



CAMINITO DEL REY Y SU ENTORNO

NOMINATION OF EL CAMINITO DEL REY
AND ITS SURROUNDINGS FOR INSCRIPTION
ON THE UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE LIST



Nomination of El Caminito del Rey and its surroundings for inscription on the UNESCO's World Heritage List



málaga.es diputación

DIPUTACIÓN DE MÁLAGA

2019

TEAM OF EXPERTS

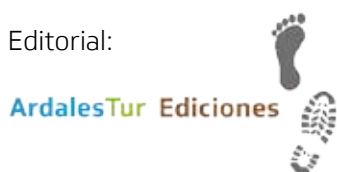
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- María del Mar Espejo Herrerías – Prehistory / Las Aguilillas Necropolis
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Publishing Company ARDALESTUR EDICIONES

Printed by IMAGRAF IMPRESORES

ISBN 978-84-946321-3-6

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EL CAMINITO DEL REY PATH AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Beauty Spot, El Chorro or the Count of Guadalhorce's Reservoir and Gaitanejo Dam, the walkways over the waterfall in the Hydroelectric Power complex El Chorro, El Chorro Train Station and the bridges over the Gaitanes Gorge, as well as the Palaeolithic Cave in Ardales and Las Aguilillas Necropolis or the Bobastro Mozarabic Cave Chapel have stood in this area for centuries and witnessed the human presence since the Palaeolithic. The unique natural surroundings have allowed the industrial development of the area and gave us places such as the path and dramatic scenery, which can be considered as one of the most beautiful in the whole world.

All the outstanding heritage should belong to humankind as an everlasting legacy. In order to make sure these aims are achieved there is to perform the registration and conservation of the sites. Therefore, any proposal to be included on the World Heritage List has to be not only supported by certain people and institutions but also by the public that confirms the real value of the site.

From the heart of the Province of Malaga, we are proud to show the value of this site, as we are convinced of its worldwide importance and exceptional features. We would like to share them with the whole humankind by promoting El Caminito del Rey Path (The King's Little Pathway) and its surroundings for the inclusion on the UNESCO's World Heritage List.



Francisco Salado Escaño.
President of the County Council of Málaga.





EL CAMINITO DEL REY PATH AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The history of Málaga and its countryside are linked to a land in the centre of the province which is related to the large reservoirs in the hydroelectric complex on the river Guadalhorce, the mountains in El Chorro, and the sites related to human origins. Rather difficult terrain and adequate protection measures and management have allowed the public to benefit from the unique landscape, which is admired by thousands of visitors who firstly came attracted by the weather and the Costa del Sol.

The natural and humankind values that have coexisted throughout history on the same land and were determined by great projects, turned what we know today as 'El Caminito del Rey Territory' in a series of cultural sites which are crucial for understanding the Western Mediterranean.

Málaga brings together nature and humankind. This is due to its position in the south of Europe that made it participate in the diffusion process of important cultures since protohistory. Its connection with the north of Africa has always been obvious, above all regarding natural species, such as the Spanish fir, which can be found in the surrounding mountains, both coasts of the Alboran Sea and the Strait of Gibraltar. This region is of geohistorical interest as it connects

two big continents where humankind was born more than two million years ago, and where culture and art were developed as we understand them today, in this technological 21st century.

Here, nature became an ideal background for big ideas, and people knew how to take advantage of the natural surroundings that seemed impossible to be used and, thanks to science and the power of knowledge, put it into their service. The proposal for nomination that we are presenting is the result of this unity between nature and some brilliant human ideas developed throughout history.

The aim has always been to take advantage of this unique and exceptional terrain so it could be used by society in all periods of time. In a diachronic sense, the result is a series of cultural heritage values which can be found in an area of less than 20 km², and belong to the period that goes from the Palaeolithic to the 20th century. They form the pillars of the History of Málaga and still serve society, which is why they were created.

The Nomination Proposal for inclusion of El Caminito del Rey and its Surroundings on the World Heritage List includes the following seven monuments with an outstanding universal value:

- Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Beauty Spot and its Surroundings
- Palaeolithic Cave in Ardales
- Las Aguilillas Prehistoric Necropolis
- Bobastro Mozarabic Cave Chapel
- Tunnels, Viaducts and El Chorro Train Station
- Canals, Tanks and Boardwalks at El Caminito del Rey
- Dams and Reservoirs of El Chorro and Gaitanejo



El Caminito del Rey: Hanging boardwalks in the first canyon





Natural Beauty Spot: View from the Caminito del Rey Visitor Centre

Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Beauty Spot and its Surroundings

Desfiladero de los Gaitanes is a natural site of a great environmental and geomorphological interest with incredible landscape, which is why this is of the most beautiful places in the Province of Málaga. This mountainous complex covers a surface of 2,016 ha that belong to the towns of Ardales, Álora and Antequera. It includes places such as Almorchón Mountain, the canyons and the valley in the middle of the gorge, as well as Ballesteros and Estudiantes Cliffs, and the peaks of the Huma Mountains. All of them include formations with plants and animals with superb ecological value.

