

## VerSus International Student Competition

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### Contemporary rural settlement in Los Pedrones (Valencia)

#### 1. VERNACULAR STUDY CASE ANALYSIS

The numbers found in the description refer to the points of analysis according to the method proposed by VerSus.

1. CULTURAL LANDSCAPE The project site is a terraced valley in the Mediterranean coast, in the Iberian peninsula. This place is not a natural territory, but an anthropic landscape. In this part of Europe is not possible to understand nature without human hand. The land and culture have evolved together for millennia, generating wealth and prosperity in the Mediterranean peoples.

2. TERRACES. DRYSTONE WALL Although stone wall may seem a simple construction, it performs several interesting features. It functions as retaining walls for agricultural terraces 11-12-13. It drains stormwater and prevents erosion. 5-6-7 It is built with stones taken from the fields. 15 It allows animal shelters and growing plants inside its joints. Thus, it becomes a reliable biological corridor between the fields. 1 In short, it is an essential element of the cultural landscape.

3. MASONRY HUTS. "Casetas" The "Casetas" (masonry huts) are part of the most archaic heritage of the Mediterranean, with infinite variations. 8 Formerly they serve as protection shelter for agriculture and livestock activities, and currently they are used as a family meeting place. 10 They were built resting on the dry stone walls that separate parcels. With an immediate relation to the fields. 2-4. They were constructed with stones extracted to making the field cultivable, and with nearby material like pine wood and reeds. 3-13-14-15. The "casetas" are often built with precise orientation, with the entrance facing south and protected from the north. 2-4

4. COUNTRYHOUSE. "Casa de Labor"

The "Casas de Labor" are compact groups of buildings, arising in rainfed areas and linked to water resources. They are usually surrounded by various agricultural buildings like barnyards and threshing floor. 2-4. Currently the "Casas de Labor" in the area are all deprecated, due to improved communications and services offered by small urban agglomerations. In the past, they formed a network of territorial colonization and transformation. Its construction was carried out with nearby material. 3-13-14-15

#### 2. PROPOSAL IDEA AND STRATEGIES

The current situation of socio-economic instability is leading to a paradigm shift. Many young people no longer consider cities as places of opportunity, and are coming back to the country field looking for a future.

But coming back to the countryside should be worth. Based on a conception of life and the economy beyond the quantifiable, This project is a reflection on how should be **the contemporary rural settlements**.

This project is based on 3 strategies:

I. STROKES RESPECT The project is implemented as a new layer of time, the next line of a story being carved in the territory for more than 500 years. The most important traces in this place are the limits of the territory, especially roads and the terraces. The new settlement emphasizes these lines, assimilates the language and proposes a distribution that does not break with the internal rules of geometry generation. An analysis of the work of Pablo Palazuelo is made to generate compositions departing from the existing and proposing the next logical state. The project spans within the territory, embracing the different fields (each with a different crops) and generating new terraces where slope permits. The intervention has an agricultural character, and is dissolved in the territory.

II. PRODUCTIVE FIELDS There is a majority-held belief that cultivating the field involves going against the species that inhabit it. Of course, it is harmful if the way to grow is extensive and exhausts all soil wealth. But if man is able to settle in a responsible manner, he can generate artificial or man-made habitats of great ecological value. The settlement will preserve the country field keeping it productive. It will follow organic and biodynamic farming principles.

III. MATERIALITY CONTRAST Approach the country culture does not mean that our proposal has to be anachronistic. Instead, we must find the balance by adding our "layer of time". The cross section can be understood as the interaction of two distinct technologies: The first (tectonic) is heir to the tradition and related to the land where it is inserted, retains the patterns and the way of build of the place. The second (stereotomic) shows the spirit of the time, drastic changes experienced by our generation. A global, technical and fast construction.

### 3. IMPLANTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

To understand that this place and its strokes are a cultural good, makes sense to use resource and energy supply strategies that do not compromise future generations.

There are use construction materials present on the site, like stone and pine wood.

Industrialized items are selected according to ecological standards, bioconstruction and nearby availability.

The resource network is proposed as a circuit that minimizes waste. There are centralized and distributed installations. To distribute energy and water is used the coping of the new stone walls.

Drinking water is pumped and stored in a reservoir. In addition, each module has its own rainwater tank. The units have solar panels and combined with wind turbines provide enough electricity for the settlement.

Water treatment is done by irrigation ditches that run parallel the walls and units to a biofiltration pond. Composting toilet are proposed for solid waste treatment and compost making.

### 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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