Abstract

In the wide outskirts of the two Canarian metropolitan areas, in its more outer layers, the limits between urban and country are dissolved. A mixture of numerous matters which are sometimes coherent, sometimes uneven, sometimes contradictory, sometimes indifferent. In these magma outskirts, although rural and urban areas are adjacently in contact by real frontiers that are elevated separating both worlds. The line of argument for reflection is based on the exploration of breaking this dynamic frontier based on the possibility to establish modest forms that link urban and rural areas. Small outlying parts have developed diverse groups of housing that have been organized according to public spaces. They have adapted and form a connection between country and city. They are not frontier fragments but as thresholds with thickness. They are real interfaces between one side and another of this new world.

Keywords: New Landscapes, New Public Spaces, New Urban Lexicons, Housing and Outskirts, Urban Design

The scenario that is characterizing the new landscapes discovered in the external layers of the metropolitan periphery of the Canary Islands, both in Tenerife Island and in Gran Canaria Island, is an strange mass, a mixture of countryside portions and bits of city that show a great difficulty to be read.

This hybrid situation, which has been taking shape, above all from the 1980s, is not easy to understand. And, without a doubt, it is the product of a change that has taken roots, the product of a deep alteration in which urban is related to forms from previous times.

Certainly, the reality of the more recent outskirts shows novel shapes that have little to do with previous experiences: it is something new. And as it is “new”, it originates both, an atmosphere of uncertainty, and interest. The first, because there is a lack of previous experiences, a lack of some historical knowledge available to use it as a support, in order to
have some understanding of what occurs; the latter, because these new areas, which can be easily distinguished, but which we do not really know how they are, have the attractive of the unknown. And human beings have always wrapped the unknown under a sheet of mystery. This quality attracts and incites to reveal this mystery.

A vision from the air, from aerial photographs, causes the sensation of assisting, in these new spaces, to a peculiar “shock” between what is urban and what is rural emerged in the late 20th Century; a shock that has been forming an amalgam generated by intertwining different materials. Today, this new matter is shaping at different speeds, from a rare mixture of urban, suburban, isolated, in raw, in buildings or block dwellings, with other uses, such as industrial, of storage, of malls, public equipment, interconnected with old and new road links. And all that combined with elements from the agricultural world; a world that is the expression of urban bindings’ expansion, where it seems that order has been subverted or annulled.

Nevertheless, it is enough with an exam to detect both, that dwellings are the most abundant thing in these sceneries, and that, actually, apart from dwellings; there are no other new elements that can be made. Then, why are these sceneries so different from those on the past times? At this point, we may suggest that the new forms could be a product of formula hybridations already present, which, being combined, have given birth to new morphologies. There is a certain consistency in this statement, since a reading of the territory, even if superficial, allows to state that its landscapes are more the result of the presence of known things in unknown orders, than unknown things that considerably alter the territory.

Thus, there are no important changes in the territory components. Changes are precisely in the mixture, in the relationships established among the components. This mixture could be represented, without big efforts, in the concept of ‘Laconic Field’, the strong image published in the last of the three thesis about cities by Ingersoll¹ (1996) In the thesis, he talks about Laconia as a set of cities that are more a continuous territory, because they have no walls. They are a group of open cities without limits between what is urban and what is rural. Some of this happens in the novel domains of the Canary Islands; where there seem to exist an osmosis that has made the city lose compactness, becoming gaseous, and the country, acquire a higher density, becoming more dissolute; a whole diverse world very different, in between, from that of a stone city, is open for us, a world that requires a deep description. A description that tends to see this new magma situating all the things at the same level, rather than through the point of view of figure and background, in order to avoid apriorisms that blind our vision.

