

DIRKMICHAEL HENNRICH PAULOREYES ARTURROZESTRATEN  
editors

# THINKINGLANDSCAPE



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DIRKMICHAELHENNRICH PAULOREYES ARTURROZESTRATEN

editors



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# INTRODUCTION

# ON THE TRANSVERSALITY OF LANDSCAPE THINKING TODAY

## AN INTRODUCTION

DIRK MICHAEL HENNRICH  
PAULO REYES

Since the onset of the new millennium, landscape, as a concept and theme, is increasingly present in the most diverse fields of knowledge. As such, it is not just an issue of a lyrical, pictorial, geographical or architectural use of the concept, but a growth of considerations, that in their whole may be understood as a paradigmatic shift and an ineluctable reflection on landscape.

This growing attention to the concept of landscape occurs in parallel with the emergence of a concept for a new planetary era, the so-called Anthropocene, which describes the tremendous influence of mankind in the transformation of the Earth. Both concepts are simultaneously metaphors for a fundamentally new relationship with the Earth and for a progressive dissolution of the differentiation between Nature and Culture, which has occurred since the beginning of the modern age and that is closely related to the birth of modern technique and the development of capitalism. The ongoing disclosure of nature, conceived as mere matter, and the conquest

of the whole planet by a single life-form and thus the total anthropization of the earth, are fundamental characteristics of the modern age.

In this sense, the concept of landscape, which in western history was firstly understood through landscape painting, being for centuries claimed by it, receives a more encompassing meaning in the march of industrialization and formation of capitalism as dominant ideology. With the growing notion of the destruction of natural appearances and vital spaces of other life-forms by means of the industrial and technical progress, the care for the landscape, understood as a care for nature, becomes the centre of emerging nature conservation and environmental protection movements. This means that the concept of landscape as a metaphor of a modern relationship with the world, of a modern image of the world, is currently well received in philosophy and is increasingly seen throughout the 20th century as a significant philosophical concept, highlighted in a specific area of practical philosophy, the so-called Philosophy of Landscape.

Thinking Landscape in the frame of Philosophy of Landscape understands landscape not only as a modern representation of the intersection between Nature and Culture, but in a much wider and less abstract manner: the intersection of vertical and horizontal needs and demands, as the indiscernible interaction between transcendence and immanence, in which neither immanence means only the earthly, physical or material, nor transcendental stands solely for the atmospheric, metaphysical and immaterial. Landscape is not simply the environment because it has always surpassed any environment and because in it one can find the most diverse environments. Neither it is just a political or ethnical territory, but the versatile surface of the Earth, the sensual space of all forms of life, the multiple face of nature, subject to its own changes and dispositions, and a shelter for the multiplicity of organic and inorganic phenomena, which all have the right to be preserved.

Here too comes the question of the future of the city and the life of the community of all living beings as a whole, which has always been a question of the place and value of the politics. The city is the place of the formation of political practice and the place of the education of free individuals into political actors. From the Greek city-state, the polis, to the bourgeois city of the Middle Ages and the early modern period, to the large cities and megalopolises of modernity and late modernity; however, the freedom to participate politically in the process of political decision-making remains the freedom of the few. If in the Greek city-state only a certain political elite was entitled to co-determination through an active exclusion of the masses, in late modernity, even in democracies dominated by capital and neoliberalism, the exclusion of the masses takes place through the structural lack of access to the basic requirements of a good life, in the sense of the Greek *eudaimonía*.

Only the participation of all within the political process of the community, oriented towards comprehensive recognition, self-determination and psychological and physical prosperity, would be at the same time the prerequisite of a future city. The way to this participation is thus a political way, but this must not be understood as a mere right or duty to freedom, which has its grounding in abstract jurisdictions, but this must happen through an opening, an education towards freedom, and through an initiation into freedom.

This opening to freedom and the understanding of how to deal with freedom is first and foremost a practice that starts from the bodily being-in-the-world, a politics of the sensitive that trains the individual to be a sentient and sensitive member of the community. It is primarily directed towards the recognition of all natural phenomena, the natural body, which is every human being itself, as well towards all the other bodily situated living beings. Only a comprehensive development of all sensory

perceptions in exchange with the possibilities and limits of the meaning of other living beings or systems of life would guarantee the basis for general participation in the political discourse.

Current urban and landscape planning, and architecture in general, can enable and prepare this process through the transformation of political spaces by orienting their projects towards the principle of the sensitive and the formation of sensitivity, while involving as many political actors as possible in the design and maintenance of these spaces. Apart from a comprehensive inclusion of the natural in the urban space, it will be necessary to let the natural (water, air, earth, plants, animals) interact with the bodily naturalness of the human in a creative, poetic way.

Another fundamental condition of the political participation of all in the creation and maintenance of the polis would be the ever-expanding creation of community spaces and a related abolition of disproportionate ownership. The distinction between private and public space must be subjected to a veritable reversal (revolution), with public space once again gaining primacy over private space. This is by no means a matter of abolishing the private, but of turning away from the private and from private property as the ultimate goal of capitalist, neoliberal systems. Enabling responsible, communal design and maintenance of public spaces as a site of political practice would be one of the first tasks of architecture.

To think architecture, at the time of the total transformation of the Earth through human interventions, recommends a reinterpretation of its purpose and meaning. Architecture, understood as the art of inaugurating the dwelling, has always been the reflection of the human relationship with its environment and the mirror of the relationship of the entire species with itself. Architecture, as a technique of founding a dwelling space, is originally motivated by the search for protection against an overwhelming nature, a direct and material response against the imposition of the sphere of necessity that weighs upon human existence.

