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VIRTUOUS HYBRIDIZATION IN AGRO-URBAN SPACES

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Abstract

Sprawl, urban decentralization, marginality of outskirts, presence of high-speed Infrastructures and ecological networks are some of the most pressing issues moved from the contemporary urban context. In many cases, sprawl saturating areas of agricultural land. Therefore, it is pertinent to ask which are potentiality areas like the Plain of Castellammare Gulf (Sicily) still characterized by the prevalence of agricultural land on built ground? This context suggests seek responses to urban issues starting from cultural, virtual and material resources of the farmland, thereby starting the contamination processes between the traditional categories of "rural" and "urban". However both these entities need to be transformed to continue to be viable. They can simultaneously express both the local and global level: depending on the project idea. Therefore, it seems clear, to achieve a virtuous hybridization between the two terms, the intervention on agro-urban space must be carried out "case by case", as any action in an already defined context: which is typical architecture practice. Taking advantage of observation, interpretation, suggestion and simultaneously, of measurement, metric survey and drawing along the pathway towards its outcomes.

Keywords: Farmland, Plain of Castellammare Gulf, "Hortus explosus", Drawing, Restructuring

1. INTRODUCTION

This reflection¹ starts from the Research Project of National Interest (PRIN 2009) financed by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research: “From the urbanized countryside to the extending town: the rules of composition of the architecture in the countryside and in the smaller towns”, focused on the urbanized area between Isola delle Femmine and Partinico (Italy, northern Sicilian coast), especially concerning relationships between urban fringes and few remaining farmland (Sciascia, 2014).

The several design experiences observed or carried out during that research represent a range of trial and error starting from which, some thought can be annotated in addition by turning attention to the Plain of the Castellammare Gulf, an area which just partially overlaps that of the PRIN research.

These thoughts gather themselves in two complementary parts which, differently, highlight the importance of employing the typical design approach of architecture to inhabitable spaces in the countryside: by describing a futuristic agro-urban scenario for the Plain (first part); then verifying it through a punctual investigation regarding an emblematic piece of this area (second part). By adopting the designing point of view such as a useful work tool to increasing knowledge.

2. VIEWS AND VISIONS

2.1. A view of a geographical context

The Castellammare Gulf is a wide bay, on the northern Sicilian coast, towards which a crescent-shaped Plain (15,000 ha) overlooks between the sea (north) and hills (south). Here the agricultural land still prevails on built ground. Against the countryside background of a Mediterranean-type garden, urban centres of Alcamo and Partinico (both 5 km from the sea) stand out, as do small building lumps like Parrini village (just 10.500 sqm) and the continuous urbanized coastal area, resulting from welding of Trappeto, Balestrate, Alcamo Marina, Castellammare del Golfo.

To understand the particular shape of the bay, it should be observed from a high place, for example Colle Cesarò, a little hill with a hard side falling sheer above Partinico. From here, you can see the two orographical presences which define the Gulf, comprising the sea horizon between Capo Rama (east) and Capo San Vito (west). They are differently shaped: the first is characterized by the west-facing steep side of Palmeto Mount. Its ridge draws the skyline of a very rough rock wall. Westerly, the Zingaro mountain chain which stretches for miles along the sea, drawing an almost wavy skyline although each with its own distinguishable silhouette. The difference of the two rock extrusions is emphasized by natural light which, during the daylight hours, very differently illuminates them.

Several streams mark the Plain in mount-sea direction. Among these, the Jato river flows along a deep cliff in the middle of the Plain; the Nocella river flows at the foot of mounts east. However, another track crosses the Plain in opposite direction: the motorway A29 joining Palermo and Mazara del Vallo. Its construction modified the ancient settlement structure of this territory, which was based on the mount-sea relationships.

¹ This reflection has drawn on the experience and knowledge of Emanuela Davi, namely responsible for chapters 1 and 2, and Luciana Macaluso, namely responsible for chapter 3 and 4.

2.2. Another view of the same context

To better describe the contemporary settlement structure of the Plain, you have to change the standpoint, for example Palmeto Mount. From here you can capture other aspects of this geographic context which appears very distinctive and distant from the static view of Colle Cesarò: there, the landscape seems focused on defining a piece of marine horizon, in a fulfilled vision as if it was a complete cosmos, a theatre of natural time and great weather events.