¹ “...Esparta, que engloba una dispersa aglomeración de cuatro ciudades extendidas a lo largo de un río. No estaba cercada por fortificaciones, ni poseía puertas de acceso ni arquitectura monumental. Esparta era una ciudad-Estado poblada por unos 200.000 habitantes que vivían en un territorio de 2.000 millas cuadradas conocido como Laconia... no necesitaba murallas, podría extenderse con sus lacónicos espacios vacíos porque, como decía Tucídides, “sus soldados eran sus murallas”. Esparta era así una ciudad abierta, que se supone carecía de accidentes urbanos, arquitectónicos o sociales, semejante en lo conceptual a la urbanización extendida contemporáneamente.”
One of the remarkable conditions of this peripheral nature is the great amount of episodes that a sequence has got. The sequence can show field portions, natural elements, tissue fragments, roads, walls, paths, and an innumerable etc., setting an image of cities that has little to do with compact cities. This image reveals the complexity with which we experiment cities today, and the shapes they acquire at this time. It does not only evidence the permeability between country and city, but something else: a conglomeration of very different elements, which have different orders, and also show very different behaviours. Sometimes, these elements cohabit, sometimes; they are indifferent, and sometimes, they crash. It is a new substance, where gaps rule. Among these gaps, buildings are set out. There are gaps that are not gaps any more. Other remain, but they can stop being stable in the future. That is why cities acquire the quality of being affected by movement and change in a major degree than precedent cities, and now they draw instable maps. It is a world with a remarkable diversity, in which it is difficult to find models. We will only find tacks among things.

The vision of Las Palmas peripheral areas, from the planimeties, is that of a territory characterized by a marked mixture of roughness and textures that are different among them, a series of built areas that are inserted between natural parts and agricultural areas without a clear location. If we begin, however, to pay attention to points, in some surfaces, it is possible to appreciate certain rules, which, if not general, seem to provide this mosaic with some logic. There are soils where there are no buildings, such as gullies or hillsides and the peripheries of strong slopes. There are also, wide surfaces -and not so wide- which are cultivated or it is not very long since they have been cultivated. And, there are lines that seem to cross great extensions. Thus, we can build figures in the territory, the same way we can see figures in the clouds, and draw with them provisional maps that can give us an incipient understanding of those zones.

Actually, these figures are not pure. Soils are not natural or agricultural, neither uncontaminated by buildings. They are, in innumerable cases, affected by the presence of
houses and other types of constructions. This high amount of dwellings scattering throughout the territory can be interpreted as an infiltration phenomenon: houses would penetrate into the country, as well as water penetrates in the fissures of a stone.

The infiltration is produced by the existence of gaps: little separations given between two parts. In the Canary Islands’ territory, these gaps take the shape of a vast and numerous network of tracks originally rural; a capillary organisation so wide that it makes possible the access to almost any point without having any problems of accessibility. In this sense, it is possible to classify the territory as a means showing an isotropy, although this isotropy is limited. A weave woven by threads that are spread throughout space shaped as a structure half arborescent and half reticular, that, in some cases, is cut and it does not continue, leaving discontinuities in the warp. It is, therefore, an unfinished network, that is spread through all the surface of the metropolitan territory drawing the boundaries between what is built and what is not built.

J. F. Lyotard’s statement, in ‘Zone’ (1994), seems to come true: “It is necessary to enter in the city through the poor areas. The expression of poor areas is the wail: we live anywhere, neither inside nor outside... Apollinaire opens Alcools with ‘Zone. Poor areas are the ‘waist’ in Greek: neither country nor city. It is another place that is not mentioned in the registry of situations.” And therein, he says that: “… if this area becomes all the city, then, the megalopolis has no outskirts, therefore, it has no inner area…”

We cannot talk about borders anymore, because that fragile line that demarcated what was city and what was country -more in our brain than in reality- does not exist anymore. That border, conceived as such, has been broken or, what is better, it has been fragmented into a great number of what we could call “border situations”, which are spread through the metropolitan areas. That is the new thing, because, in every point, therefore, in every place in this magma, there is a “border”. The condition of border is, thus, a characteristic of these wide areas, where the mixture of materials and elements from one side and the other -city and country- becomes the new domain in which we are to work.

