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Community Culture and Design in (Re)Territorialization Processes: Devices and Narratives of Memory, Rootedness, and Resilience

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ABSTRACT

In 2021, the Canary Island of La Palma experienced a volcanic eruption that lasted 85 days, forcing the relocation of over seven thousand people, two thousand of whom were unable to return to their homes. Within this complex and conflict-laden context of collective healing, we explore a design contribution through cultural and artistic creation as a sociomaterial assembly. Drawing on situated research conducted primarily with women from the rural periphery, this article examines the design of encounters, listening spaces, and networks of affection and care that foster the collection of ancestral knowledge and strengthen collective rootedness. The continuity of the domestic dimension within public spaces is analyzed, with the *(sobre)mesa* (table talk) serving as both an object and a context in dynamic processes of (re)territorialization.

Keywords

collective memory
community heritage
domestic sphere
participatory design
Tajogaite volcano

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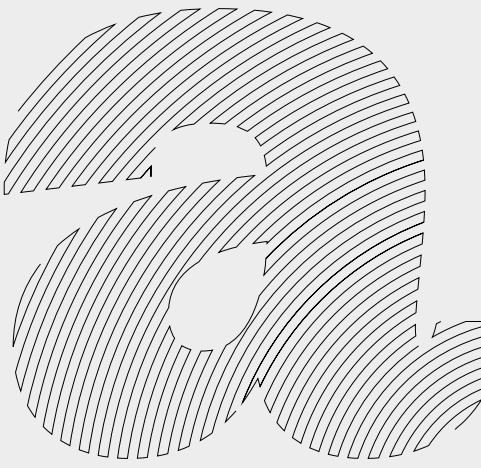

Community Culture and Design in (Re) Territorialization Processes: Devices and Narratives of Memory, Rootedness, and Resilience

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INTRODUCTION: PARTICIPATORY DESIGN WITH WOMEN'S COLLECTIVES IN CONTEXTS OF LOSS

In a complex context of loss and (re)territorialization, such as the one experienced after the dramatic consequences of the emergence of a new volcano on the island of La Palma, it is essential to create environments that facilitate the reconfiguration of relationships and rootedness. These are intimate processes that involve moments of fragility not devoid of pain, as the scope of a post-identity vision entails a loss of established references (Braidotti, 2020, p. 12).

Aware that relationships are fundamental to human well-being and survival, people form communities to develop a sense of identity, learn, grow, and socialize to share life's challenges (Gilligan, 1982). These needs become especially tangible for women, who have been historically relegated to the private sphere of the home and burdened with caregiving roles. The starting point is the premise that it is impossible to address this traumatic event, and therefore we focus on transforming its negativity into positive affects by reworking it within a relational ethic: moving from loss to a sense of connection, and from isolation to care (Braidotti, 2020, pp. 19-21). These are relational spaces, as described by Gilligan, characterized by a 'feminine voice', balancing the personal and the impersonal, reason and emotion, the individual and the collective, all within a spatial and temporal context (Gilligan, 2013, p. 13).

The design process begins by "deeply understanding people, from understanding the particulars of their actions and their impact on complex systems" (Barón Aristizábal & Echavarría Quinchia, 2020, p. 110). In the processes of uprooting, repair—as a practice linked to design— requires contemplation and care (Pérez-Bustos & Botero, 2023, p. 13). For people engaged with practicing participatory design in intimate and vulnerable environments, it is essential to create active spaces that allow for the exploration of relational capabilities (Rodríguez Alfonzo et al., 2024, p. 7). As noted by Sossa Londoño and Vergara Arias, women in these spaces have the opportunity to mitigate their sadness by forming bonds with other participants, socializing in their daily lives, and envisioning new possibilities (2019, p. 195).