From the new stance point the Zingaro mountain chain, which previously seemed to embrace the Gulf, is now as a wing which cuts off in a southern direction. Thus showing a part of another geographical context with mountains crowned by slender wind generators. The spatiality opens up to the south-west in a large opening, leading to the areas of Trapani and Mazara del Vallo, where the motorway takes you out and away. After crossing the Plain overlapping the rural fabric, cutting its paths and ancient tracks, establishing a new boundary, an ecological barrier, a morphological discontinuity, a different hierarchical order in the territory. The motorway clearly shows itself as the load-bearing axis of the urbanized system of the Plain: the various, large and small urban centres are bound together in a whole through the high-speed infrastructure.

Between sea and motorway there is the urbanized coastal band. Between motorway and mountains, large agricultural areas extend out up until the foot of the hills or otherwise stop on urban edges. The rural pathways seem almost uninfluential in the relationship between various towns: the countryside appears compact, as a "solid" body represents a separation. The roads crisscross it, breaking it down into inaccessible "islands". Nevertheless, the countryside still unifies the landscape of the Plain for its extension, continuity and the lushness of fields.

2.3. Comparing two views

By comparing the two views, you can annotate some other consideration.

Both describe a *transition landscape*: the sprawl began to advance and along urban margins, the asphalt and concrete edges bump into clods of earth in uncertain ways. The state of the places indicates a territory which can still evolve towards different outcomes from those seen in the nearby area of Palermo. The issue here is to find new ways of interpreting the urban/rural relationship: by bringing together economic, social and cultural interests, you can probably avoid reaching the disintegration of the countryside, the depletion of its virtual or material resources and socio-cultural meanings.

However the second view also suggests the idea of a *transitorial territory*: a section of a route linking capital-cities. You can cross it by experiencing that particular form of knowing consciousness which is typical high-speed (Ingersoll, 2005): an experience in which the most important place (the only one actually associated with defined space and time) is the destination, like the film by Claude Lelouch "C'était a rendez-vous" (1976) emblematically affirmed. This type of knowledge can be tested on any highway, anywhere. However, in the farmland around Partinico, among fields, a few meters from the guardrail, visions and noises of the motorway and its junctions (6 in 22 km) seem distant. The global and local space brush against in a "friction" which could produce "sparks": the two entities are devoid of common interfaces but this condition is not unchangeable. On the contrary, possibilities of their interaction depend on the designing, evidenced in the intervention along the highway A85 joining Angers, Tours and Vierzon (France) by Bernard Lassus.

Evidently, to put together local and global (that is, to compose the two views) the farmland must be considered as a basic element to renew this territory: because in it several socio-economic facts are rooted and still recognizable, richly entrenched in cultural meanings. Certainly, the cultivated land is able to produce an array of resources in addition to the mere agricultural productivity and involves various interests (business, tourism, arts, scientific research). Potentially, it is a *source and place of culture* (Pignatti, 1991) which, through appropriate transformations, can include new and complex levels of social fruitions. After all, even just from the agronomic point of view, the agricultural land needs to be transformed for continuing to exist. In addition, an innovative management should counterbalance the fleeting fruition of the high-speed, by finding its foundations in the local economy structure (wine industry, farms, dining facilities and agritourism) and the connection of social type between town and country which partially still remains. It is handed down through the generations in many family histories: the inhabitant residing in the town and often goes to the countryside to take care of a vineyard, a vegetable garden, an orchard, a citrus grove, an olive grove. A tradition tending to die out. However, a significant cultural fact.

2.4. Suggestions for new agro-urban visions

The countryside of the Plain of the Gulf still reveals the ancient face of this area. However, it has inside many contemporary traces and typically extra-urban objects: greenhouses, sheds and silos dotting the farmland; warehouses and shopping centres align along the infrastructures. The town needs the countryside as space for projecting some "functions". However the countryside is able to offer much more than the simplistic availability of "free" areas on which to place those functions. Therefore, a full redesign of agricultural spaces where everything (urban fringes, fields, rows, irrigation canals and tanks, paths, edges, visual and spatial openings towards landscape) contributes to include the various presences in a new net of meanings, could commence.

