floor in the first generation; it has been transacted outside of the places of production in the second generation; and finally, it is displayed and or performed at the arts incubator.

## 7. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

This paper’s main goal was to trace the evolution of the *food for thought* concept and to discuss its Building, Landscape, and Community practices across the Atlantic Ocean. The research questions comprised a series of interrogations aimed at clarifying how the concept of *food for thought* first developed and materialized; how it evolved across the Atlantic Ocean; and what some of the expected ways it might be utilized in the future are likely to be. The first conclusion is that the third-generation vernacular architecture of the Albany Barn in upstate New York might very well have emerged out of the ancient pre-industrial self-secluded vernacular architectonic environments represented by the villages

of Soajo and Lindoso in Northern Portugal. If any thought remains, an easier interpretation can be put forward by relying on the ‘food’ part of the ‘*food for thought*’ concept, which has travelled a long distance to influence our contemporary thoughts.

The three-pronged BLC Framework was utilized to analyze and discuss three hundred years of the evolutionary path of the notion of entrepreneurial work, where it occurs, and what its creative outcomes entail. In the first generation, land can be considered an endowment granted by the creator [71]. Acquired knowledge based on accumulated experience then is utilized to cultivate it; the results have not only been food that can be eaten (e.g., grain, vegetables, etc.), but also *food for thought* (i.e., ideas that can be turned into useful knowledge, artistic products, and cultural performances, which can be enjoyed by everybody). It was also demonstrated that the management of land resources, building structures, and personnel requires rules of engagement (e.g., how and when to use shared resources, property ownership entitlements, labor rules for personnel, and rules to coordinate the utilization of common infrastructure).

We ought to recognize that, ‘we need to reconnect culture with nature and unite people with place in theory and practice’ [67] (p. 1149). On the one hand, the overabundance of land in the passage of the first to the second generation led to the privatization of a common resource and a reduction in collective creative capital, which resulted in exploitative practices deployed mostly to maximize profits. Agriculture in the New World has evolved dramatically from its early days of Native American indigenous cultivation techniques. Mechanization and industrialization brought forward farming and massive processing techniques, and now we are realizing that we have come full circle and need to revamp ancient and secular, less destructive, more humane, energy efficient, and more sustainable and ecological cultivation methods. It is believed that many agricultural practices can potentially also mitigate carbon emissions, such as grazing, land management, restoration of degraded lands, and substitution of fossil fuels by agricultural feedstock. This is recommended to rebalance farming to protect the production capacity and ecological characteristics of the land.

On the other hand, new construction outside of consolidated areas of cities partially led to the abandonment of housing in central neighborhoods and, in certain cases, to its subsequent and deliberate demolition, such as during the Federal Urban Renewal Program. The passage from the second to the third generation required investment capital, collaborations to rehabilitate cultural heritage, and marketing skills to attract tenants to the arts incubator. The loss of common creative capital experienced in the first transition was partially off-set in the return to the urban environment. The loss of housing stock in core areas of cities due to both suburbanization to the countryside and demolition of existing structures has been partially off-set with urban renovation and rehabilitation programs, leading to such success stories as the Albany Barn.

There is, nonetheless, room for improvement in the strengthening of the connections between human creativity and the reduction in collective human impact on the planet, which causes damaging and irreversible climate change. This can be achieved via, for instance, zero-acreage farming, vertical farming, farm to table programs, and urban community garden cultivation [72–74]. Also, the optimization of rural landscapes within a landscape governance planning framework ought to ensure the sensible utilization of fragile socio-economic and cultural livelihood systems of places still in their first generation (e.g., via place rewilding) and the establishment of farmland preservation programs in second generation places [75]. There is evidence that this might be starting to occur in Connecticut as the number of farms in operation appears to have increased from 4191 in 2002 to 4916 in 2007 [76] (p. 48). Furthermore, the cultural value of rural environments associated with first generation places ought to be as enhanced and nurtured by public authorities as those currently in their third generation (i.e., in exclusively urban settings). For instance, the need for conservation management of EU priority habitats after the collapse and abandonment of traditional pastoralism in mountain rangeland has also been defended recently [77].

A limitation of this study is the small number of direct case studies utilized to deduct these conclusions. Furthermore, the lack of direct correspondence between the early English colonial settlers and those Portuguese who lived and still live in the Alto Minho region and likely never thought about emigrating to the United States might be another limitation. Nonetheless, there is evidence that the Dutch and Germans who migrated to the regions that later would become New York and Pennsylvania, respectively, also brought with them barn technology that needed to be adapted to the different territorial conditions in North America. As the author has never visited the English, Dutch, or German original barns overseas, his theoretical term of comparison is the model of the remote mountainous village in Alto Minho, which ‘may soon become a memorial for a vanished way of life’ [22].