The most prominent are gorges in the Guadalhorce River, which are made of limestone and Jurassic dolostone. They are 3 km long, and can be up to 300 m high and less than 10 m wide, which is why they are so popular among climbers.

These mountains were once sea sediments that had been rising for millions of years before geological formations such as caves and chasms of great geological and archaeological interest were created. For example, there are a lot of traces of humankind since prehistory. Moreover, the remaining structures that were used for generating hydro power are of anthropological interest and an important cultural

heritage, above all, regarding industrial archaeology.

The refurbishment of El Caminito del Rey, or the service walkways, which were fixed on the wall of the gorge by the workers who built the canal of the Hydroelectric Power Station and were used by the workers who built El Chorro Dam, has resulted in a wonderful path from which one can admire the view of these stunning canyons.

Biodiversity is another advantage of this natural beauty spot. More than fifty plant communities and plant species associations of interest, adapted to a



vertical kind of life and some of them endemic, were registered. Some unique species stand out among these plants that live on rocks, such as *Rupicapnos africana*, *Sarcocapnos baetica*, *Campanula mollis*, *Chaenorhinum rubifolium* or *Cytissus moleroi*. As for trees, the most prominent species are Aleppo pines, stone pines, holm oaks, eucalypts, rockroses, and Phoenicean junipers.

The range of protected animal species in the Gaitanes Gorge (Desfiladero de los Gaitanes) is rather wide and adapted to diverse existing microecosystems, such as rivers, reservoirs, springs, river beaches, sheer walls, holes and caves.

Birds of prey, such as the Bonelli's eagle (*Aquila fasciata*), the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) and the Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*) stand out. Wild goats live in the highest areas here. Smaller animals, such as ring ouzels and Alpine swifts live close to water in lower areas. Falcons live at the middle parts of the gorge, together with common kestrels and northern goshawks, as well as other medium-sized birds of prey. At the top, there are big birds of prey such as golden eagles or griffon vultures.

Thanks to all these resources, the Gaitanes Gorge (Desfiladero de lo Gaitanes) was designated a Natural



Beauty Spot or Natural Site in 1989, when it became an Andalusian Nature Conservation Area. This site has been part of the Intercontinental Biosphere Reserve of the Mediterranean in Andalusia (Spain) — Morocco since 2006, and it was included on the list of Sites of Community Interest (SCI) in the Mediterranean Biogeographical Region. Moreover, it has been designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the birds directive and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).





The Cave in Ardales: The Hall of Stars (Sala de las Estrellas), the zone where Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens* lived.

First Settlements: the Cave in Ardales

Besides the importance that the surroundings of El Caminito del Rey have for nature, this natural beauty spot has sheltered many archaeological sites which talk about settlements that existed in the Lower Paleolithic Period or the Early Stone Age. There are three valleys in the area where more than hundred thousand-year-old proofs of human presence, such as tools, included hand axes, and the use of fire were found.

Likewise, the cave in Ardales is a prime cultural heritage from the Palaeolithic and a site which is famous for the human remains, archaeological evidence and prehistoric artwork found in the south of the Iberian Peninsula. Actually, it is considered to be one of the cradles of prehistoric cave art. The walls of the cave have the oldest-known prehistoric cave paintings, made by Neanderthals between 65,000 and 45,000 years ago according to the uranium or thorium dating of the sample layers with drawings.

Moreover, the has a variety of paintings made by Homo sapiens from the Upper Palaeolithic. At the same time, more than 20 bone deposits from the Neolithic and the Copper Age were studied.

The cave in Ardales, which is part of an important complex of five caves

in the Province of Málaga together with the Pileta and Gato caves in Benaolán, the Tesoro and Victoria in Rincón de la Victoria and Nerja Cave, was discovered in 1821 thanks to an earthquake during which its entrance was unveiled after approximately 3,500 years. Its use in tourism was initiated by Ms Trinidad Grund, who bought the cave, but after her death in 1896 it was abandoned even though its importance had been underlined by Henri Breuil, a first great scholar of prehistoric art.

It was in 1985 when its refurbishment and conservation were started and when it was opened to the public. From that



The Cave in Ardales: Horse image carved more than twenty-five thousand years ago.

moment on, a project in the Town Council of Ardales supported by Spanish and international bodies allowed the research on it to be continued and show the value of the cave.

Today we can see 1,010 images on 252 panels or different areas in the cave. They include 787 abstract signs, 106 unidentified or neglected motifs, 98 pictures of animals (above all deer and horses, although goats, bulls, snakes and birds can be seen as well), ten human figures, and nine hand prints. Likewise, at least 250 panes with drawings were registered, above all, in dark areas.