This study explores the creation of domestic environmental conditions within public spaces as a strategy to strengthen the sense of belonging, particularly in contexts of loss and (re)territorialization. We analyze an empirical participatory design experience conducted with a group of rural peripheral women in the context of the Tajogaite volcano crisis (La Palma, Canary Islands). The approach is grounded in legitimizing the experiences and knowledge of vulnerable collectives, adopting a situated knowledge approach (Haraway, 1988). It represents a process of community healing and self-conformation through design, focusing particularly on the process—dialogue encounters, memory gathering, and mutual care—enabled by a series of devices emerging as sociomaterial assemblages. In this regard, and drawing on Latour (2008), the social is understood here as a dynamic network of connections between humans and non-humans, where objects, discourses, ideas, and the volcano itself, among others, become actants, with the capacity for agency and mediation in creating interpersonal connections.

CASE CONTEXTUALIZATION: THE EMERGENCE AND CONSEQUENCES OF TAJOGAITE

This research is set in the Canary Islands, an archipelago of eight islands recognized by the European Union as Spain's only Outermost Region. One of the factors contributing to its inaccessibility is its insular nature, with a 'double insularity' often cited in the case of the six non-capital or smaller islands, such as La Palma. This island has experienced several volcanic eruptions, eight recorded since the 15th century, the most recent occurring in 2021 (Pérez López & Galindo Jiménez, 2021). Each volcano behaved differently, leading to distinct relationships with the island's inhabitants (López et al., 2021, p. 23).

The most recent eruption is that of the volcano now named Tajogaite or Cabeza de Vaca, located in the municipality of El Paso, on the western slope of Cumbre Vieja, reaching an altitude of 200 meters (Gobierno de Canarias, 2023). The eruption lasted 85 days—from September 19 to December 13, 2021—, displacing more than seven thousand people, two thousand of whom were unable

to return home (Pérez López & Galindo Jiménez, 2021). It affected over 1,200 hectares and nearly three thousand buildings and structures (Figure 1).[1]

The municipalities directly impacted were Los Llanos de Aridane, El Paso, and Tazacorte. Additionally, areas such as Jedey, Las Manchas, or Caños de Fuego suffered damage from volcanic ash (Pérez López & Galindo Jiménez, 2021, p. 9), while Puerto Naos-La Bombilla was affected by diffuse gas emissions (Martín Luis, 2023, p. 27). In this article, we specifically address an action-research process conducted with women from the affected municipality of Jedey, as well as some of the women who were relocated to Los Llanos de Aridane.

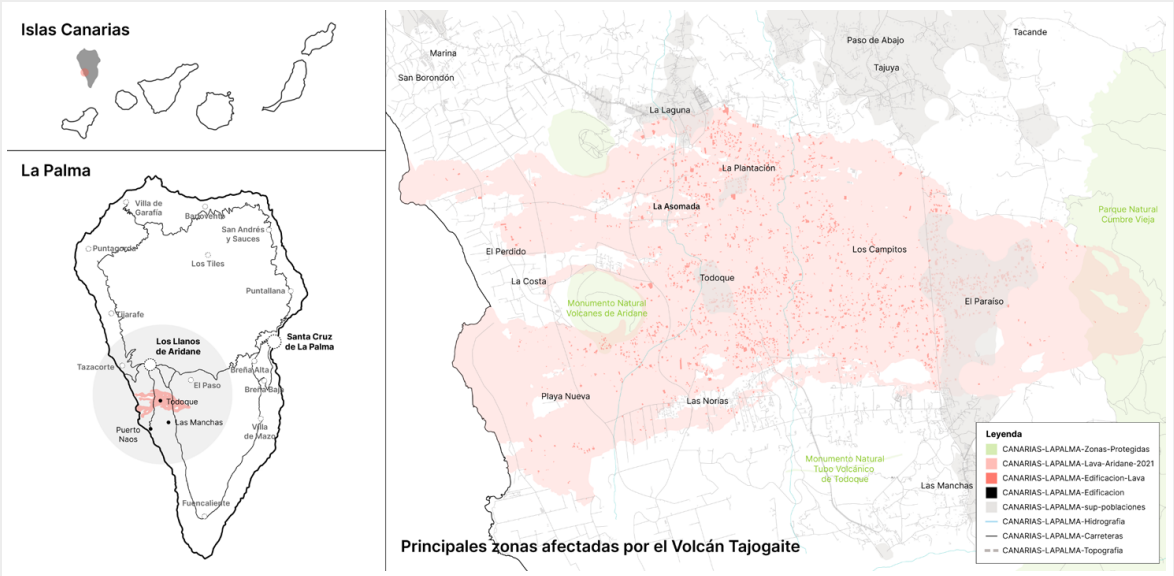

Figure 1: Map of the area affected by the Tajogaite volcano eruption (2021). Source: Own elaboration based on OFIC files.

