

La meva relació amb Barcelona és ben antiga; entre els anys quaranta-cinc i cinquanta i tants, cada any, el meu pare organitzava un mes de vacances a Espanya.

Llogava un cotxe i preparava l'itinerari acuradament, amb el mateix entusiasme amb què més tard ho recordava.

Pel que a mi respecta, recordo que m'animava a dibuixar un meu oncle —que per altra part tenia poca tirada a les arts— i jo m'interessava pels museus i per aquelles perdudes sagristies on de sobte, entre la pols, apareixia un Greco (el meu oncle m'oferia coses meravelloses: un llapis del número 1, gomes, caixes d'aquarel·les, quaderns de paper costaneira, tot seguit Almaco, més tard Whatman, o Ingres, o Conté; a cada millora de qualitat dels meus dibuixos corresponia una promoció premeditadament decidida per aquell meu oncle que no sabia dibuixar).

Encara no hi havia turistes, ni autopistes. Èrem més a prop de les cases i de les persones. Espanya era pobra, devastada. Pertot arreu la pols amagava la riquesa secular; pols del color de Toledo, de l'Alcàzar fins al Tajo. El cotxe llogat pel meu pare tenia un gran èxit; la gent es congregava per veure un model americà que no coneixien.

A partir de mitjan anys cinquanta vam deixar de fer les vacances a Espanya. Els preus havien augmentat i el canvi ja no resultava favorable. L'Hostal de Santiago, rodejat d'automòbils francesos, era un signe dels nous temps.

El cotxe llogat ja no causava sensació.

My relationship with Barcelona goes back a long time; every year, between nineteen forty-five and nineteen fifty-something, my father organised a month's holiday in Spain.

He would hire a car and painstakingly prepare the itinerary. With the same enthusiasm, he later remembered it.

As for me, from the moment I remember when an uncle of mine—otherwise little given to the arts—encouraged me to draw, I became interested in the museums and in those hidden shrines in which, suddenly, amidst all the dust, an El Greco would appear. (My uncle offered me wonderful things: No. 1 pencils, erasers, water colour sets, costaneira paper sketch pads, then Almaco, later Whatman or Ingres or Conté. Each time the quality of my drawings got better I was given a deliberately calculated promotion by my uncle, who could not draw).

In those days there were neither tourists nor motorways; we were closer to houses and to people. Spain was a poor country, a devastated country; everywhere you looked the dust covered a centuries-old wealth: dust the colour of Toledo, of the Alcázar and even of the Tagus. The car my father hired was a great success; people flocked to admire an American model they had never seen before.

In the mid fifties we stopped coming to Spain for our holidays. Prices had risen and the exchange rate was no longer in our favour.

The Hostal de Santiago, surrounded by French coaches, heralded the new times.

The hired car no longer caused surprise.

The year we visited Catalonia my father, as usual, studied what had to be seen; the family gathered around the big table in the dining room and made plans.

My interest centred on the Vic Museum and Gaudí.

I was not very interested in architecture; but even if Gaudí was not actually painting or sculpture, he at least seemed to be.

The first night—we arrived late—I went with my brother to see the Sagrada Família. It was dark and we were frightened. The streets were generally deserted. But in the Ramblas there was bustle and the usual procession of people one finds in all the towns and cities of Spain.

The following day I became aware that the strange sculptures were made from what can be found everywhere: windows, doors, plinths, ironwork, ceramic or stone friezes, roof tiles, guttering; everything very functional, adapted to the hands and the feet, to the five senses. Inside the Casa Milà I felt at home: there was nothing special except a magical atmosphere. Not very different from the other houses in well-aligned blocks, in airy streets where it is a pleasure to stroll, crossing one by one, all day long, the corners cut at an angle of forty-five degrees, the corners of profound spaces that Federico Correa was to show me

later.