However, the deep meaning of the borders’ fragmentation, as a whole, is not that borders have disappeared, but that they have fallen as strong lines, becoming something where things mix. When Walter Benjamín talked about Naples (Italy), in the article published by the Frankfurter Zeitung in 1926, in collaboration with Asja Lacis, he precisely wrote about the dissolution of borders between spaces and between times: “…spaces of prosperity and decadence, public and private spaces, spectacle spaces and spaces from where spectacles can be contemplated, sacred and secular spaces are mixed.” 2 Kohan, Martin (2007) There is a lack of distinction, a kind of transference. In Canary Islands’ scenarios, something similar happens: the difficulty to give an answer to what is country and what is city, or where begins one thing and the other, reflects how diffuse space is and its boundaries. Together with the dissolution of borders, Benjamín mentions the image of porosity, Buck-Morss, Sussan, (1995). And linking this

2 “…se mezclan los espacios de prosperidad y de decadencia, los espacios públicos y los privados, los espacios del espectáculo y los de la contemplación del espectáculo, los espacios sagrados y los profanos.”
eloquent term to the peripheral panorama of the Islands seems possible, because it is actually porous.

Pores exist because there are separations between the particles of matters, causing discontinuities. Porosity is a quality of bodies, and that is why it can be applied to territories, as they are matter. Porosity is a concept used by P. Viganò (2007) to face both description tasks and project making of contemporary urban shapes. In the territorial analysis, we not only can find the pores, but also the slopes of the pores, which are reflected in certain shapes and densities, depending on the higher of lower capacity of a territory to absorb a certain amount of buildings. Porosity is evident in the drawings that buildings draw on the ground. That is to say, in the particular ways of urban writing, in the tissues, over the territory.

We can distinguish, at least, two different behaviours of these tissues in Las Palmas periphery, which, even though having a common ground on their basic structure, they clearly diverge in the intricate network of tracks and in the shapes. The first one is the filament, produced from the gradual accumulation of houses around the sides of a rural road. One house beside the other, one house in front of the other, transform the road in an urban street. A thread with a minimum thickness is built. Its simplest section is the sequence: field, house, road, and field. And can double in the unconstructed side of the road with another house. Its linear development varies both in its length and in its geometry, simply adopting the guideline of the rural road, which has served as an element of order that, in general, arises from both the topography conditions and the conditions of the property.

The second type is the pile, which, like the filament, also bases on the pre-existing roads. The difference is in the way the soil is occupied. In this case it is made on a surface, rather than on a thread. The rules are diverse, beginning with the repetition of parallel filaments, going over a certain area (sometimes with agricultural soils inserted), and ending with the formation of very elemental meshes greatly bust. These shapes generate bindings of dwellings that sometimes have to adopt the shape of a block. They are actually pseudo-blocks, half made groups impossible to enclose, due to the topographic conditions, the conditions of the property and to other causes.

These two shapes of tissues are not the only shapes that can be found in the metropolitan layers. The diversity of these grounds is high, and that is why it is varied. Nevertheless, these shapes are abundant in the intertwine ment between country and city and they occupy great extensions of ground. The drawing that represents their spreading has certain parallelisms with the cave structures of sponges: that characteristic succession of pores following the image used by P. Viganò, where gaps of different sizes are separated by thin walls that

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3 “For some time, I have been thinking about the concept of porosity and its relevante as a tool for understanding, interpreting urban dynamics and for developing a set of instruments to desing and describe its space. In fact, I am interested in space, in its physical properties, limits and proportion. The concept of porosity faces the issue of empty space.”
materialize the body of that animal. This type of surface is similar -although not very faithfully- to the gaps delimited by the filaments and the lumps of the territory. The cavities are different, of course. In this case, they are bags of natural or vacant soil. And the partitions are not continuous, nor do they go along the bags in their whole. But even so, the image is interesting, because it allows the understanding of gaps as something confined, specific, and not something without limits, fleeting. It is the country “trapped”; fragments of “nature” kept by the particular urban warp of Las Palmas periphery. They are gaps that cannot be occupied, because they are defining territory in a specific way. This way, they compose a matter in which gaps have a value, the value that nature stamps in the construction of determined sceneries; in the quality of life of its inhabitants; in the physical expression of its sustainability. Not everything can be built, but we must assume that the processes that have been “urbanizing” the country are an irreversible phenomenon. But, at the same time, we must assume the existing gaps as essentials parts of this metropolitan territory. That is why they have to remain as such: unconstructed.

