

Caminos de Sedó (The ways of Sedó)

Collective journeys of encounters

Resting in the midst of both mountainous and riparian landscape; a stone's throw away both to Esparraguera and Olesa de Montserrat; amongst both machinic and organic production, Colony of Sedó endures a paradoxical seclusion inherited from its 19th-20th century company town origins. Although the establishment of the Colony flourished both Esparraguera and Olesa de Montserrat, for many years it failed to become part of either one of them; even though it profited from the natural resources in the surroundings, it omitted to provide reciprocally. However, with its diverse and multilayered connections; its historic role in the region's textile industry; and its advantageous positioning on the eco-geography, Sedó has the immense potential to emerge as a vigorous gravitational point — a campus of socio-cultural, socio-ecological and socio-economic encounters, and an experimental pilot project for the future projections of Llobregat's colonies.

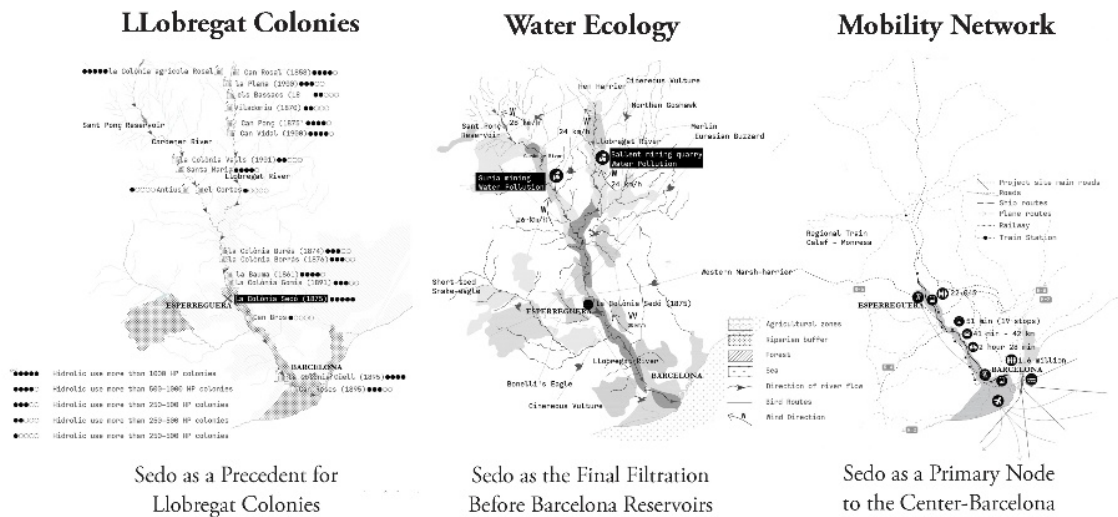
Aiming to prompt a design mechanism that evokes a multitude of networks activating and reinvigorating Sedó, the project re-interprets and builds on the sparks of the existing thematical routes; by deciphering the further ramifications of the “routes”, the project diversifies the translations and connotations of them from literal to metaphorical, from touristic to organizational, or from linear to cyclical. Through this reading of the routes, the project proposes an interconnected system of routes — a hybrid framework where multiple layers intertwine into a dynamic metabolism to accommodate time and offer tools for reproductions, transformations and rediscoveries. These routes operate at multiple scales and mediums, from territorial to individual; ecosystem to organism; and physical to digital. At the intersection of the routes, the Colony acts both as a switchboard stimulating all circuits and as a fertile field of encounters prompting countless other informal activities.

Altering the current mono-functional operational structure, this hybrid framework aims the combination of diverse macro/micro-economies to create a more resilient economic model both to futureproof and to establish nurturing & restorative relations with its natural ecosystem. This notion is particularly pivotal for Colony Sedó, not only because its strategic geolocation suggests potential population increase as Catalonia's population growth chart and the post-pandemic urban decentralization tendencies indicate, but also because Colony Sedó is one of the last industrial nodes on Llobregat River before the waters reach to Barcelona's drinking water reserves. Through synthesizing and empowering its diverse attributes via digital mediums, the Colony can explore a connective living-working-visiting scenario accompanied by a recuperative ecologic mission aiming to undo and subvert the damaging impacts of the current and previous industrialization on nature.

