

PROYECTAR EL

PAISAJE

TERRITORIOS EN TRANSFORMACIÓN

BARRANCO DE BADAJOZ / GÜIMAR

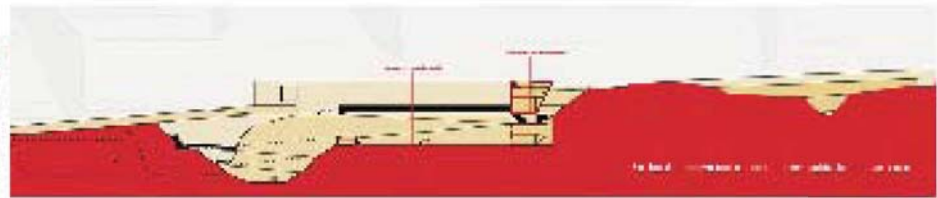
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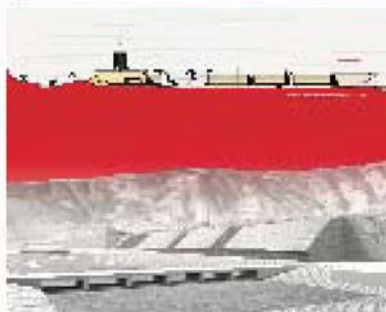
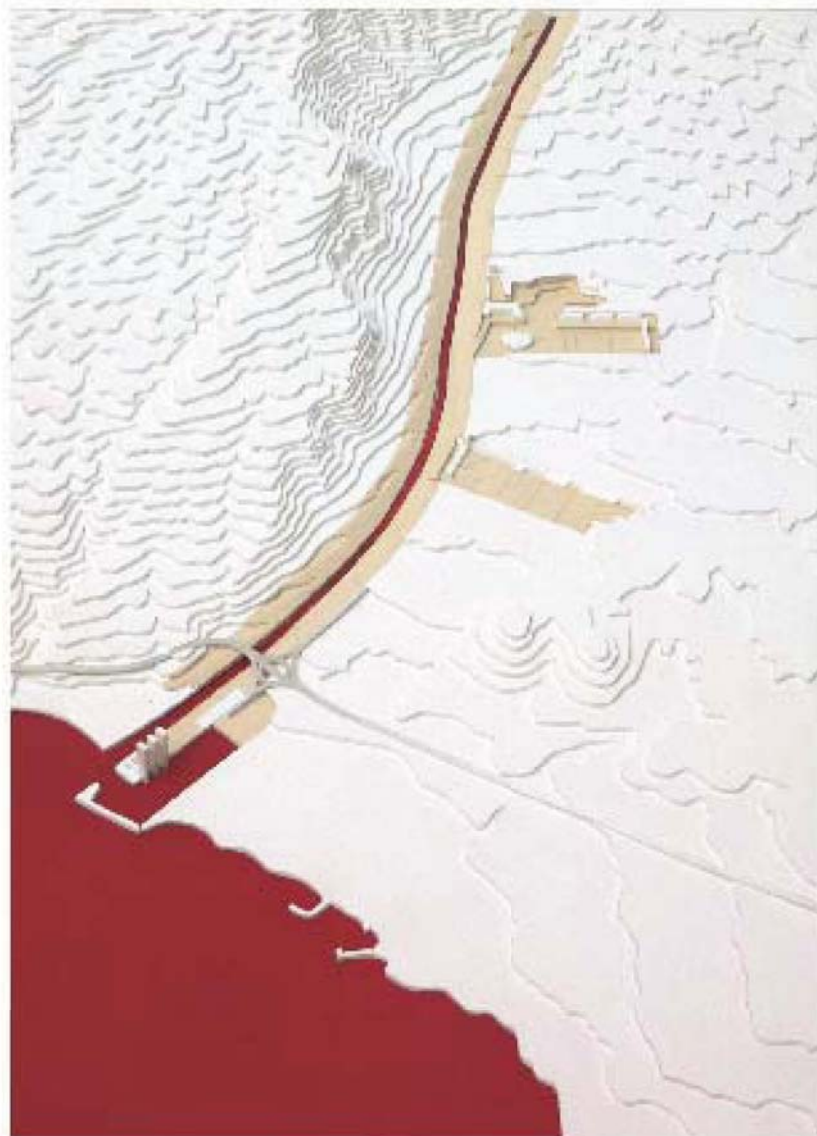
THE LOCAL CRUX