The Cave in Ardales is part of the route called 'Prehistoric Rock Art Trails', a European network with traces of artwork in caves which was certified 'Cultural Route of the Council of Europe' in 2010.

The route had great appeal among experts all over the world and has become a cultural attraction in this town. However, there is a lot to find out about this cave, which has an approximately 1,600 m-long trail inside of it, where some rooms such as the Large Hall of Stars, the Maze Gallery, the Arch Room, the Lake Room, the Spur Gallery, the Drawings Gallery or the Calvary and the Room with Hands stand out (Sala de las Estrellas, Galería



de los Laberintos, Salita del Arquero, Sala del Lago, Galería del Espolón, Galería de los Grabados / del Calvario, Sala de las Manos). Moreover, it has a characteristic maze with pillars, perennial lakes and beautiful stalagmite formations.





Las Aguilillas Necropolis: One of the undamaged tombs in the Guadalteba Valley and the Peñarrubia Mountains

The Great 'City of the Dead': Las Aguillillas Necropolis

The traces of prehistory can be also found in Las Aguillillas Necropolis, a cemetery placed at the confluence of the rivers Guadalteba and Turón, on a sandstone promontory from the Miocene at an altitude of 500 m above the sea in the Town of Campillos.

This site is of special interest as there are seven burial structures that are caved in the rock like family pantheons. Burial chambers in them and many of the niches in its surroundings, as well as some of the access passages were conserved. They were chronologically built from the end of Chalcolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age. One of these tombs is placed at the highest point of one of the hills and covered with an artificial burial mound which is the top of the necropolis.

Due to its architectural form, human remains or the found furnishing, these megalithic buildings are one of the most studied and useful, considering a large amount of information regarding the life and funerals of the first inhabitants of Guadalteba that was obtained thanks to them. This is why this necropolis is one of the most important prehistoric cultural heritage monuments in this area with many important archaeological sites.

It is placed in a strategic zone and related to tribes that settled in the

valley, right next to the river banks at first, and later on the high hills. Actually, these collective burial sites created by groups of humans who lived in those valleys in prehistory are of architectural, archaeological and anthropological interest. The use of a necropolis together by different tribes settled there can be considered an element of social cohesion.

According to the performed research, round fifty people of different age and gender were buried. These were secondary burials of bones only. Tombs were made by hand with stone picks, out of which approximately two hundred pieces made of flint and other materials



have been found. Next to the human remains, there were articles of furniture, such as pottery, knives and flint picks, personal ornaments (necklaces) and amulets, as well as metal objects such as arrow and spear points and cleavers, and some female idols made of stone. A total of more than two thousand archaeological items have been studied.

Las Aguilillas Necropolis is to be added to the monuments such as the ruins in Bobastro and the Cave in Ardales, which are both examples of troglodyte architecture in the area of Guadalteba, a rather important place regarding rock-cut or cave structures in the province,

although the cave in Ardales is more natural than man-made.

Other materials that were found during the research show there were human presence and settlements under late Roman rule or in the Middle Ages, which is not strange considering its strategic position. During the Spanish Civil War, it was used as a shelter and was a part of the front, so there are still remains of the trenches made in the battles.





Las Aguillillas Necropolis: The inside of one of the megalithic tombs



Bobastro Mozarabic Cave Chapel: The inside of it seen from the basilica's main nave.

Mozarabic Riot: Bobastro Mozarabic Cave Chapel

The surroundings of El Caminito del Rey also witnessed the medieval cave art and an uprising against the Emirate of Córdoba by Mozarabs (Christians in Muslim lands). The Bobastro Ruins, Mozarabic town in the 9th and 10th century were preserved at Mesas de Villaverde natural beauty spot. These ruins are an important site with a cave chapel or basilica as its most extraordinary symbol.

Its unique architectural features do not only base on its rock-cut structure but also on the fact that it inherited forms from Early Cristian and Hispano-Visigothic basilicas. This can be seen in its basilical plan as well as in its classical dimensions – three naves and a horseshoe arch, connected to a hermitic monastery.

The complex, which is included in the Andalusian Cultural Heritage General Catalogue (Catálogo General del Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz) as Good of Cultural Interest like the Cave in Ardales and Las Aguilillas Necropolis, is a great cultural resource because of its location, its unique features and historical importance.

The fact there are two geological complexes which are very different among them makes this site specially important. Limestone mountains in the Subbaetic System from the Jurassic, with

sheer terrain, can be clearly distinguished from chalky and conglomerate rocks from the Miocene that form dramatic scenery of Mesas de Villaverde with waning piled horizontal layers. Bobastro was created on one of these terrains. This is a wide settlement with a surface of more than 60 ha that can be surveyed. Its boundary line are three hills (La Encantada, Tinilla and El Castellón), which are more than 600 m high.