Tajogaite did not exist before the eruption: the mountain ceased to be a mountain and became a volcano (Nave, 2022). Its emergence as a 'subject' (Ingold, 2011) and its dramatic consequences, marked by its ability to displace citizens, remind us of the power of agency of the insular territory itself. In other words, it refers us to the territory's inherent capacity—through the birth of the volcano—to bury the context in which the community's daily life unfolds (Despret, 2022).

Although measures for material reconstruction and socio-economic recovery have been implemented, many families in 2024 continue to face vulnerability, grappling with the loss of memory and rootedness to their previous daily lives. After an initial year centered on urgent needs, the importance of supporting collective recovery has become increasingly evident. Consequently, between late 2021 and 2024, various participatory processes with a community-focused approach have been developed, employing diverse resources and scales.[2]

1 Data from the Copernicus satellite (European Union's Earth Observation Program) reported 2,988 buried buildings and 138 damaged ones. The cadastre lowered the figures to 1,676 buildings, assuming that more than 1,300 unrecognized constructions should be reviewed (León, 2021).

2 A representative example is the 'Proyecto de Intervención Comunitaria para la Resiliencia Social *Revivir el Valle*' (Revivir el Valle Community Intervention Project for Social Resilience) (Zapata Hernández & del Rosario Martín, 2023), promoted by the Citizen Participation Area of the Cabildo de La Palma, with the participation of several municipalities and Universidad de La Laguna.

Similarly, numerous artistic and cultural expressions have emerged to narrate the diverse experiences of those affected by the volcano. These expressions serve as both a refuge and individual introspective practice, as well as tools for transformation, awareness, and collective healing. Testimonial books, presented as diaries, offer a direct glimpse into how individuals experienced the situation (González, 2022; iLove The World, 2022), while photographic books document the process as visual records (López et al., 2021; Nave, 2022). Poems (López, 1973; La Palma Ahora, 2022) and poetry books (González, 2024), also act as direct bridges to emotion.

Audiovisual creations combining these elements have also emerged, including the award-winning *Un volcán habitado* (Pantaleón & Fuentes, 2023), which captures the vicissitudes of a group of friends through WhatsApp audio messages exchanged during the eruption; and the intimate *Hojarasca* (Machín, 2023), which tells the story of three sisters gathering in a village of La Palma to divide a family inheritance when the Tajogaite erupts. This type of expressions, aligned with participatory design, aim to give a direct voice to those affected while fostering the articulation of spaces for listening, dialogue, and connection, ultimately promoting the joint search for solutions through art and design.

MESTURA LA PALMA: MEMORY AND ROOTEDNESS AFTER THE VOLCANO

In this context, the design initiative analyzed here did not originate from the efforts of the public institutions of the island or the archipelago. Instead, it emerged from a small work cooperative in alliance with other territorial agents through a call for funding by a private non-profit organization. *Mestura La Palma* stands out, among other aspects, by its emphasis on conceptual and methodological approaches, where the creative, artistic, and design dimensions permeate the work process with affected communities. In this sense, we embrace shared challenges from diverse forms of knowledge—both 'expert' and 'diffuse', as defined by Manzini (2015)—, fostering a sort of transdisciplinary cross-pollination. Only retrospectively is it possible to apply a systematizing and research-focused perspective, enabling cultural codification in a document such as this article.