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THE MYSTERY OF THE PLACE

Introduction

"The present is dimensionless. It is a diaphragm, an interstice, a marginal space between two large sides. Today, more than ever, we live within this interstice. In order to comprehend and design this interstitial space, we must know how to excavate and establish the project in the archaeology of the past and in that of the unknown future." These are the opening lines of the work entitled "L'enigma del luogo" ("The enigma of place"), written nearly ten years ago by Filippo Messina, a dear friend no longer with us. We were reminded of these words when we first began working on this project. On the one hand, we have the large body/block consisting of the part: the huge and remote tremors which, ages ago, gave life and form to the Tenerife island, formed the enormous inclined plane of Ladera di Güímar, and the deep canals of basalt/lava which flow into the Ocean seas and which recent natural phenomena have filled with inert material; the Pico Cho Marcial and the Monte De Las Arenas high up on the mountain ridge, and the Teide, lying at its base, visible and immense on clear days.

The certainties

On the other hand, we have the vast and unknown future, along with a community's resolute request for what, in twenty years' time, will become the structure of its territory and its "city". This is an extraordinary opportunity for considering and reflecting upon the possibilities of transforming the nature of such places, of the settlements that have formed there over time, of the ways to route, cultivate, and utilize, perhaps even violently, the area through the removal of vast quantities of earth so as to build other cities. A gigantic and monumental work.

The unknown

For the project for the Barranco de Badajoz de Güímar, we have been asked to remodel a territory which, understood as a system and therefore a complex material that architecture is capable of reformulating, allows us to produce new geographies and places in which man can live and progress. A territory which, as a result of the community's acting and operating in and on the landscape, already encompasses nature as a project of intentional transformation. We have been asked to give life to the community's expectations, raised through dialogue: words, instruments, and objects required for the territory's inevitable utilization and change. We have been

asked to give form to an idea, to imagine the future and develop the project by taking into account precisely what is needed to make it happen, to foresee the outcome with sublime and excellent skill. It involves anticipating form and is the result of constructive ingenuity, of the movement of machines, of the energies required for creating at a certain given moment - fixed beforehand in time and immobile in form. It is the need for transformation, the inevitable course towards change, of which the project is both a process and instrument. In sum, what we have been asked to produce is a poetic vision of form that transcends its human dimension and need. Architecture does not yearn to be functional, but opportune.

Analysis of the current situation

The geography of the Barranco de Badajoz de Güímar may be read from two scales of magnitude.

From a large scale: the high distribution of mountain ranges in the background of the project area, the great Ladera surrounding the area to the south, and the ocean to the east.

From close range: the excavation areas containing the existing quarries; the extensive palimpsest of the original land division, marked by stone walls; the small range of the Los Guirres located beyond the motorway; the two urban settlements: Güímar located upstream and Portito de Güímar situated at the ocean's shore; two small cities made frailer by recent widespread expansion.

Intervention strategies

The Barranco de Badajoz de Güímar project is geared towards a strategy that responds to criteria of concentration and densification; the only one, in our opinion, that allows for sustainable development planning and ensures the rational utilization of existing resources, avoiding them from being completely compromised.

Concentration: limiting transformations to a few areas (four total) with interventions that sustain and examine the different proportions of the elements structuring the territory; protecting, at the same time, the vast zones not yet compromised by the excavated areas and "restoring" certain parts of the area by utilizing the discarded materials of future excavations. Here we refer to the quarries closest to Güímar, in the upper region of the barranco, located along the Camino Real.

Densification: continuing operations until the four new excavation areas become opportunities for infrastructuring in the entire area, while occupying as little as possible of the territory, in connection with the predicted amount of material to be extracted in the next twenty years. This is also an opportunity to provide the territory with new facilities for recreation and leisure, for developing high quality sporting facilities, scientific research laboratories, and concentrated residential housing areas, as well as tourism facilities and services - such as new marine and wet dock areas for sailing and pleasure boat storage and upkeep, in addition to golf course areas.