The town, which was at an almost unassailable location, was a shelter, operational base and headquarters of Umar ibn Hafsun and his followers, who rose against the Emirate of Córdoba, for almost



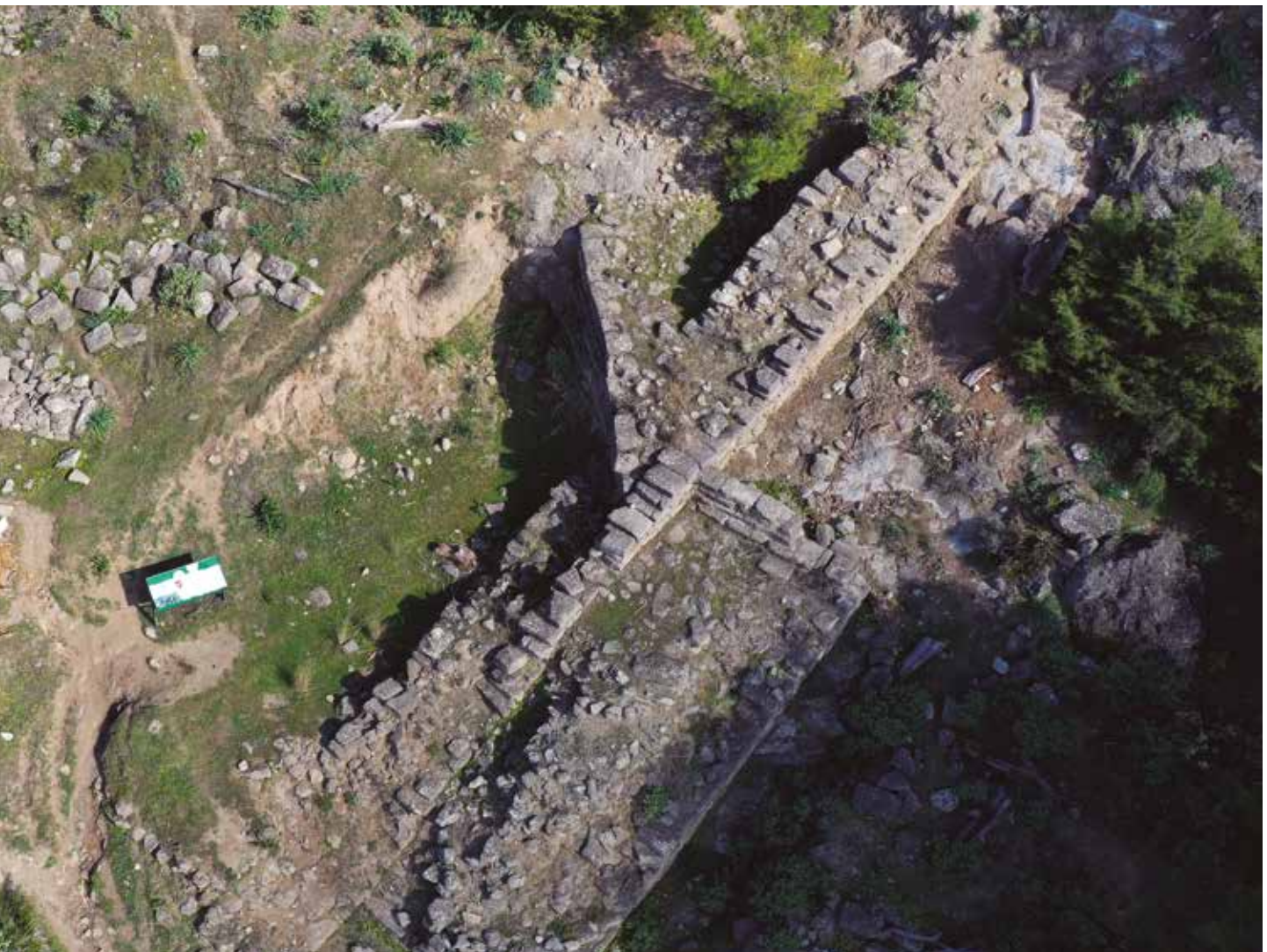
half a century or, more precisely, from 880 to 928 AD.