Between the gaps, and the filaments and lumps that go along them, there is no permeability. A close look to these threads can highlight how dwellings face to the roads. They open their main facades to the roads and ignore or deny “nature”, shutting from it with secondary facades or blind walls. And things that do not represent a value are usually denied. This rule is one of the characteristics of the peripheral tissues of the Canary Islands, which, based on the culture that only sees the country as an opposed space to the city, shows a clear indifference. In general, filaments and piles show true situations of lack of communication between urban and rural. They act, in this sense, like authentic borders that block the relationship. Opening them, making them porous, in order to link gaps to urban spaces, is a key operation for “natural” space to be rediscovered by the inhabitants. This way, they will begin to acquire a value for society, a value that helps to understand them as the new unconstructed spaces of these metropolitan agglomerations. Only in this way, the maintenance of the gaps, their permanence, will be possible. Thus, the fluency between these two worlds must be established by means of an “interface” capable to establish links between one side and the other. This must be the domain of the project. However, would a little urban writing, that is to say, a recognizable figure between these two worlds have a place?

1 Figures in the borders

In a painting by Goya, at the Museo del Prado, in Madrid (Spain), there is a fragment of a bigger fresco entitled “El perro semihundido”. In this fragment, we can see two big surfaces separated by a sloping line that divides the painting into two parts. In the upper surface prevail the ochre tones; while in the lower surface prevail the earthen tones. Nothing indicates, nor in their textures neither in their shapes, what they are. Two almost plane colours are the framework in which the head of a dog protrudes. This figure is the only intelligible
thing. It gives to this fragment a remarkable complexity for its reading, Thiebaut, Carlos (1990).  

Apart from this remarkable quality, what is interesting is that a figure exists, just in the boundary between two different parts in between. The consequence that could be drawn from this experience is the possibility of inserting something in the border, without it being annulled or swallowed up by the power of two frontier domains. The recognition of the figure is, therefore, possible. And it is possible, because it has a value on its own, an intrinsic value, which makes unnecessary to have to insert it in one of the two domains. Thus, this status, gives it independence from what is around, relatively, however.

When the figure is not between two abstract planes, like in Goya’s painting, being in a physical context, like Canary Islands territory, requires being an interface. That is to say, being an element that establishes bonds between the city and the country orchestrating a certain agreement between both of them. In order to acquire this specific property, it must come with a shape that builds a bridge, between both worlds without being one or the other. For that reason, the shape must be inescapably complex. The complexity comes from the fact of being a connector between country and city; a duality that causes unfailingly a double face -like the double face of the god Jano- in order to give an answer to these two domains with a guarantee.

Jano was also known as the god of the doors. And attributing this quality to the Jano does not seem accidental, since he faces to the front and to the back participating of two visions, like it happens with the Doors: they connect two spaces linking them and distinguishing them at the same time. The doors are the thresholds.

2 The Thresholds
G. Teyssot (1997), reflects on the thresholds through the reading of the book by W. Benjamín Das Passegen-Werk, and he quotes literally: “We have got to insist in the difference between the terms, boundary, fence and border. Instead of thinking of the boundary as a clean line, traced on the ground, it can become an area. Boundaries are not only lines, because they can offer habitable places and obtain an area. They are not borders, but rather, they are places in which rituals are practiced: passing through rituals.” Thus, the line can be understood as a thickness line. Given this nature, it can be presented as a movement place between two realities.