Intervention areas and development phases

1. The first and most important transformation intervention concerns protecting the area through the construction of two rain water outflow canals, based on a "Y" scheme that provides for the merging of the Fregenal and Badajoz riverbeds (Planos de diagnóstico y ordenación, tav. D.6, alternativa 1). This new infrastructure develops a constant width of nearly 180 meters, including the non building areas situated alongside the outflow canal. Its asymmetric section permits a linear reserve to be developed on the internal side of the canal, which is located at a depth of -20 meters with respect to the current surrounding countryside. Whereas the spare area slopes down from this depth, where a new road infrastructure is proposed as a support to planned functions at a depth of -10 meters. Particular attention is given to the section of the linear reserve which is structured according to a series of steps, terracings and inclined planes planted in various ways to obstruct any view of the drainage canal.

The entire work entails the excavation of circa 8 million m³ of "dry land" and should be completed within the span of seven years, divided as follows:

- a)** The first phase involves the area above the Camino Real and includes the construction of the first section of the canal and of the two water basins in the "El Eaden I and II" quarries which, for the remaining phase, will have to be remodelled and possibly brought back through interment to their original conditions.
- b)** The second and more extensive phase will involve the completion of the work to the shores of the sea, and will require connecting the Camino del Muerto with the TF61 motorway and with the new planned road at the upper edge of the area with respect to the canal. This will give rise to the development of two underground cisterns for collecting rain water, reutilizing those parts of the Bakjos and Extracsa quarries which are intercepted by the canal.
- c)** The third phase concerns the raising of the current motorway to the approximate height

of +35 meters, along the cross section of the Barranco. The new section will follow a slight curve so as to allow for the construction of a road junction which will create a direct link between the motorway and the new and valuable activities and facilities situated along the canal.

2. Once the new water and road infrastructure system has been completed (a fundamental element of the entire Barranco de Badajoz de Guimar transformation project), two of the three large excavation areas will be realized: one intersecting the present quarries of El Lano I and II and Frenegal and the other, lower down, intercepting the Extracsa quarry.

The planned excavation system differs completely from the one that has been adopted up to now. It involves the construction of vast flat areas and the removal of a sloping triangular section, circa 300 m. at its base and 30 m. in height, as well as a development in the upper excavation area of circa 900 m. and in the lower area of 700 m. The goal is three-fold: to introduce a scheme of elements capable of intercepting the existing quarries which were built without any apparent logic; to concentrate the excavation areas in such a way as to rationalize the extraction work, while at the same time generate indications which can be examined and compared with the construction elements in the area; and finally, once the extraction process has been completed, to prepare and arrange for housing and building areas.

2.1 High quality sporting facilities are planned to be constructed in the upper excavation area, including accommodation facilities for seasonal (also winter) athletic training. It is estimated that nearly 4.5 million m³ of material will be extracted from this area.

2.2 In the lower excavation area it is estimated that circa 4 million m³ of material will be excavated. Development of scientific laboratories for agriculture and floriculture research is also planned for this area. The working phases of the two interventions may be carried out at distinct and separate times. In such a case, we suggest constructing the upper excavation area first. However the alternative is also possible, where both interventions are realized contemporaneously over the course of eight or nine years.

3. The final intervention concerns the source of the canal towards the sea. The last and perhaps most important intervention of the Barranco morphological transformation complex should be constructed over the course of twenty years. We believe that this is

an extraordinary occasion for establishing the Portito, which has recently undergone large residential expansion to the south.

The plan proposes that expansion be stopped in the already compromised area, and that the zone between the building site and the Agace quarry (circa 800,000 m²) is kept free for the development of golf facilities. It also proposes concentrating new spatial areas for residential housing, tourist facilities, service industries, and pleasure boat building and storage facilities, as well as for a large wet dock (600 m. long and 150 m. wide).

This functional system complex will be located in a large and well-organized building along the motorway and will be connected to the new canal and wet dock. Its prominent

architectural features include three high crystalline towers that reflect the waters of the nearby ocean. In size the towers are equal to the Los Guirres range situated beyond the motorway.

This final phase will include the excavation of approximately 3 to 5 million m³ of material, will be operational with the modelling of the future golf area, and is estimated to be completed within three to five years.