Mestura La Palma, coordinated by the design, architecture, and urban planning cooperative Oficina de Innovación Cívica S. Coop (hereinafter OFIC), is one of the six projects selected by Fundación Daniel y Nina Carasso under its 'Alianzas para una Democracia Cultural 2022' (Alliances for a Cultural Democracy 2022) call for proposals.[3] The project team is multidisciplinary and includes a community mediator residing on the island who has worked with those affected during the emergency. Additionally, the team features an architect and a designer with community experience, both based in Tenerife and traveling frequently to La

3 During its implementation, the project received support from town councils of some of the affected localities (Los Llanos de Aridane and El Paso). Additionally, the Asociación Cultural Karmala Cultura contributed to *Mestura La Palma's* ideation and initial months of development.

Palma. The designer, with La Palma heritage and close ties to the island, serves as the main researcher for this article.

This project does not operate within a fixed municipality, but instead represents a dynamic process of (re)territorialization (Despret, 2022). Rather than simply discarding a 'used garment', it involves shedding skin collectively (Braidotti, 2020, p. 14) by embracing loss and constructing new imaginaries through participatory design and community culture.

Community Culture and Participatory Design for the Reframing of Grieving Processes

As noted in academic literature, participatory design emerged in the 1970s in Nordic countries as a response to a growing sense of community awareness (Ehn, 1988; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). It introduced a paradigm shift: moving from designing "for" users to designing "with" users (Sanders, 2002). In this framework, design is recognized as an inherently human activity (Papanek, 1984) and users are no longer viewed as passive subjects but as experts in their own realities (Manzini, 2015; Sanders, 2013).

Community culture, on the other hand, refers to any cultural practice aimed at social transformation through collaborative logics, prioritizing the process over the outcome (CulturaComunitaria, 2023). We believe that the combination of community culture and artistic practices creates favorable conditions for the project's development, fostering empowerment and rootedness within the community. This is achieved by understanding urban and territorial logics in processes of citizenship building, together with the incorporation of tools and dynamics for collective and collaborative creation.

This article, drawing on the logics of community culture, employs participatory design as a methodology given its transformative capacity to re-signify grieving processes through action. It delves into the networks created during the process, as well as the generation of spaces for collective listening and care through the imitation of home dynamics. In this context, we regard the valorization of oral memory through the fundamental collective practices of women, as they "serve as a basis for narrating other ways of coexistence, thinking on conflict, and building memory from action, remembrance, and not forgetting in the search for justice" (Sossa Londoño & Vergara Arias, 2019, p. 195). In this sense, we find the use of the term 'community heritage' appropriate, understanding that community practices blur the categories defined by UNESCO. Under this umbrella, we include common goods that are valued and sustained by the community.

The process developed within this framework is structured around horizontal and participatory encounters and actions that facilitate care and mutual support. These are articulated through the design of devices that influ-

ence the community's sense of belonging and contribute to the reconstruction of its rootedness.

PROCESS CARTOGRAPHY. TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININE SPACES OF CARE

Using the theoretical and methodological references previously outlined, we initiated a process open to different ages and genders. However, to ensure meaningful contributions and the creation of safe spaces, we defined the intervention community based on groups already established by Cruz Roja La Palma. The selection of participants was guided by the need to engage with groups that had pre-existing trust-based bonds, which extended beyond the *Mestura La Palma* process, and included other spaces for meeting and reflection. This approach facilitated greater openness to the process—crucial for achieving the study's objectives—while ensuring the group's continuity and the sustainability of the work undertaken.

Initial mediations were conducted with several existing groups, including some composed of adolescents. However, the approach proved to be more successful with senior groups, which consisted of over 90 percent women (with male participants accompanying some of these women). This composition likely reflects the importance of meeting spaces for these groups, which frequently experience unwanted loneliness (D.P., 2021).

The mediation thus focused on two groups of rural peripheral women, structured into various sessions—held almost weekly in Los Llanos de Aridane and approximately fortnightly in Jedey. These sessions facilitated collective inquiries into territorial identity, community heritage, and domestic life. It was a particularly sensitive process, with its pace adjusted to align with the participants' emotional states, emphasizing the creation of interpersonal bonds that contributed to the group's well-being.