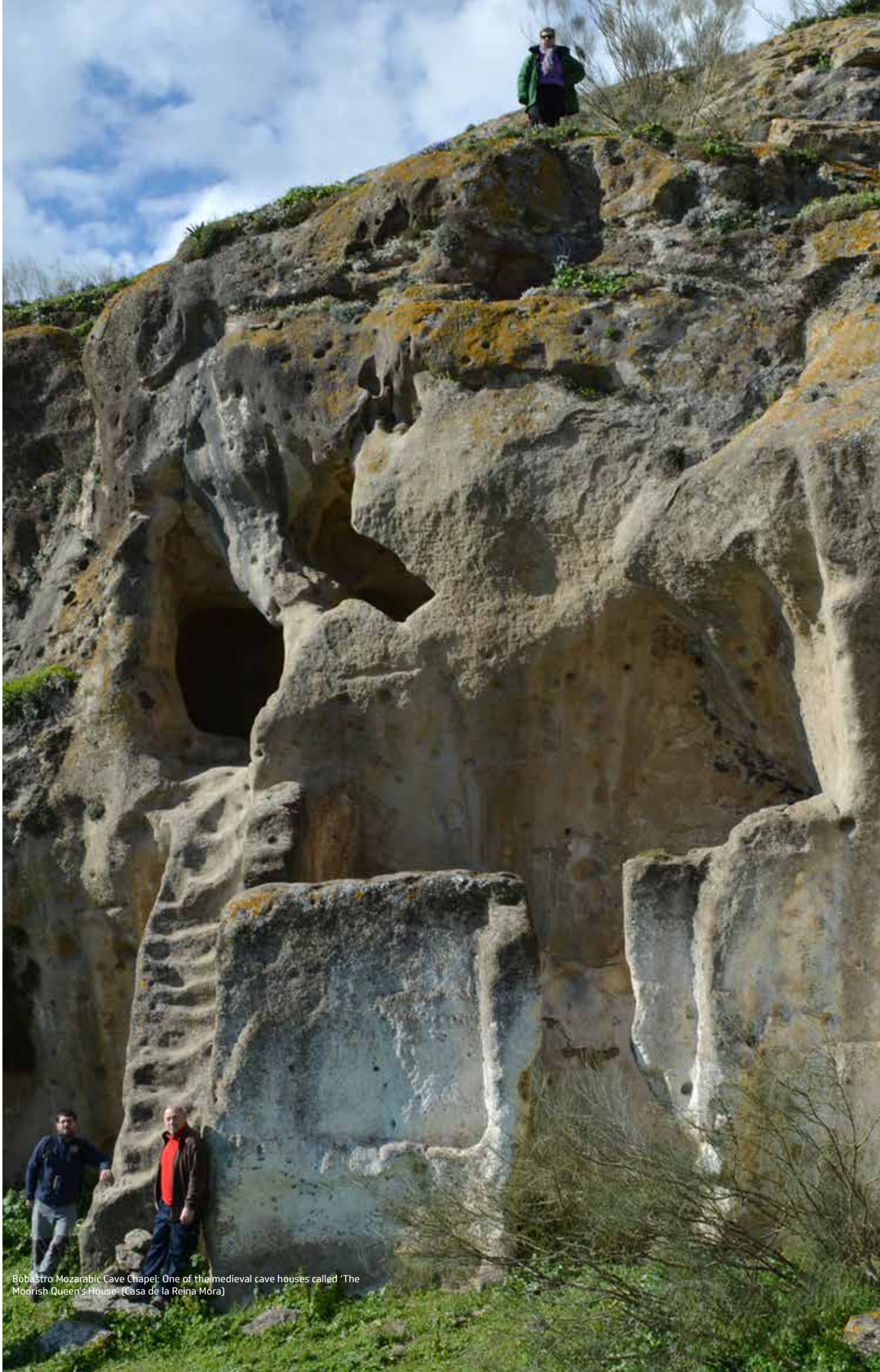
During Islamic rule over the Iberian Peninsula, Umar Ibn Hafsun, helped by some important Mozarabic allies, started the rebellion against the Emirate of Córdoba and made a fortification that consisted of a fortress in Bobastro, defensive walls, churches, palaces and residences. This population could get to 1,500 people at some periods of time.

Next to the cave chapel, which is a great example of eremitic monasticism in the area, there are also some caves, walls in ruins, and remains of some old ovens and