4 “Pero quizás, sobre todo, el perro es índice o imagen de la subjetividad que nace y se sitúa en un encuentro entre planos distintos, en la frontera misma donde se encuentran los niveles de una realidad dividida. La subjetividad emerge ahí en un no-lugar, precisamente en la dislocación de los planos de la realidad en los que se ha constituido la forma moderna de una identidad... El perro y su mirada son el lugar de articulación de los planos de la pintura... El lugar fronterizo donde se construye textualmente el yo, niega su identificación con cualquiera de los dos mundos con los que linda. No es ninguno de ellos. No puede reducirse a ninguno de ellos. Por eso, no puede, entenderse, tampoco, sólo a partir de uno de ellos..."
From this point of view, it is possible to see the thin lines that the innumerable boundaries of Canary Islands sceneries draw, as thresholds. They acquire dimension, understood in that sense, that is to say, surfaces in which a project with a minimum of urban content can be spread; a domain that contains unconstructed spaces and architectures, in an understandable order, building a little fragment of city. As Teyssot (1997), would say: “to offer a habitable space and obtain an area.”

The clear need of giving width to the boundary is not only to have a space in which an urban project could be developed, but, above all, it arises in order to materialize movement. This movement formalizes in an “intermediate area” assuming gradation that goes from what is compact to what is scattered. Country and city are linked in a gradual way, like the passing from wakefulness to sleep, where there are no cuts, but a process that, little by little, goes through a state to pass into the other, like Benjamin’s discourse shows.

### 3 Retention Spaces

The urban projects that the thresholds form are situated just between what is constructed and what is unconstructed. Thus, the lines of the filaments and lumps remain, but the “edges” of the blind walls change to open facades to the country. Boundaries in which they spread are little, in the majority of cases, but if they sum up, the line would take a considerable length. Therefore, we can have a great extension of ground, next to the urban ground, which makes unnecessary occupying wide surfaces of rural land distorting it and making it disappear. They can, thus, be understood like elements that retain an uncontrolled spreading through the rural space.

Some theoretical projects by Steven Holl⁵ (1997) are experimentations in this sense, such as: *Sutures*, in Cleveland, Ohio, 1989, *Eire Canal*, in Rochester, New York, 1988, *Spiroid Sectors*, Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas, 1990, or *Spatial Retaining Bars*, Phoenix, Arizona, 1989. The former talks about creating a great line of buildings that slightly remember to the horizontal skyscraper by El Lissitsky, inserted between Phoenix city and the desert. It is an interesting strip, as to urban writing, halfway between two worlds, with a territorial dimension, due to its extension. It is like a great drilled wall, capable, at the same time, of absorbing the new growths and establishing relationships with the imposing scenery of the desert keeping it as such.

*Projects in Las Palmas consist of points, lines, and, in some cases, surfaces that act as kind of accumulators that attract a building quantity, that otherwise, would have to expand throughout*

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⁵ “En los barrios periféricos de las ciudades contemporáneas, fragmentos aislados surgen por doquier…”

“Esta zona exige actitudes y proyectos que delimiten la frontera entre lo urbano y lo rural…”
all the territory, annulling the cavern areas of the sponge, that is to say, occupying the country. The possibility of concentrating part of the urban increases in these areas, allows both, to channel them towards localizations that do not affect the gaps -or at least that affect in a reduced way-, and to give density and contents to the impoverished tissue of the peripheral city.

4 The Textures of the Place

Grounds on which projects must be developed are generally difficult, geographically complicated, slope strong, with tortured folds that make of each zone a singular point: a roughness that has been gathering more and more with the changes caused by the agriculture and urban domains. The variety of these situations does not make possible to easily apply a systematic, at least in formal terms, capable of articulating a repetitive way of operating. Only from a more general plan, an abstract plan, establishing parameters that can be applied to the whole, would be possible. That is why the systematic can only be expressed as a formulate: to build a new urban route that links what is full with what is empty; a route that has to have the public space as central element, defining the positions and the shapes of the architectures. To explore an understandable vocabulary that links the gaps with the filaments and the lumps dissolving the boundaries.