This study takes on a qualitative approach, integrating the voices of the participants and the impact generated during the process. It is based on the analysis of testimonies collected during the encounters and mediation, framed within a narrative and phenomenological perspective that focuses on the experiences and emotions expressed by the participants. This approach is complemented with participant observation of the local mediation and involved agents, allowing researchers to immerse themselves and observe interactions in a contextualized manner.

In this setting, a horizontal relationship between researchers and interlocutors is established through collaborative and dialogic practice, recognizing the participants' knowledge and perspectives as vital to the project. This approach amplifies and affirms the participants' self-expressions, facilitated by the

context of the *(sobre)mesa* (table talk), where everyone gathers around a common element on the same horizontal plane. At the same time, it ensures that the researchers do not adopt a neutral, external, or hierarchical position, but instead embrace an embodied objectivity (Haraway, 1988).

These two methodological approaches are complemented by an assessment using the *Civímetro* evaluation tool, which provides a context-adaptable system structured into seven steps, ranging from defining objectives and indicators to measurement and conclusion drawing (Civímetro, 2020). This methodological triangulation ensures a deeper and more situated understanding of the social practices under study.

Aiming at valuing the memory and sense of belonging of those affected by the Tajogaite volcano crisis—while simultaneously consolidating a space for mutual care and support—we carried out a series of encounters, actions, and collective construction device implementations across different phases. During the initial participatory diagnosis phase, we provided the group with a space for active listening. The content generated on this phase facilitated the articulation of a series of actions aimed at recovering and reconstructing memory and territory. The second phase focused on the materialization of co-produced devices based on the findings and needs (both expressed and implicit) identified during the diagnosis. Additionally, the evaluation using the *Civímetro* tool constituted the third phase, though it remained a transversal element throughout the entire process (Table 1).

Table 1: Phases of Mestura La Palma.

Phases	*Specific Actions*	*Dates*
1. Participatory diagnosis	1.1. Definition of fixed working groups (the community)	November 2022—March 2023
	1.2. 1st Workshop: Where are my neighbors?	November 2022
	1.3. Collective mapping of community heritages	December 2022
	1.4. 1st Community Encounter: *Conversaciones de Sobremesa* (Table Talks)	April 2023
	1.5. Summer meeting. Community afternoon snack	July 2023
	1.6. Ongoing on-site mediation	March—December 2023
2. Development of memory and rootedness devices	2.1. Map of territory and community heritage affected by the volcano	November—December 2022
	2.2. Mestura Coffer	April—December 2023
	2.3. *(Sobre)mesa* short film	June 2023
	2.4. *(Sobre)mesa* documentary	June—December 2023
	2.5. Mestura Table	December 2023
3. Evaluation and possible futures	3.1. *Civímetro*	October 2022—January 2024
	3.2. Final project encounter	December 2023

Source: Own elaboration.

HOW TO SHED SKIN THROUGH THE COLLECTIVE? A PROCESS OF IDENTITY INQUIRY AND SPATIAL APPROPRIATION

Before Healing, Diagnosis

In the initial engagement with the community, we focused on investigating all the significant community heritage elements buried by the volcano. This preliminary research was conducted through collective mapping—using a map designed with the QGIS tool—which enabled the precise location of these heritage elements.

Figure 2: Composition featuring photographs from the collective mapping workshop and "Community Heritage Seal". Photographs: OFIC.

From this initial collective research conducted during the diagnosis phase, approximately 80 community heritage elements were identified and categorized into nine groups for further study (Table 2). However, while this process provided a clearer understanding of the situation and a valuable starting point, the approach was not pursued further. Engaging with the affected community revealed the fragility of their circumstances and underscored the need to prioritize rebuilding the present and future. Despite this shift in focus, the process brought to light valuable testimonies of longing and affection for the lost territories: "I remember the countryside scent, the family, the union. The feeling of freedom, surrounded by fifty years of memories and work done with love. I remember the sunsets from the rooftop and the family gatherings. I remember a life" (Testimony 1, extracted from Coffer Mestura device).