The idea of drawing the countryside just, like the town and urban spaces, recalls images like the panhellenic town of Thurioi (fifth century B.C., Taranto Gulf, Ionian Sea) where urban and rural planning hybridize each other, producing shared spatial geometries (Sereni, 1961). Moreover, it often goes back to meditate on this idea, in front of the challenges posed by relationships between agricultural areas and urban growth. Among several researchers who took an interest in it, in Italy Giuseppe Samonà highlighted its importance before the explosion of the sprawl as it is known today, with the agro-urban vision of the "extending town" (Samonà, 1976) indicating a significant horizontal extension of agricultural planning. Obviously mindful of the great agro-urban vision of Broadacre City (1934), a socio-political model for civilization against urban congestion and vertical growth of American cities, a pattern of settlement on free ground infinitely extensible (Wright, 1958). However in Italy, where the availability of farmland is lesser (due to sizable presence of mountain zones), the issue was especially the dissolution of agricultural areas due to the sprawl. Which has occurred in many cases. However now, the idea of Samonà is still interesting because it puts the spatial approach of the architecture to support the interdisciplinary order which regulates (or should regulate) the actions on the territory. Which is a still valid possibility, at least partially, for the Plain of the Castellammare Gulf, provided that you envision in a whole both the built ground and agricultural lands. This mutation of meaning can be expressed e.g. through the imaginary idea of the "constellation-town" in which, every part is essential to recognize the shape of the entirety: the "astral bodies" (that is

the "lumps" of building: urban centres both large and small, as well as agricultural, industrial and commercial buildings spread out among the farmland); the "nebulae" (areas of sprawl); the "interstellar" spaces (the farmland) without which, the overall figure would not be identifiable. This vision, which deliberately does not take into account the infrastructural network, suggests looking for the principle able to connect these "lumps" in agricultural spaces. Farming, spatial and landscaping renovation of the rural areas is necessary to imagine the countryside playing this new role. Such a reorganization would allow the introduction of the experience of the low-speed as a relational and shared opportunity, by "cultivating" activities which typically take place slowly and finding a new and widespread consciousness of places. In this way, every urban centre and its surroundings, as well as the existing facilities scattered among fields, could open themselves differently towards a new fruition network, in the connective space of the countryside. The vision of the "constellation-town" appears as a reinterpretation of the observed places: it describes a territory which, despite connected to the high-speed infrastructural network, is not debased from this. Instrumentally it summons another vision even more imaginary and arbitrary: the "hortus explosus", representing what must be done to realize the "constellation-town" idea. Trying to define it is useful for imagining the Plain in a different way.

The "hortus explosus" can be defined as starting from the traditional spatial figure of the *hortus conclusus* which is hidden, guarded by walls or buildings. In which, the idea of the natural dimension is enclosed in a cultivated patch of land expressing cosmic visions, often through metaphorical language. On the contrary, the imaginary figure of the "hortus explosus" indicates something else entirely, as if were ejected out of the urban context. This spatial "decompression" is more than a "change of scale": it is a passage in which, the metaphorical language, entrusted to the geometry of a compressed space, dissolves itself in favour of a cultural space with different characteristics: metamorphosing from "exclusive" to "inclusive". However the "explosus" borrows from the *conclusus* the forceful presence - and effects - of the spatial designing, summoning the memory of each time in which, the countryside was drawn like the town. One of those effects is that the "explosus" is not an undefined space, although not bounded by walls or fences. It has no "limits". However, it certainly has spatial references like it occurs that which in the fascinating painting "La tempesta" by Giorgione (early sixteenth century): urban fringes, morphological discontinuities, standing out architectures, volumetries of large trees, changes of vegetation, urban or geographic skyline. According to the Plain context, it also explains the preference given to the image of "hortus explosus" rather than "agricultural park": the topic is imagine to connect the towns of the Plain in an alternative way than that prefigured from the sprawl, and with a most significant bond than that result from the high-speed network: the "explosus" can contain or connect many towns. Thus, the agricultural areas around urban centres represent the "medium" in which, a virtuous agro-urban hybridization can occur. In this sense, by virtue of the reference to the *hortus conclusus*, the "explosus" too implies a clear connection with the designing: in it, potentially, everything is drawn. Finally, its extension takes its size from the system of "lumps" or "poles". Furthermore, because it is not "conclusus", it is able to "grow" by annexing new elements, involving the new spatial and cultural vision into increasing acres of land. It could develop starting from an initial figure or "organizational nucleus" (Donadieu, 1999), connecting poles or stakeholders already established in the territory: winemaking industry, major farms, the gastronomic centre of Parrini village. Then, it may grow by including new local players who want to share the interurban network made up by agricultural areas (small farms, citizens' groups, schools, hospitality facilities) and attracting