This point of view implies the project of the place. Not understood as the strength that spaces of stone cities show, however, but as something more liquid, since the periphery has a weak ontology. I. Solà Morales (1995), puts forward: “The production of the place is still possible from a thousand different places. It is not like revealing something that exists permanently, but it is like producing an event. It is not about proposing an ephemeral, instantaneous, weak and temporary architecture. What we defend therein is the value of the places produced by the fact that the current energies meet, thanks to the strength of project devises capable of causing the spreading of the undulations and the intensity of the shock that its presence produces.

Contemporary places have to be a meeting that the architect has the talent to seize…”

Projecting a place is to generate new folds in the boundaries, assuming the polysemy, the ambiguity and the open. Visiting places between the city and the country, where things loose density, where solids sponge, until they dissolve in the greens. Successions of spaces, formed by groups of dwellings grouped in linear blocks or in pavilions, which go deep into the country. And, in this internment, the separations between the diverse pieces acquire more and more distance in between, and their number is lower.

They are organizations that can remember the way in which some Greek agorae are presented, like the one in Athens or Axos’ agora. Forms composed by different pieces that establish relationships among them defining open spaces. Or the civic centre of Saint-Dié Reconstruction Plan, by architect Le Corbusier: a series of architectures that spread through
the ground enclosing a space. Nevertheless, the civic centre is not closed; it flows beyond its boundaries. It is a space signalled by some buildings, different among them in height, surface and shape, which do not define an only route, but several ways. In Saint-Dié, there are multiple ways of covering the forum. There are also different ways of going in and going out of it. It is a quality that allows it to be connected with every thing that is around.

There are no *ex-novo* materials in these peripheral projects, they are all known: blocks of buildings or fragments of blocks, blocks of flats of different shapes, corridor streets, open floors, squares, levelled areas, terraces, country dwellings, stables and sheds, walls, vegetation, spaces without definition. What is new, however, is its mixture and its numerous and rare combinations. Also new are both, the localization of some materials in places different from the usual places, and the dominance of the gaps. In some cases, the gaps make the spaces expand and dominate upon the full spaces, as an expression and a quality of these new situations, where the routes go on through the country, through “park-paths”, that make possible that the citizens dive into nature.

5 The Bridge Projects

We have selected two points of Las Palmas city’s periphery, in Gran Canaria Island. It is a city with an average number of 380,000 inhabitants, and around 500,000, in its metropolitan area. One of the points is situated at the North of the municipal territory. It is formed by “Casa Ayala” and “Ladera Alta”, and the other one is situated at the East: “Marzagán” area. They are two fragments that contain the materials of the outer layers of the city, although they show differences in between.

*Casa Ayala and Ladera Alta* are two little neighbour groups, both situated in the Eastern hillside of Tenoya’s gully. The first one is a tissue that has been formed from an agricultural road. Some rural buildings that have been condensed with new buildings, on one side and the other, with flats -the type of dominating buildings- were located in the sides of this road. The transverse weave of this way has no previous planning; it is disorganized and derives from the paths that existed, between the terraces, to have access to the crops in its agricultural past. These terraces, with irregular geometries and sizes, have been a support to the dwellings constructing a particular group.

The second group is Ladera Alta. This group occupies the highest elevations of the gully’s slope. It is a more recent tissue, which, sheltered by a regional road along which dwellings are grouped, stretches superficially in its Northern end with a series of little unfinished streets that descend the slope, and, in its Southern end, with an open plan growth with a grill shaped weave, formed by a succession of rows of single-family dwellings.

The project has been separated into four parts that can be considered relatively autonomous, although they are linked by a common route. The first part faces to the North and is situated in the highest elevations upon the top of a group of parallel terraces. In this area, a series of
linear blocks that follow the classical repetition of the rationalist orders of the 1920s has been spread. Nevertheless, they break their purity, when growing again in the underframes that face what is built, in order to partially form a “square.” And they disperse in the opposites, into a more little piece, dislodged from the linear block that tends to have a relationship with the scale of what is rural.