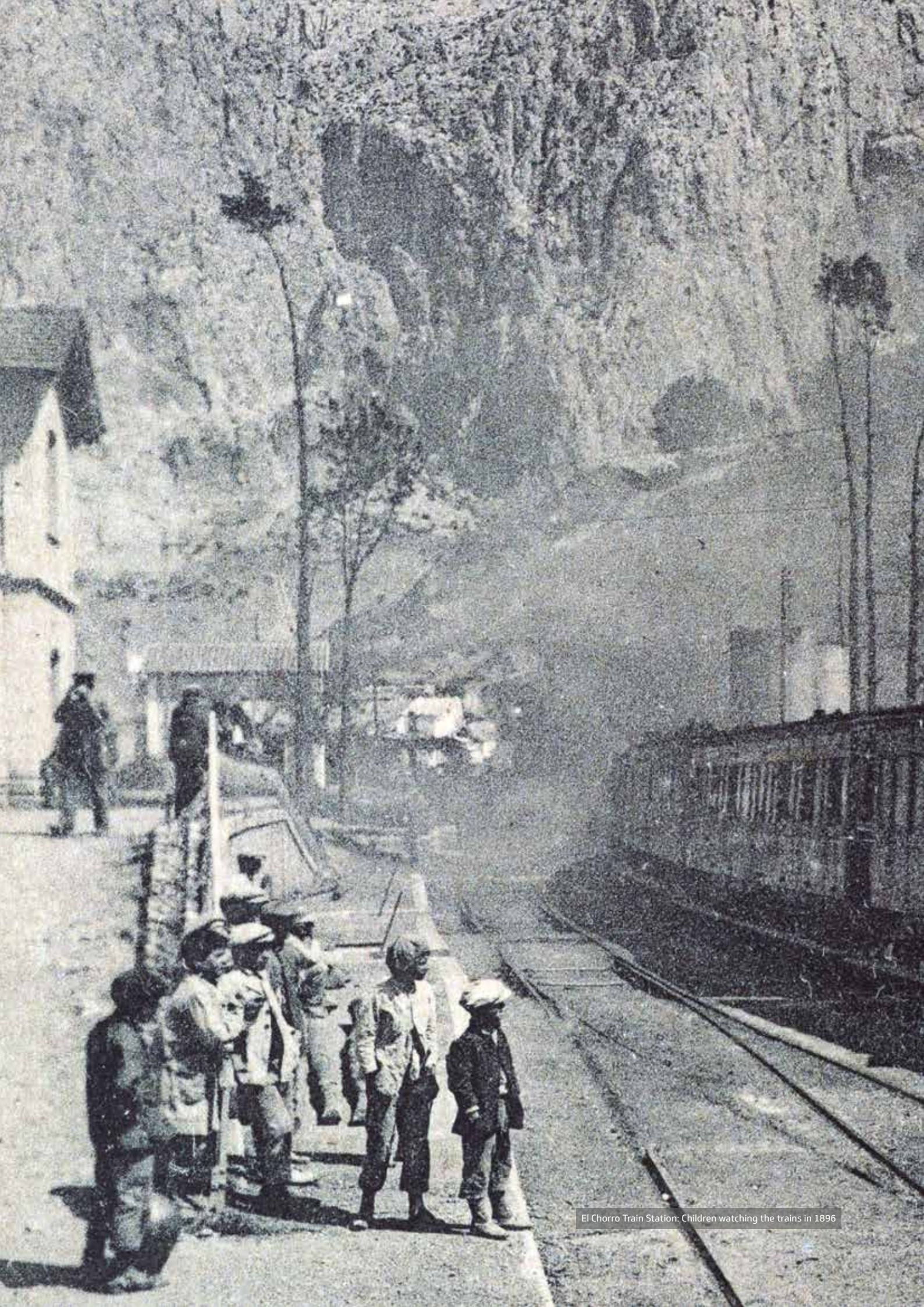
quarries, which were reused as dwellings. These are extraordinary examples of medieval cave structures that can be found in the province of Málaga. Bobastro is an outstanding example of this rock-cut or cave architecture.

Today, the paths are being improved and installations like museums are being developed in the area in order to make it easier for visitors to learn about military and civil architecture of this fortified town.





Bobastro Mozarabic Cave Chapel: One of the medieval cave houses called 'The Moorish Queen's House' (Casa de la Reina Móra)



El Chorro Train Station: Children watching the trains in 1896

Transport Revolution: El Chorro Train Station

When railway was established in Málaga in the middle of the 19th century, it was one of the most important happenings in the modern history of the province with a significant influence on the surroundings of El Caminito del Rey path, and brought the Desfiladero de los Gaitanes natural site in the centre of attention. Its creation required certain infrastructures, such as El Chorro Station, tunnels, bridges and viaducts, which are all good examples of industrial and architectural heritage from that period.

The train had a considerable impact on all economic sectors in Málaga, as number of visitors, trade and employment increased, and it positively influenced on town development and changed people's lifestyle. Of course, it was also a great stimulus for the area which was at the time more passive and away from the economic activities in the country due to its complex terrain.

Málaga was the second industrial town in Spain, and the railway was supposed to improve its future prospects. It was meant to connect this city with the Andalusian inland, especially with the coal-bearing river basins in Belmez and Espiel, in Córdoba, something which was crucial for the strong iron and steel industry in Málaga, as well as to connect it with other railways in Spain, which

would help the economic development of the area that had flourishing textile and chemical industries.

Some important business people decided to make a railway between Málaga and Córdoba. This was done in 1866, twenty years later. The immense volume of the works can be seen thanks to the structures, including 17 tunnels more than 5 km long in total, eight viaducts and 18 bridges, that were built to make a trail over or through the Gaitanes Gorge (Desfiladero de los Gaitanes). This massif was a big challenge for the industry at that time as there was to drill the mountains and cross the gorges. An important part



of these infrastructures had to be done only to go across the gorge.

Two stops at both sides of the gorge were made. In the north, Gobantes Station was built in Peñarrubia (today Campillos), but it was flooded by the water from the Guadalhorce Reservoir in the 1970s.