Table 2: Typologies and samples of collected community heritage elements.

Heritage typology	*Sample/Element*
1. Domestic	Vernacular/*costumbrista* photographs
2. Gastronomic	Bar Las Tejas; Bodega de Los Camacho
3. Oral memory	Stories and anecdotes of significant places (some lost); Daily habits (domestic and public); Spaces and moments of socialization before the eruption
4. Associative	Velia La Laguna Society; Las Manchas Terrero; Todoque Neighbors' Association
5. Educational	Los Campitos School
6. Religious	Cemetery of Las Manchas; Church of Todoque
7. Festive	San Pío X Festival; Descent of the Virgen del Pino
8. Agricultural	Las Manchas wine-growing area; Tenisca water canalization
9. Landscape	Los Guirres beach; Tacande and Tacande views; El Paraíso

Source: Own elaboration based on collective mapping workshop findings.

Domestic Practices as Affirmative Forms of Belonging

Although certain common aspects were identified between the collectives from Los Llanos and Jedey— which led to bringing them together on several occasions and deeming them as one in this article—, their motivations, interrelations, and dynamics proved that each group had its own peculiarities. In this context, mediation allowed to gradually ground issues that particularly moved each group, resulting in a common nexus: the domestic.

Delving into spaces of collective female construction, it is important to highlight how, traditionally, the domestic sphere has been associated with women and is seen as intimate, immutable, and timeless; in contrast, the public sphere has been associated with men and is built and transformed, sometimes being understood as a transit channel, overlooking its nature and potential for staying and encountering (Collin, 1994; Gilligan, 1982). This public/private dichotomy has historically excluded women from public space, as they could not carry out caregiving tasks in a context designed for productivity. Currently, territories continue to replicate this division, placing certain experiences and actions in one space—the public, associated with shared and community responsibility—and excluding them from another—the domestic, private, and familial—(Col-lectiu Punt 6, 2019, p. 75).

Thus, each group focused on an aspect of domestic heritage rooted in their identity. On one hand, the women of Jedey worked on a recipe book of dishes that represented them (Mestura La Palma, 2023, pp. 38-47). On the other hand, the group from Los Llanos worked on creating a communal tablecloth, reviving the sewing habit that had been lost for many after the eruption. In doing so, they taught each other, creating moments of well-being, socialization, and shared learning (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Composition featuring photographs of the sessions for creating the community tablecloth (left) and the recipe book (right). Photographs: OFIC.

We consider that mediation was of vital importance, as it contributed to the group's sense of belonging and improved the well-being and emotional state of its members. One hundred percent of the people surveyed through *Civímetro* rated their overall relationship with the project as "very satisfactory," also feeling that their opinions were taken into account throughout the process. Ninety percent felt comfortable (to a greater or lesser extent) expressing their feelings in front of the rest of the group. There was a general improvement in the emotional situation of those surveyed compared to 2022, the second year after the eruption and the start of the project. They believe this was largely due to the project (with an average of 4.77 on the Likert scale, 5 being the highest value). Thus, testimonies from different women confirm the impact: "This time gives me life. Well, of course, I'm always locked up in four walls. Here I feel good, yes" (Testimony 2, extracted from *(Sobre)mesa* short film). "While I'm here I forget everything. Oh, dear! Because the days I don't come, I feel bad... because this gives me life, if it weren't for this... it's like a third youth one has" (Testimony 2, extracted from *(Sobre)mesa* short film).

It is worth highlighting that, although the community tablecloth was created only by the Los Llanos group, it is one of the highest rated actions in *Civímetro*: beyond the various encounters, the community identifies it as the action that has most improved their mood and emotional state. Not in vain,

> The act of embroidery, rooted in lived experience, facilitates the connection with the individual body and contributes to forming a

> collective body that keeps individual and collective memory alive. These spaces, created through collective embroidery, offer a sense of being wrapped up in listening, dialogue, reflection, and connection between women seeking to repair their lives. (Albarrán González & Colectiva Malacate, 2024, pp. 12-13)

This research, dialogue, and initial collective creation process highlights the importance of the domestic and the everyday. It is a context for addressing identity and rootedness from an intimate and constructive perspective. The domestic space constitutes, as Chávez-Giraldo notes, "a reality distinguishable from other spaces produced by other cultural and architectural practices" (2010, p. 9). Studying it helps to understand the social structures of a specific group (Chávez Giraldo, 2010).