The second part is situated in a great shapeless gap, in spite of being bordered by buildings. It is an important gap, because it dominates a wide landscape. That is why a square is made, a great agora closed to the South and to the East and open to the West and the North. The elements that define the closure are two linear blocks outlining the angle. The opening is entrusted to little pieces that point the opposed vertex making it permeable.

The third part is formed by an area with a lack of buildings, a gap with a remarkable slope where only one route with an excessive incline exists. The project develops a route with reasonable ramps that facilitate the connection between the high and the low elevations. Linked to this “street”, successive platforms follow one another as flexible places, where diverse activities can be developed.

The fourth part spreads in the lowest elevations and faces the tasks of giving form to the unconstructed space of which it lacks. This part completes parts and organizes a square. It is a particular square, because it spreads on a series of terraces that go from the lowest points of the route-park, until the cultivated land and the gully. It also is an irregular square as a result of a concentration of spaces that adapt to the geometries of each point.
The four parts form a wide and diverse route that goes from the upper part of the hillside to the bottom of the gully. This way, it shows how the place is; it tends to discover it, to show it and to put together country and city. It is a succession of weaves that have no end.

**Marzagán** occupies a little valley between the top of a hillside, a little mountain and Las Goteras gully. The area where the project is developed is only a little part of the surface. It is a ground with a slight slope that passes through the middle of the gully. It is an area that still reveals strongly its agricultural past. Its entire surface is signalled by diffuse buildings without a homogeneous distribution.

The road is presented as the main element of attraction, since on it and in its surroundings there is the greatest amount built: dwellings, stores, garages, etc., grouped in a confuse mixture. As we move away from the route, the density starts to decrease, constructions become more scattered, until almost disappear in the proximities of the gully. This gradation of the density outlines a very clear section: concentration and density on the route, scattering and slightness on the gully. It is a section that discovers a characteristic asymmetry of the territory, which must be kept.

The lumps on this way are tissues with little articulation. They are partly formed by blocks without closing or with any possibility of closing. There are streets that cannot go on, because they are blocked by houses, insurmountable obstacles that make their continuity impossible. Some threads that flow towards the interior are found. They are ways that link roads and country, which introduce us in a world full of walls and uncultivated soils. Nature is maybe the only thing capable of grouping all this magma.

The project expands throughout all the area assuming its particular section. The wide gaps that the buildings have left are the strong points of the intervention. These gaps become the main unconstructed spaces that must give the area the urban quality of which it lacks. Squares, as a place where what is collective is reinforced, are built from linear blocks, of diverse dimensions, situated in their boundaries. A not very thick weft spreads on the first strip demarcated between the road and a new street that is being projected, almost parallel to the previous street. This way, the internal connection is guaranteed and the dominant orientation becomes apparent: closed spaces to the route and open to the country. They are agorae that give an unmistakable lecture to this part of the city.

The second area is parallel to the previous strip. We begin to play, here, with new spaces, partly inherited from the open plan, partly derived from the existing rules. The result is a succession of little linear blocks or dwellings pavilion shaped that line up on the roads. They are related to the divisions of the ground and with the walls, and they coexist with vacant grounds. Spaces nor urban neither rural. Thinner and thinner pieces sign “street-roads” until the gully, the last strip of the intervention. The gully is part of this diverse group where what is natural dominates, but where nature is also accessible. An unconstructed peripheral space
treated for it to be used by the citizens of Las Palmas city. Here also there are architectures and versatile places where activities that can be developed can be as different as the behaviour of the metropolitan inhabitants.

So, if we summarize about this approaching to the new “urban matter” and about the possible projects, in general, differences in the territory should not be seen as a denial of what is urban and what is rural. On the contrary, we should see new lexicological formulate in these forms. We should see the opportunity, if necessary, to develop a new language of “being city” to which we can give form: a coherent language with the periphery. A syntax based on the creation of “bridges” between what is natural and what is urban, of “connection points”, of interfaces. We should not see in big, medium sized or little gaps an available gap to be occupied by buildings, but building in their boundaries, for them to be part of a new city, of a city like Las Palmas.

References