El Chorro Train Station was constructed in the south, in Álora, where the train runs on the left side of the Guadalhorce River and across the gorge at almost the same altitude at which El Caminito del Rey path is. Today, it is still working. On the 4th November 2016, it was officially named El Chorro-Caminito

del Rey Station. It keeps some original structures like access tunnels to the railways, metal tanks used for storing water for steam locomotive boilers, and the building for travellers, train manager and his assistants.

Between these stations, we can still see tunnels and viaducts, which used to be metal and known as 'iron bridges'. Most of these iron bridges were changed for bridges made of dry stone and ashlar a few years later. Some of them were rather beautiful like Josefona, which has a big arch that goes over the entire cattle track. Only metal bridges remain there. One is in the middle of the Gaitanes Gorge, in Hoyo



Valley, and the other one at the place where big walls of the gorge end in the Town of Álora.

Until 2007, all trains between Málaga and the rest of the peninsula used this railway. Today, short and medium-distance trains run along it, and it provides access to the natural beauty spot and El Caminito del Rey Path.



El Chorro Train Station: First tunnels built in 1865.



El Caminito del Rey Path: The walkway at the end of the boardwalks – Rivera Bridge-Aqueduct, built in 1904.

Engineering that favours Málaga: Hydro Power and El Caminito del Rey Path

The surroundings of the Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Beauty Spot were crucial in modernization, power supply improvement in Málaga and its intense industrial activity. At the beginning of the 20th century, there was an important change in power industry in Spain, where hydroelectric power stations were chosen. It also happened in Málaga. After the railway that connected the town with Córdoba had been built, the difference between the natural elevation at the entrance and exit of the Guadalhorce in the area of the Desfiladero de los Gaitanes was discovered, and that became an ideal place for a large waterfall that would create hydro power.

This is when a project for generating power based on this natural elevation of approximately 100 m was created. The waterfall was called '*Salto de El Chorro*', and its building was a real challenge for the 20th-century Spanish engineering.

The works on the hydroelectric power station to use the waterfall started in 1903, and were managed by engineer Rafael Bejumea. The project included building a dam at the entrance to the first gorge in the north, and a canal that went through the rock to the end of the second gorge in the south, where the water fell down along pipes under pressure up to the power turbine. This great hydroelectric

power project was completed by building El Chorro Dam in 1921.

In order to carry out these works, such as the service way, it was necessary to make hanging walkways that were fixed in the sheer walls of the gorge and used by the workers. This is how the maintenance workers could walk from the dam to the power station, materials could be transported, and locals could go across the gorge. King Alfonso XIII opened the dam on 21st May 1921, after he had walked along one section of the walkways, which were then named '*El Caminito del Rey*' or 'the King's Little Pathway'.



El Caminito del Rey Path: King Alfonso XIII sets the last stone to mark the end of the works on the hydroelectric power station on 21st May 1921.

At the end of the 1960s, the old canal was changed for an underground pipe, which is why the walkways were not necessary any longer and they were abandoned. As the years went by, nature itself and the lack of maintenance made El Caminito del Rey path irreparably damaged.

After many other unsuccessful tries, the County Council of Málaga together with the town councils of Ardales, Álora and Antequera, planned a series of actions in order to meet the common goal that consisted in a complete refurbishment of the path, which was opened to the public again at the end of March in 2015. Since then, El Caminito de Rey has been a world-famous

example of its kind and Málaga's tourist attraction, which promoted and stimulated economy in the surrounding towns.

The path is 7.7 km long. It consists of 4.8 km of dirt and access ways and 2.9 km of path in Hoyo Valley and boardwalks and walkways which are fixed on the sloping sides of the gorges. The latter are the most famous part of the trail due to which it became worldwide famous. These boardwalks and walkways are at some points 100 m above the level of the Guadalhorce River.

The refurbishment of El Caminito del Rey was based on the project made by



architect Luis Machuca. It brings together actions that enhance landscape and the refurbishment of the cultural heritage in an environmentally friendly way. The old structure was kept as the industrial archaeology and the new boardwalks were built with respect to environmental sustainability in order to make the impact of the construction as low as possible. Due to this, the project was awarded at national and international level on many occasions.

It got the Europa Nostra Award, which is the most significant prize given by the EU for the cultural heritage, as well as awards at the 13th Spanish Architecture and Town Planning Biennial; the 10th Hispanic-American Architecture Biennial; and the Architecture Award at the ArchMarathon in Milan. In all these cases, the actions that support the sustainability and cultural heritage and environmental conservation were considered.

Moreover, the Spanish cabinet awarded the path with the prize for emerging tourist destination and the Regional Government with the Premio Andalucía del Turismo (the Andalusian Award for Contribution to Tourism Sector). However, the path is not only a tourist attraction, but it also protects the history and the cultural heritage of the Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Beauty Spot with outstanding landscape, anthropological, and archaeological values, which is specially important because of its animals, plants and geological features. Until recently, this natural site was only visited by extreme spots lovers.