The key takeaway for the scientific community, as well as the general public, is an up-to-date discussion of the *food for thought* concept in two distinct geographical worlds and three-time eras, as well as a set of lessons learned. These five lessons learned with implications for public policy appear rather sensible. The first two pertain to issues of procedural justice as encapsulated in the anonymous ‘The Goose’ poem, while the last three result from a discussion of selected verses in Nick Cave’s ‘Fable of the Brown Ape’ rock song. The combat poem arguments of ‘The Goose’ might bring some closure to first- and second-generation dilemmas already partially resolved with recourse to vernacular architecture and landscape theoretical constructs as some of the song lyrics appear factual, open-ended, and future-oriented, not necessarily in this order.

And geese will still a common lack  
Till they go and steal it back [78].

But the brown ape escaped  
And was heard to roam the ranges  
Clanking its heavy chain  
Down in the valley it sang to its friend  
Whom he may never see again [10]

*Lesson #1 ‘The law locks up the man or woman [w]ho steals a goose from off the common’:* The vernacular architecture shows us that rodents, as well as people, were unable to reach the food without the help of some sort of staircase in the first generation. Similar certainty might be utilized to demonstrate the privatization of the North American commons, which occurred in the transition to the second generation. The jury might still be out on concerns as to whether democratically elected officials and their representatives negotiated appropriate community gains for the Capital Region of upstate New York in the third generation.

*Lesson #2 ‘But leaves the greater villain loose’:* Although rodents were prevented from stealing food, birds (likely with long beaks) who were able to fly away with small loads of food could technically still steal the cereal from the stone granary (first generation). The overabundance of land and especially the human pursuit of happiness (i.e., the maximization of profits) by most who migrated from the ‘Old World’ to the ‘New World’ could be the answer to the theft of the commons (second generation). Finally, the well-intentioned real estate developer who has recently launched a ‘sister’ barn in an adjacent city of the Capital Region of upstate New York appears to be pursuing a ‘well-oiled’ vernacular architecture operation [79]. To optimize the rehabilitation of historic buildings, a proactive and predictive approach to inventorying and planning the rehabilitation of historic structures has also been defended [80]. Cities could have a more proactive role in assembling those databases and making them available to not only to those with money to invest but to everybody in the community.

*Lesson #3 ‘Never ask me to come into this barn again’:* Not even virtually, one might say, in a post-COVID-19 pandemic age of personal protective equipment (PPE), face masks,



social distancing, Zoom meetings, apps for food delivery, and the patenting of grains that have been in the public domain for millennia by private corporations, personal data harvesting, and pretty much online everything [81].

*Lesson #4 ‘And the ground soaked in the milk of human kindness’:* In the transition from the first to the second generation, the well-intended public–private partnership (PPP) governance mechanism where the ‘public’ pays (i.e., with the sack and usurpation of native land and the public taxes paid by the majority of low- and middle-income groups) and the ‘private’ benefits (i.e., as in the ‘grow and multiply’ religious mantra) might well be a red flag to the tenants of the Albany Barn arts incubator in Albany and in the ‘sister’ arts incubator in Schenectady (i.e., artists be aware! Is the ‘greater villain’ still loose? [82]). The political dilemma of rent recapture is, nonetheless, open for debate. ‘Left wing’ and ‘right wing’ advocates tend to propose different interpretations on how to go about recapturing rent profits [78]. The former likely claim that taxes should be drawn from land, labor, and capital to pay for public services and to foster social equity by their redistribution. And the latter proponents hold that efficiency requires more wealth to remain in private hands, and that the government should only receive the minimum necessary provision of public services.

*Lesson #5 ‘Down in the valley it sang to its friend whom he may never see again’:* Is it rather opportune to ask for reparations and indemnities three centuries later? The answer might be that the ‘public’ pays... only and so long as contractual claw-backs are imposed on the thefts caused by the ‘greater villain’! This appears to be the most plausible arrangement to atone for the injustices suffered by the property dispossessed of this one planet we call home and who have not yet been able to partake in the prosperity generated by real food, let alone *food for thought*. Networks of properly nurtured individuals ought to finally be able to conceive of a better vernacular architecture capable of sustaining integral landscapes [20] for all and not only for the few who receive the crumbs from the creator’s table (also known as cereals from your barn).

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