external stakeholders (scientific research, tourism, international market for bio-food). Thus, introducing in the countryside new fruitions: agrarian tourism, leisure, educational paths.

The focused images clarify the important role of the countryside in the future of the Plain, as an entity rich in resources for responding to some of the most pressing urban issues such as the decentralization, the marginality of outskirts, the presence of high-speed infrastructures, the ecological networks. Therefore, those images can be considered as starting points concerning what needs to be done or proposed for territories which go through a phase of transition: profoundly transforming areas whose fates are still open.

3. RESTRUCTURING THE COUNTRYSIDE

3.2.A piece of the agro-urban puzzle in the Plain of Partinico

The economy of the Plain of Partinico is historically based on agriculture. In the Norman period, the land belongs to a few landowners, who cultivated it extensively. In the XVI century, the cultivation of *Cannamela* thrives, causing the deforestation of the area to get the necessary wood to cook its sugar. At the decline of this sector (XVII century), grape combined with wheat, olive, fruit and vegetable cultivations become predominant (Sciascia, 2014).

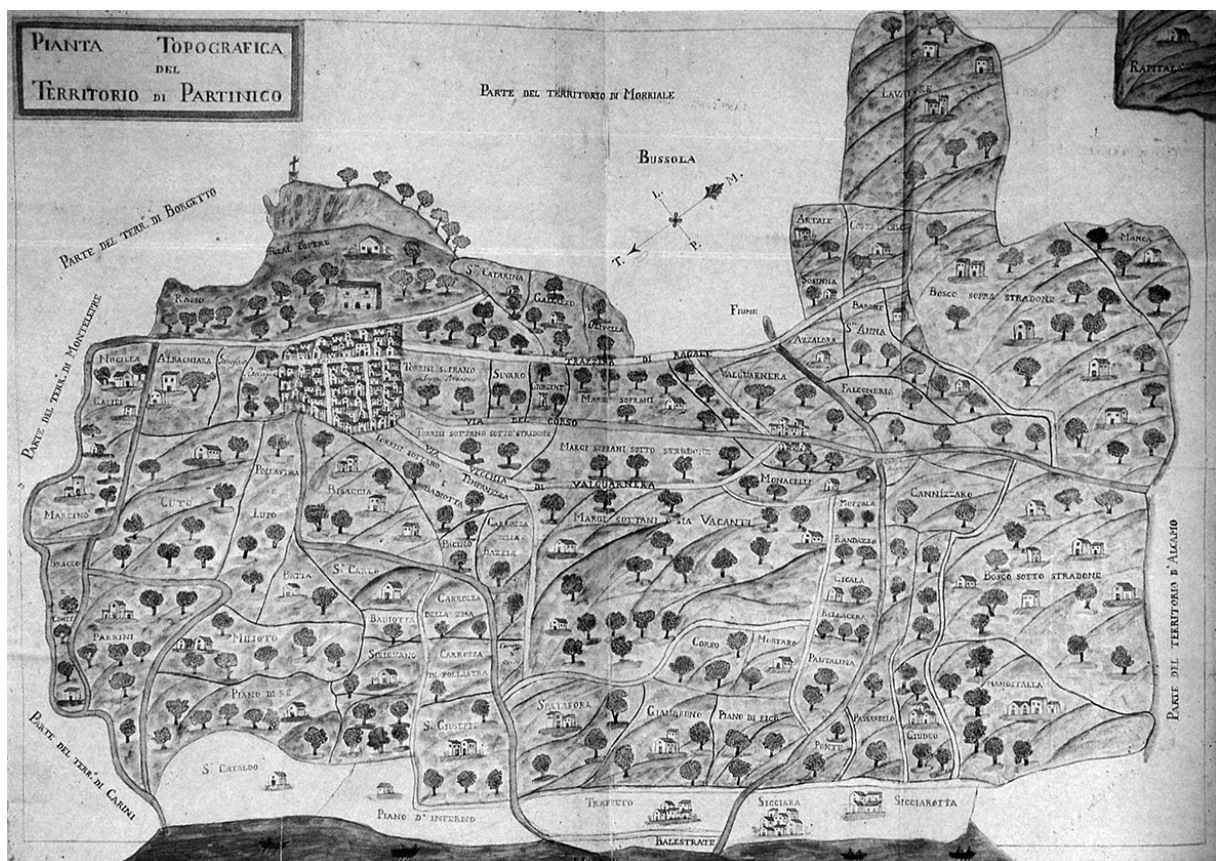


Figure 1. Topographical map of the territory of Partinico, 1809

Wine production is practiced until today as shown by the presence of several companies. Among these, the Bertolino distillery now is not only linked to the local economy, but it is inside an

international circuit. This industry, since 1935 situated in viale dei Platani, on the northern edge of Partinico, will be transferred to another site, so releasing a piece of the Plain, which is intended for the construction of a new residential district. The stink of the distillery has deterred urban sprawl, preserving a triangular agricultural area of about 100 ha, which is separated from the rest of the agricultural Plain only through the ss113 and viale dei Platani (the two access roads to Partinico from the north). The outskirts of the town border the area to the south. This ground includes, in its central part, the railway station of Partinico and, along the ss113, a fruit and vegetable wholesale market. Besides, a new beltway provided for by the General Town Plan, will cross the fields passing to the south of the distillery, parallel to the railway line.

Existing assets attract urbanization. The urban forecasts confirm a fate, only apparently univocal, towards an urban growth proceeding through a proliferation of roads that overlap the agricultural land, fragmenting residual areas progressively saturated by buildings. The architectural project can disprove the nature of this foreshadowing. It may suggest different ways to turn urban and economic needs into opportunities, building a virtuous hybridization between town and countryside.