Actually, the refurbishment of E Caminito del Rey was the first step of an ambitious plan which was meant not only to prevent the area from being damaged by human actions but also to stimulate economic development and improve the standards of living in the surrounding towns.



El Caminito del Rey Path: The difficult project started by engineer Rafael Benjumea in 1901, who counted on specialized workers, and there were no fatal accidents.



El Chorro and Gaitanejo Dams and Reservoirs: Stunning El Chorro Dam was designed by Rafael Benjumea and built between 1914 and 1921 with large ashlars carved on the spot.

Big Hydraulic Constructions: El Chorro / the Count of Guadalhorce and Gaitanejo Dams

Water is one of the most precious resources of El Caminito del Rey path and its surroundings. It has influenced its past and present and it will do the same in the future. The last monuments to be added to this list are El Chorro Dam 1921, which was named '*El Conde del Guadalhorce*' or 'the Count of Guadalhorce's Reservoir' in 1954, and Gaitanejo Dam. Both of them are 20th-century constructions which can be considered hydraulic heritage of the province and outstanding examples of harmony between buildings and nature in this natural beauty spot.

The Gaitanejo Dam is a hydraulic structure of great technological interest, which had been made to provide hydro power while El Chorro Dam was being built. Its architecture is an example of the technology from the beginning of the last century, and it is considered to be a real innovation in the field of technology and industry in Spain and abroad for its location and the position of several vaults, as well as for its spillway system over the main dam.

The most important feature of this dam is its modern design. The structure is abutted against the mountainsides of the Gaitanejo Gorge and it is covered by a vault which comes from the top or crest of the dam, and acts as a cover which is

also a spillway. The other newness of this project, was placing the hydroelectric power station in the middle of the dam. It was among the first plants in the whole world that was made like this. In that section, the wall was closed by a firm tough large window, built on the reinforced concrete base which allowed watching water as it falls from the spillway from inside the plant and admire such a spectacular view.

Therefore, the dam and the hydroelectric power station of Gaitanejo became an important cultural heritage not only because of their technical characteristics and functions, but also



because they were original piece of work in the Spanish industry at that time and a great technical achievement with a rather stunning design, which made them fit perfectly in the landscape.

Another monument is El Chorro Dam, which was built as a large hydraulic structure that was meant to store big volume of water for years, ensuring power supply even in the periods when it hardly rains, as well as drinking water supply for the town of Málaga and for irrigation. Therefore, this was an extremely important project which was meant to ensure development and prosperous future of the Town of Málaga

as well as of several other towns in the Guadalhorce Valley.

This dam was built in a gorge on the Turón River, upstream from the waterfall at El Chorro. It is an incredible gravity dam with curved base, 72 m high (from the foundation), which creates a reservoir with a capacity of 80 million cubic metres. Its structure reminds of classical architecture style. Downstream, it is finished with large rounded ashlar, and it fits perfectly in the landscape which has been reforested throughout the years. Several paths and a kind of Romantic style balconies were also added to make this complex even more beautiful.





El Chorro and Gaitanejo Dams and Reservoirs: Today, El Chorro Reservoir is a wonderful place where people can admire nature.



The Cave in Ardales: One of the most representative forty thousand-year- old
Palaeolithic paintings of someone's left hand

The Nomination Proposal for Inclusion on the UNESCO's World Heritage List

All seven monuments that have been described here prove that 'El Caminito del Rey Path and its Surroundings' are natural, historical, industrial and cultural heritage that embraces times from prehistory to the 21st century and has to be conserved for future generations.

The objects behind this proposal for nomination tend to turn into firm structures made of variety of elements that have existed throughout different periods of time at the same place and got to the 21st century in good condition so they could be contemplated, valued and admired by today's and future generations. The main goal of the institutions which present this nomination proposal is conservation of these outstanding and unique values. This determined proposal is based on a series of projects that are going to implement necessary improvements in order to obtain benefits from this international recognition.

The nomination will not only result in cultural benefits. The area where the villages and towns have a growing tendency in depopulation will be rewarded for its efforts to foster conservation and provide adequate management model that controls tourism with visitors who are attracted by cultural and environmental tourism that can be experienced at places less than an hour away from cosmopolitan Málaga and the Costa del Sol.

This cultural and environmental tourist supply can be reinforced and its failure avoided by this kind of projects or proposals, which, from the very beginning, show to the society a responsible management that controls tourism, following the principles of sustainable use of resources that will be conserved in the future. This nomination will allow the support which is necessary to conserve this legacy for new generations.

This document is meant to spread the news about this nomination proposal among the society which is concerned about the future of this region. The future of these sites should be entirely



controlled, something which includes necessary conservation, research and spreading of their outstanding universal values. Their inclusion on the World Heritage List by the UNESCO would be the kind of backing we need to continue building that future.

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