Thus, mediation focuses on the collective reflection of domestic heritage, revealing how "the table", an apparently simple object, serves as the epicenter of the domestic sphere—the place where bonds are forged. The table's location, the objects arranged on it, and the people who sit around it create different spaces and contexts. Therefore, it is crucial to distinguish between the table as an object and the *sobremesa* (table talk) as a context: the one that facilitates coexistence, mutual care, and the channeling of conversations. The pairing of both becomes a means of constructing meaningful relationships and collective support for the Aridane Valley community. This reflection leads to the use of the term (*sobre)mesa*, a definition that transcends the traditional one, materializing the importance of both the object and the context.

It is important to highlight that this research defines public space as a place of fundamental value for everyday encounters. In this sense, in the context of working from the domestic sphere, the *(sobre)mesa* is used as a strategy to generate domestic spaces within public space. What happens if we transfer the common practices and objects that make up the domestic environment to public space? "Bringing the domestic to the street" is a strategy for appropriating public meeting spaces (especially as a woman), reclaiming neighborhood spaces, and creating friendlier environments that, through the intimate qualities of the home, foster conditions of trust and healing.

Under this hypothesis, another experimental action was carried out to test its catalytic power in different contexts. Thus, various spaces and protagonists were selected to generate different *(sobre)mesas*: 1) a festive *(sobre)mesa* in Plaza Gazmira (El Paso) with some female neighbors from Los Llanos; 2) a snack at the Jedey Early Childhood and Primary School; 3) a sewing session in the Los Llanos Market Square; and 4) a more intimate *(sobre)mesa* in the new home of two of the people we worked with (Figure 4).

The vast majority of these *(sobre)mesas*, except for the sewing session, were articulated around food, using it as a pretext to share and engage in dialogue. Eating—as a social practice—in a public space not only has a significant social and interpersonal impact but also contributes to territorial appropriation, identifying the public space as a place for meeting and coexisting beyond the domestic sphere. Food practices are a daily process with a strong cultural dimension, and therefore, they are conditioned by the context in which they take place (Gaínza, 2003, pp. 82-83). In this sense, the selected foods and their preparation not only form part of the domestic heritage of a community, but are also a fundamental part of its identity and rootedness. Thus, these tables were filled with dishes prepared from family recipes and typical Palmeran cuisine such as *escacho* or *mistela*.[4]

Figure 4: Mosaic featuring images of the *sobre(mesas)* from the documentary. Photographs: Natalia Morales, Awara Producciones.

The different *(sobre)mesas*, along with the valuable conversations that took place at them, were recorded to create the documentary *(Sobre)mesa*. This audiovisual document compiles various spontaneous scenes that embrace loss while visualizing the importance of gathering spaces, the meaning of self-organization, and the reconstruction of daily life and home through support networks. This device thus establishes a setting where the conversations are neither premeditated nor mediated, aiming to avoid hierarchization and interpretations of subaltern voices (Spivak, 2011). The documentary thus envisions how a 'minor gesture' (Manning, 2016), in this case, table talk, can become a projective device capable of activating all five senses and enabling reflection on the society we wish to become

4 *Escacho* is a dough made from *gofio* (toasted and ground corn flour), potatoes, local smoked cheese, green *mojo* (Canarian cilantro sauce), and chopped onion. *Mistela*, on the other hand, is an alcoholic beverage made from water, *aguardiente*, sugar, lemon and orange peel, cinnamon, and anise.

and the territory we want to inhabit. Those surveyed through *Civímetro* consider the documentary the device that most contributed to strengthening the community's sense of belonging. This reflects the power of the *(sobre)mesa*, not only as a context for socialization but also as a tool for transformation.