The selected area has been chosen in the context of a research carried out at the University of Palermo by Andrea Sciascia. He invited five design teams from Italian universities to propose different project solutions. The district-plans are published in the results of PRIN research (Sciascia, 2014). From one of these (designed by V. Cannizzo, M. Gentile, E. Davi, L. Macaluso) this reflection arises, focusing exclusively on the architectural design of the countryside.

This area is, in fact, an ideal testing ground to look for new settlement strategies, which contemplate the structure of the agricultural spaces. It is rarely marked by sprawl. Its condition portends to orient the ever-changing agricultural fields to a configuration that ensures and enhances their role of as an economic and social driving force of the territory. The lush fields can give to the countryside a new order. Conversely, the countryside, now impenetrable and landlocked, may host pedestrian paths, which pass the access along the urban fringe, setting up a new network of cycle-foot routes.

This piece of land is an experimental field of observation of an overall idea about the area sited in front of the Gulf of Castellammare, according to the suggestions described in the previous paragraph.

3.3. Drawing the countryside

The study of the portion of land in the north of Partinico begins from the relief of the framework built by the fields and vegetable. Moreover, since antiquity, the geometry has been the instrument of control of the territory. The Table of Heraclea, which certifies the features of the lands belonging to the temple of Athena Polias in Lucania, dates back to the IV century b.C. (Sereni, 1961). Likewise today, the countryside and the town are described with the same method of representation. Indeed, the projections of Monge can include any physical object: artichoke plant, streams or buildings. Who designs makes his selection. According to the example of the eighteenth-century map of Rome by Giovan Battista Nolli (1748), in the map of Las Vegas, Robert Venturi inverts the representation of solids and voids showing how you can turn your attention towards the open space (Venturi, Scott Brown, Izenour, 1972). In Las Vegas the *Strip* and the asphalt overlies the desert. In Partinico, instead, the open space is densely

hatched by vegetable crops from which emerge the silos of the distillery, buildings, thin trails, infrastructures and the geographical background.