1. The County: Territorial Convergence

Scrutinizing the unique composition of this territory's characteristic layers, the framework of routes aims to create a divergent infrastructure to foster conversations between the two towns; create links between past and present; and let new realities emerge through establishment of connections between human and nature, allowing the Colony ground to be activated by new channels and networks. With oscillating ties to a myriad of various local assets, the Colony emerges as a strategic point on the multi-layered routes framework, reconciling its surrounding

resources, mending broken relationships and provoking new ones. While each route connects and converges the territorial scale, each of them also instigates programs and stimulates events within the Colony; by doing so, the framework encourages a horizontal communication model between the institutions, associations and the individuals; it promotes the multi-scalar inclusion of all stakeholders and social groups to achieve meaningful, impactful and enduring transformations.

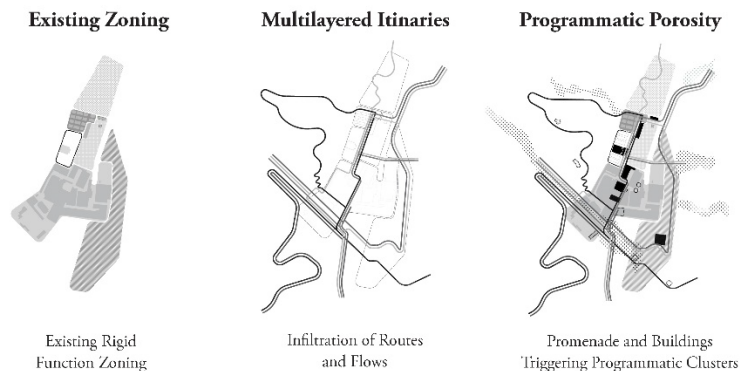


Local productions route, for instance, not only composes crafted products for visitors, rather it links all types of sectors logistically in a circular economy while promoting innovative reinterpretation of the inherited means of production in Sedó. Nature recovery/discovery route, in addition to offering paths of ecologic interaction, it also urges support for (urban, mining, deforested, etc.) sites in need of ecosystem restoration. Heritage route highlights the multi-epoch historic remains, and facilitate channels between local materials, local workforce and national-global heritage funds. Water route merges water’s multi-means of presence in the region — natural, historical, recreational, operational while also inciting a catalogue of strategies to recuperate it. Socio-cultural programs route harmonizes vernaculars of both towns, and instead of separate additional facilities for Esparraguera and Olesa de Montserrat, this route prompts the installation of any lacking socio-cultural infrastructure within Sedó, both to create a more feasible public investment and to amplify the Colony’s new role as a common ground. Sports and health route exploits the diverse geomorphological offerings of the territory to locals and visitors with activities such as hiking, biking, running, climbing, kayaking. And lastly, agriculture route augments the productivity of these landscapes with diverse agro-products that help recover the biodiversity while coupling them with various modes renewable energy cultivation systems.

Attempting to enable conversations of these divergent layers, this framework of formal, informal, organizational, logistical, recreational, informative links is united and supported with a responsive and communicative ecosystem— with a virtual infrastructure. This digital mechanism allows reinforcing and scaling the connections, promotes Caminos de Sedó for broader publics, and asserts digitality as an additional layer of soft mobility network. This narrative of routes, thus, prevent fragmentation and segregation; rather incite socio-ecological and socio-cultural interaction while encouraging socio-economic collaboration.

2. The Colony: Crossroads of Flows

All routes pass through the grounds of the Colony infiltrating its secluded formation from different entry points and itineraries to strengthen its ties to the close vicinity, it is almost as if the routes were sewing the Colony to its surrounding fabric. This action of penetration and infiltration, thus, enables porosity within the campus allowing each route to interact, touch, transform, and leave traces; it triggers programs to fuse and blend; it creates a diverse natural, socio-cultural and economic ecosystem.



