



Urbanism as Farming

La Bazana

Completion Year : 2017

Cosimo, the protagonist of Italo Calvino's *Baron in the Trees*, was a wise rebel who chose to live his whole life on treetops, roaming around Europe from tree to tree. Cosimo represents both the curiosity of the pioneer and a physical condition of connectedness and freedom.

Despite its origin as a peripheral hamlet, La Bazana lies at the centre of the Dehesa landscape: a complex, productive ecological system, which has become fragile due to anthropic pressure and climate change. Our proposal for a productive city is a dehesa-inspired landscape: a continuous, system of productive trees and crops which, combined with the water infrastructure, foster the Dehesa's resilience while introducing new ways of producing and living in La Bazana.

Scenario. Rather than a fixed project, we propose to foster a bottom-up design process. We showcase the one scenario of implementation that we deem preferable which we named La Finca de La Bazana. The Finca is a productive landscape, a platform for collective knowledge and entrepreneurship, and a spatial strategy. The main structure of the Finca is the productive landscape, developed at different scales: outside the city's boundaries the landscape is devoted to experimental contemporary agroforestry and ecological agricultural practices; inside the urban fabric the landscape is solely composed of fruit trees, which both produce a marketable good and help to redefine, give order or re-establish the spatial qualities of La Bazana. Each square chooses their species, the design of the square, and participates in the planting festivals. The entire city participates in the redesign and "rebuilding" of Plaza de Espana.

Process. The platform for collective knowledge is at the basis of our implementation proposal. The main, real, action we propose is to install a permanent workshop/academy in the Union Brotherhood, combining both a collection of tools for building, and a platform for debate, collective design, and investigation on contemporary agroforestry practices. We also propose to foster very simple forms of intervention on the built fabric. Within the original urban layout, the boundary walls can be thickened to incorporate small spaces for hospitality. Along the southern border, the courtyard plots can be opened to recover the connection between city and landscape.

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