The focus is on the agricultural texture of the area. In the morphological variety of the vegetation some constantly changing formal features differ from more durable signs on the soil. These second ones have specially to be considered (and to be drawn) because they show specific principles of settlement. The traces of the fields are perpendicular to the south-north direction marked by elongated lots of adjacent urban fabric: here the settlement rules are different between town and country.

Entering into the merits of the vegetation, the physical description imposes an abstraction, typical of any graphical depiction, which aims to describe the volumetric consistency of the crops. Moreover, every master of architecture drew in his own way the treetops. Frank Lloyd Wright completes plans and elevations of the houses in Oak Park with fragmented lines and he strokes his perspective of the Winslow House in Illinois with watercolour brush. Alvaro Siza, on the contrary, abstracts the complexity of the leaves synthesizing the foliage in a circle. In the *Villa Vert*, Le Corbusier draws the trees as sculptural stains.

Colours and specific placements of the plants in the fields correspond to the trees and arable varieties. The distances between the rows depend on the size of the trees, but also on the methods of collection and irrigation. The citrus orchards, according to a local custom, have an implant 5x5 or 4x5 meters with trees not more than 2 meters height. The olive groves have a warp of 6x6 meters with trees pruned every year to facilitate the subsequent collection and consequentially of not more than 5 meters height. The vegetable's gardens are located especially near the infrastructure, where short production cycles may easily allow to convert agricultural land in buildings. Some vineyards streak the field in north-south direction, according to a mildly slight slope that stretches out the soil towards the sea. On the whole the relieved portion in Partinico shows a texture of fields with various and irregular shapes crossed by minute paths. Among these, via Bisaccia emerges as historical route.

3.4. The architecture of the countryside

Giuseppe Samonà opposite to abandonment or destructive exploitation of the land, in the conference *Extending City* held in Palermo in 1976, proposes "to restructure" the agriculture (Samonà, 1976). Spinning Samonà's idea further, according to which the agricultural and urban space is regulated by unique criteria, the analysed ground is considered, same as the town, as anthropic physical construction.

The reflection on the restructuring project reveals some questions: does restructuring the agriculture means to restore the ancient wrap of the fields? And is it merely complete in correspondence of the gaps (*lacunas*)? Or is it better to change the cultivation according to the actual needs of the market and of eating habits?

Not surprisingly, these questions are comparable to those appropriate to modify the buildings. Likewise, the answers depend on specific conditions, focused during the survey phase: when the place has been drawn.

In the studied area close to the wine distillery, the urban fringe and the transport infrastructure, the countryside is especially fragmented. These discontinuities can be interpreted as possible

accesses between the town and the fields. If bicycle and pedestrian paths cross the thresholds seeping in the grounds, the extra-urban activity of the area (market, railway, agriculture) can be connected to the heart of Partinico. The design imprinted on the ground by the vegetation, the fields and the sinuous line of via Bisaccia are the reference for the new tracks. One of these, as provided by the municipalities, will cross the area, linking Partinico to the Jato-dam (about 7 km to the west) and to Montelepre (about 10 km to the east). In this hypothesis thin paths encircle the fields, emphasizing their shapes and intercepting the interurban cycle-footpath. Continuous and capillary trails lead to countryside activities (buying and selling of agricultural products, entertainment, sports...) and users, giving an innovative impetus to these spaces. Since the paths are not only for the farmers' use, it is necessary to design them to accommodate even who crosses the site unequipped with boots or appropriate shoes. To retain the mud during the rains, for example, the walking level of the path must be higher than the fields. If some edges and paths were of stone firmly stuck to the ground, a new order would be recognized, in the contrast between a permanent reference or backcloth (walls, flooring) and the changing rural image (trees, flowers). Sometimes the paths can be part of more complex architectures that include water pipelines for irrigation, tanks and warehouses. The placement of these elements may confirm the principle of settlement of the country (in which prevails the east-west direction) or that of the town (where north-south direction prevails).

In correspondence of gaps (*lacunas*), for example in incomplete citrus or olive groves, it is possible to implement the field with new plantings, confirming the existing essences or choosing other compatible ones. The new volumes (that may be buildings or vegetation) and the paths can reveal landscapes existing but now undetectable.