AFTER THE LAVA AND ASH, *(SOBRE)MESAS*. FROM LOSS TO POSITIVE AFFECTS

This collective action-research represents an approach and a contribution aimed at reconstructing the territory in the context of a volcanic crisis, drawing from community culture and participatory design. It enabled affected individuals to gather in trust-based environments to reflect on loss, mourning, memory, and the elaboration of new narratives around identity, rootedness, and the possibilities of collective healing and new daily routines in redefined domestic and public spaces. These topics have been brought into dialogue with diverse contributions—such as Haraway's situated knowledge and embodied objectivity (1988) or Braidotti's (2020) affirmative thinking—through creative, artistic, and relational project practices that have allowed for the following:

- Developing and testing an *ad hoc* methodology with the mediation groups, while experimenting with various formats and tools to facilitate dynamization (worksheets, devices such as the coffer, actions like the tablecloth, etc.).
- Generating an initial diagnosis of community heritages that are significant to the community and in need of preservation.
- Gathering audiovisual testimonies and life stories that narrate and emphasize the process of loss, resilience, and (re)territorialization experienced by those affected by the Tajogaite volcano.
- Verifying the power of the table as a key element for mediation, as well as the potential of bringing elements associated with the domestic environment into public spaces.

During the research, challenges related to the group's emotional state emerged, requiring constant adaptation to their life circumstances and the stages of grief they were experiencing. Additionally, the process involved shifting dynamics, with continuous reformulation and co-ideation as it progressed, leading to an extension of the timeline to align with the community's rhythms. These factors highlight the importance of a flexible and reflective methodological approach that evolves alongside the process.

The various *(sobre)mesas* held throughout the project have contributed to improving the community's emotional and mental well-being by

fostering trust networks and providing opportunities to relive enjoyable habits that had been lost, such as sewing and cooking. The evaluation underscores that the most impactful contributors to the community's well-being were the gatherings, those that brought both groups together, as well as the sessions dedicated to creating the communal tablecloth. Additionally, the community highly values the documentary for its role in strengthening the group's sense of togetherness.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the active role of women in participation, not only within the domestic sphere but also in the public space. This underscores and enhances the significance of integrating women as both agents and beneficiaries of change, revaluing their role in society as managers and designers of their own environment (Melero Aguilar, 2011, p. 21).

Throughout the process, participatory design has served as an instituting practice, grounded in the creation of relational and cooperative spaces capable of empowering vulnerable groups. During its development, the active role of design facilitated encounters and the construction of positive experiences with the participants. However, its instituting capacity is considered limited, as the project itself is confined to the scope of the funding. The dynamics initiated continue through other impulses and perspectives, thanks to the framework established by Cruz Roja La Palma. We consider it a success to have integrated ourselves into a broader context, ensuring the survival of the spaces and relationships formed. Currently, the project is awaiting new funding formulas. Nevertheless, the work of the professional mediator continues through her subsequent hiring by Cruz Roja.

From *Mestura La Palma*, we propose a transformation of the territory through neighborhood action and community culture. We consider that, through the *(sobre)mesa*—breaking the barriers of the domestic sphere and bringing it into the public one—it is possible to create a network of community spaces (intimate and close) that citizens can take over and care for. This is a process that emerges from the affected individuals themselves (bottom-up), where a shared agency is established to address structural inequalities and transcend the symbolic, giving voice to the most vulnerable groups.

As Elsa López (1973) recalls in her poem "Yo vuelvo a La Palma" (I return to La Palma)—based on the idea of remaining, resisting—one of the participants also vindicates the importance of channeling pain to create sustainable futures through collectivity: "You have to work, and you have to make the same encounters happen again, and you have to sacrifice yourself, because no one will do this to you" (Testimony 4, extracted from *(Sobre)mesa* documentary).

With her words and the song by La Palma artist Valeria Castro playing in the background, we conclude by emphasizing the power of the collective to generate positive emotions that support us in times of loss.

What had to happen, happened
And I don't plan to do anything else
But stay here
Taking care of the root
VALERIA CASTRO, *La raíz*

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