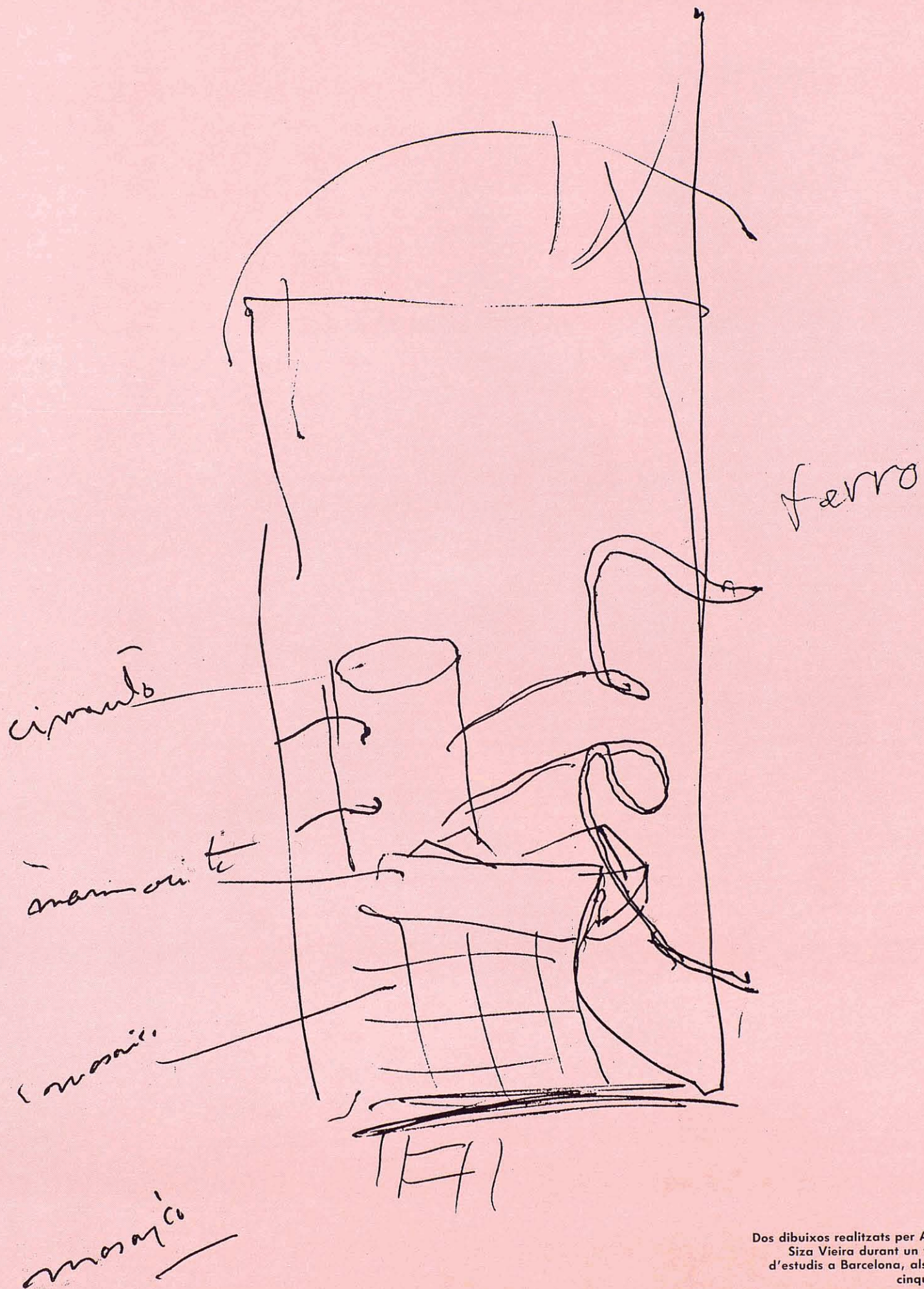
I had my first premonition that perhaps architecture interested me more than anything else; that it was within my grasp; all that was needed was to arrange windows, doors, plinths, ironwork, ceramic or stone friezes, roof tiles and guttering. I felt the heartbeat of normal section tubes, of electrical wires; and the movement of air through walls.

On the way back we stopped to have lunch in a nearby restaurant. I saw a poster advertising Colonia Güell. My father was tired of architecture and museums; but he let the chauffeur take me «over there».

When we came back they had just finished lunch. The chauffeur was hungry and disgruntled; my father pretended to be angry; my fifteen-year-old eyes were shining.

Up the Costa Brava, the blessing of the Mediterranean.

(Later I came this way at one hundred kilometers per hour. Wonderful motorways, Coderch in two seconds, a city in the Far West made of wooden façades. Enthusiasm, enthusiasm. The enthusiasm I needed: hands, feet, five senses).