In order to make these plans feasible, the "architecturally restructured" agriculture must produce profit. Hence, the integration of new crops in Partinico is an opportunity to build appropriate surfaces and distances between plants for a technologically advanced agriculture. Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that some advanced machines for collection recognize fruits according to their colour. Consequently, for example, an alternation of aubergines and tomatoes would pose considerable technical difficulties. Where a greater variety of colours on surfaces smaller than one-hectare are required (this is the necessary surface for a profitable garden), floricultures of gerberas, well sold in Sicily, are a solution (Caruso, 2014).

Including the contribution of agronomists in the architectural choices (about volumes, colours, olfactory and tactile feeling; using of vegetation at a ground level to open the perspective to the landscape or groups of trees to build a background and rows to mark the avenues) can ensure that landscapes are constructed economically sustainable, and therefore socially favourable. Among the fields, along the paths, "profitable" and compact borders are laurel and pomegranate; olive trees are windbreaks and good limits with the roads; rows of *corbezzoli* (red) can identify chromatically the intercity foot-cycle routes, such as itinerary that will connect to Partinico with Montelepre and the Jato-dam.



Figure 2. V.Cannizzo, E.Davi, M.Gentile, L.Macaluso. Infrastructures, countryside and urban fabrics at Partinico.

The new agricultural fabric will also contain a vehicular access to the train station of Partinico, which does not mean to compromise the continuity of the ground. The road could be partially buried or put in a trench, articulating the soil surface and, in some cases, making it habitable. The same reasoning interests the planned bypass, parallel to the railway line that would separate Partinico from the countryside.

The agricultural fabric that is "restructured" and sewed up with the urban one, made a place of food production and income, meeting and leisure, becomes a "common" (Nicolin, 2014). This tendency is in progress. The community recognizes the value of the agriculture as historical memory and economic, social and food resource. So progressively these spaces are transforming in poles to live. Besides scientific studies, also newspapers and television programs are devoting more and more space to the advantages offered by a "return to the countryside".

However in Sicily, the society still does not seem to be aware of the necessity of architecture in the government of agriculture areas. The urban gardens are often made with precarious structures, without a unitary order, nor recognizable forms. The reflections on the case of Partinico lead to assert that the steps to climb down to the gardens, the border of the fields, the benches where you sit down to put on your boots, the tool shed, the water tank, the channel must be architecture. The choice of materials and colours of the elements, their types and how to bind them to the floor and end skyward, trigger unusual relationships with the plants and

other environmental pre-existing, expressing meanings and involving people. Not considering the agricultural fields *tabula rasa*, but capturing their essential features, it is possible to find new settlement strategies. These will be alternative to those that fragment the agricultural area through an infrastructure-ring and then saturate these parts, causing landlocked and inhospitable districts devoid of both urban and agrarian connotations.

It is urgent to have a punctual architectural response (in the northern fringe of Partinico), but also widespread and unitary (in the Plain of Gulf of Castellammare) which transforms the "return to the countryside" in an improvement of the physical and economic conditions of the area. Only through virtuous hybridizations the countryside will grasp the advantages of city-life (security, economic well-being, hygiene, recognition of the route...) and, conversely, the urban aggregation can be equipped of the necessary and new poles (economically and environmentally sustainable public space).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The farmland plays an essential role in the future of the Plain of the Gulf of Castellammare. Based on two different views of this place, a possible scenario has been developed where a "hortus explosus" holds the Plain as a whole. The study carried out on a piece of this territory approaches the imaginary vision to a feasible hypothesis. The dialectic between the utopian impulse of the foreshadowing and the actual challenges lead to some project-actions, overall related to the themes of "continuity of the rural and urban soil" and "permeability of open spaces".

The critical drawing of the area has been essential in recognizing the identity of the places, providing a practical basis for the design study. The contribution of the punctual experimentation is trying to build a relationship of reciprocity between heterogeneous parties and elements, through an (and at the same time) architecture-urbanism and landscape project. After all, "releasing places" is a peculiarity of the architecture that is not the cause of the loss of the territory but a possible solution.

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