While bike paths, footpaths, bridges and an electric shuttle ring between Esparraguera and Olesa de Montserrat facilitate access trails to the site, bioswale and water filtration routes guide the ways for permeating green corridors within the Colony. Installation of eco-friendly renewable energy cultivation tools from various natural resources (hydroelectric barrel generator, solar cells and wind-stalks) generates an integrative and self-complementary energy circuit. The north-south axis of most frequent route intersections emerges as the main promenade with catalyst plazas and catalyst community buildings nurtured by the variety of inputs both for socio-cultural public programs and also for innovative hybridity of research and industrial activities. The organic agricultural production in the orchards contributes to the robotic manufactural production in the historic weaving warehouse (such as fibers from local banana cultivation to be processed for sustainable textile production). The residential units accommodate spaces for working, short-term staying and communal services. The abandoned and underused common buildings extract the imprints of the routes and contain common programs such as collaborative hub, guesthouse, community kitchen, sports facility, expanded units of the museum, library, visitor center and ecosystem restoration lab, inviting the locals of both towns and passersby.

As each route finds its itinerary through the Colony and manifests their existence, the current rigidly separated functional zones of the campus begins to transform into clusters of programs where the zones embody a multitude of uses but in varying densities according to the dominant character of each zone.

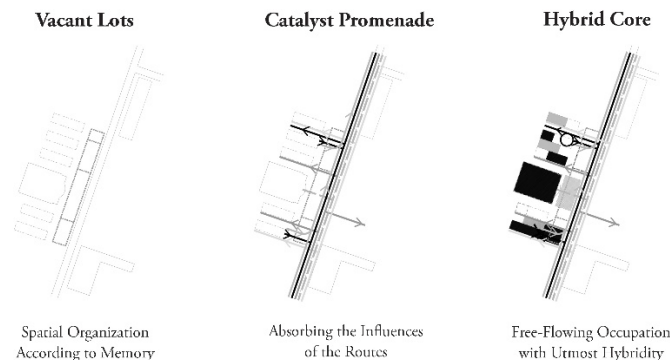
3. The Core: Gravitational Hybridity

The current abandoned and vacated central section of the Colony emphasizes the segregation in between parts and underlines the deteriorating condition of its components. However, within the strategic template of the routes, this area has the potential to serve as the main core, not only due to its centrality, but also due to its fallow, void-like nature. This current absence creates a programmatic vacuum which can absorb anything and everything that flow through the routes, it

can foster nomadism and vibrancy within the Colony, creating an everchanging cycle of programmatic dynamism.

Aiming to conduct and coordinate the influences of the routes, the project proposes a system of free-flowing occupation similar to the organizational logic of expos or industrial “nave”s. The spatial memory of the site (remnants—church, wall, footprints of the former buildings) establishes a documentational envelope and creates the parcellation of the nave lots, the esplanade as an active landscape and the church as the social processor— a collaborative multipurpose hub. The structural open frame of the lots references the codes of industrial architecture with its tectonics and occupational configurations; it enables utmost flexibility to employ culmination of hybridity; offering an open system that allow continual short-term or mid-term transformations as modular or total spaces. The collective body of institutional and individual actors and their participation in the decision-making via digital and physical platforms are key factors in determining and ensuring their use while keeping the Colony in the center of conversations with the constant management processes.

On the other hand, the project also adopts inclusive and adaptable strategies for the renovation of the existing residential units. While the protected envelopes of these typological heritage buildings are restored with the inclusion of the local workforce and local clay materials, with the proposed modular interior organization units, the project generates a participatory model that is adjustable according to user needs both in sizes of the units and also in programmatic variations.



Offering a strategic scheme to foster and promote the Colony as a gravitational point, the project proposes a contemporary template for a co-evolving system of mutual interconnections; this hybrid framework places the Colony at the central node where the routes flow through Sedó both in physical and digital form. While their mutual interference creates a chain reaction of interactivity and information, the interdependent and intertwined harmony of Caminos de Sedó incepts a dynamic, multi-layered and hybrid Colony for human and natural spheres to continually reinvent, reformulate and reshape its everlasting existence.