Dos dibuixos realitzats per Álvaro Siza Vieira durant un viatge d'estudis a Barcelona, als anys cinquanta.

Two sketches by Álvaro Siza Vieira, made on a journey to Barcelona during his studies, in the fifties.

L'any destinat a Catalunya, com sempre, el meu pare va estudiar el que calia veure; la família es reunia al voltant de la taula del menjador i feia plans.

El meu interès es dirigia cap al museu de Vic i cap a Gaudí.

L'arquitectura m'interessava ben poc; però allò semblava escultura, o pintura, o ho era.

La primera nit —vam arribar tard— vaig anar amb el meu germà a veure la Sagrada Família. Tot era fosc i vam agafar por. Els carrers eren buits. Però a les Rambles hi havia animació i l'habitual desfilada de gent, com en totes les ciutats i pobles d'Espanya.

L'endemà em vaig adonar que les estranyes escultures eren fetes amb el que existeix a tot arreu: finestres, portes, sòcols, ferraments, revestiments de ceràmica o bé de pedra, carasses, gàrgoles; tot ben funcional, adaptat a les mans, als peus i als cinc sentits. Dins de la Casa Milà em vaig sentir com a casa: no hi havia res d'especial tret d'una qualitat màgica. No gaire diferent de les altres cases dels barris ben arrencgerats, en els carrers ben airejats on venia de grat passejar, creuant tot el dia, una darrera l'altra, les cantonades tallades a quaranta-cinc graus, les cantonades d'espais profunds que més tard, Federico Correa, em faria conèixer.

Vaig tenir el primer pressentiment que potser l'arquitectura m'interessava més que qualsevol altra cosa; que es trobava al meu abast; que només era qüestió de posar en dansa finestres, portes, sòcols, ferraments, revestiments de ceràmica o de pedra, carasses, gàrgoles. Vaig sentir el bategar dels tubs de secció normal, dels fils d'elec-

tricitat, i el moviment de l'aire per entre les parets.

Quan tornàvem vam parar a dinar en un restaurant dels voltants. Vaig veure un rètol que deia: Colònia Güell. El meu pare estava cansat de l'arquitectura i dels museus, tanmateix va accedir que anés amb el xòfer a «allà al costat».

Quan vam tornar acabaven de dinar. El conductor tenia gana i estava enfadat. El meu pare feia veure que estava enfadat. Els meus ulls de quinze anys brillaven.

La Costa Brava, més amunt, la benedicció del Mediterràni.

(Més tard vaig passar per aquí a cent per hora, belles autopistes, Coderch en dos segons, una ciutat de Far West de façanes de fusta, entusiasme, entusiasme, l'entusiasme que em feia falta; mans, peus, els cinc sentits.)

A l v a r o S i z a - V i e i r a



Neix a Matosinhos, Portugal, l'any 1933. Estudia Arquitectura a l'Escola de Belles Arts de Porto, després d'haver estudiat pintura i escultura.

La importància de la seva tasca pedagògica ha contribuït a l'aparició de l'*Escola de Porto*.

De la seva obra, cal destacar els projectes SAAL d'habitatges per a obrers a Évora, les piscines públiques de Porto, i un gran nombre d'edificis de petita dimensió.

Actualment viu a Porto, encara que realitza projectes a Macao, La Haia i Berlín.

Born in Matosinhos, Portugal, in 1933. He studied Architecture at the Oporto School of Fine Arts, having already

begun his career as a painter and studied sculpture.

The importance of his didactic work has led to the setting up of the Oporto School: a group of architects whose

projects arouse a great deal of interest. Outstanding among his works are the

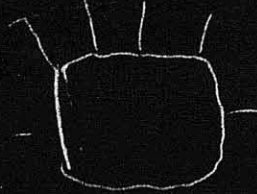
Evora SAAL project for workers' housing, the public swimming pools in Oporto and a considerable number of buildings of small dimensions.

At present he lives in Oporto, although he carries out projects in Macao, The Hague, Venice and Berlin.

mosaico minado
mosaico longo

mosaico
minado

pedra



vê-se o
estereotipo
Pedra trabalhada
em grão muito
grosso.