Architecture is consolidated along the development of technical consciousness and the increasing possibility of deliberately shaping mundane matter with the result of the total appropriation and colonisation of the most diverse spaces and earthly landscapes. Thus it would be necessary to think the anarchic future of architecture, which means the opening of an unfounded dwelling and the demand and possibility of a non-possessive relationship to build the contingency of human life, to establish practical ethics, a transitive dwelling as a renewed dwelling with the Earth.

This an-architectural thought would contemplate the baselessness of dwelling, considering the nomadic being in the world before the beginning of sedentarism, but not to counterpose the nomadic to the sedentary, which would be hypocritical in times of increasing urbanisation of humanity and for the multitude of human beings who live in precarious situations without the possibility of living properly. It makes no sense to worship the nomadic mobility of the modern cosmopolitan urban individual, tied to a linear and punctual history and based on monocratic and monotheistic capitalism. On the contrary, the nomadic is here understood as the common, the cyclical, not monotheistic, but pantheistic or animistic, an abode not of individualistic individuals, but of tribes (packs, shoals, groups, clusters etc.) or societies in motion and flowing, open to break all manners of foundations and fundamentalisms.

Individualism, therefore, would not be a self-affirmation as such, but a continuous opening towards the other, because it is not a question of establishing universal values only for humans (anthropocentrism), but of finding justice in all species in the anarchic nature and relationship with the world.

Anarchitecture would be first of all a dissolution of property, which itself exceeds the existence of the individual and falls within the scope of the exercise of power. This means that representative architec-

ture and emblems of power must be negated because they completely reflect modern subjectivity described as an appropriative subjectivity. The first step out of modern subjectivity is the abolition of accumulated property and its dissolution through the restitution of the appropriations that have taken place in the process of modernity. This means the decolonization of property and, consequently, its just redistribution.

This architecture, however, is thus no longer comparable to the dominant architecture, but is almost its inversion, or at least its re-evaluation: the public rather than the private; the communal rather than the individual; the practical rather than the theoretical; the corporeal rather than the spiritual; the sensitive rather than the rational; the horizontal rather than the vertical; distribution rather than accumulation; and so on.

Regarding the previous reflections, thinking landscape in a wide and transdisciplinary way is more than necessary to really initiate a renewed relationship with Earth. Earth is neither house nor environment, but rather the reunion of countless landscapes and forms of life that do not remain in their environments but in an inter-relationship with each other. The world, known as Earth, means the reunion and widest opening of countless landscapes and forms of life that coexist with one another, neither dominated by a single landscape nor by a specific life form. At the same time, landscapes are also not simply given, as if the totality of all landscapes would offer a clear image of the Earth. Landscapes are not simply given because they are modified in the passing of time and the passage of the most varied life forms. They are visualizations of the outside and openings to the inside; they must be trod upon and apprehended always anew.

Thinking Landscape as a fundamental part of practical philosophy, and designated as Philosophy of Landscape has been consolidated at the Centre of Philosophy of the University of Lisbon over the past decade

and has been considered with numerous publications, projects and academic events. One of the most recent events was the 1st International Conference of Philosophy of Landscape, held at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Lisbon from November 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 2019.

From this event resulted the texts that are presented here, addressing the landscape in its relationship with the Anthropocene, blurring the boundaries between nature and culture, in order to think about our relationship with the world. In the wake of what Jean-Marc Besse called five doors or entry possibilities to the concept of Landscape, we chose to organize the thoughts that follow here in three reading keys ordered by three signs: seeing, feeling and imagining. From 'Perception and Engagement' to 'Sensitivity and Affection' and to 'Representation and Designing' the present volume gives an overview of this transdisciplinary reflection on landscape, focusing on the necessity to establish a constructive dialogue between theory and practice, between thought and action, at a time when man's relationship with the earth seems completely detached from the ethical content of dwelling.

In the section "Perception and Engagement", we find texts that take perception much more than a simple act of representation in which the body of the observer stands out from what is in front of him/her as landscape, and position it as a relation of engagement between subject and object, to the point that this distinction no longer makes sense. Perception thought of as engagement brings into the field of philosophy of landscape the notion of landscape experience.

In the set of texts organized under the title "Sensibility and Affect", we offer texts that present the landscape in its face of existential experience, establishing an ethical and committed relation within the interface human and nature. We are in the sphere of the experience "in situ" where the body allows itself to be affected by the landscape in its different manifestations and scales - from amplitude to residual spaces.

In the last section, entitled "Representation and Project", we present texts that think the landscape in the sense of being altered by the human mind and hand through the action of representation and, more specifically, by the project. In the different readings of the project on the landscape, we do not lose sight of the critical position regarding the human consequences in relation to nature, with the intention of building new landscape imaginaries in which the aesthetic field is merged with the ethical field.

# PERCEPTION AND ENGAGEMENT

# THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE?

LUCA VARGIU

## The aesthetic prejudice

Discourses on the aesthetics of landscape are constantly dealing with a notion that, although unexpectedly, is still widespread even today: the notion that talking about the aesthetics of landscape means, first and foremost, talking about the beauty of landscapes and the pleasure felt by those who contemplate them with rapture and admiration. Landscape seems still to be regarded “as a scenery more or less pleasant to see, as a picturesque framework favourable for reverie and nostalgia, as though it were an amiability of the world”, to quote a consideration by Jean-Marc Besse (2018, 5; translation by the author). In this regard, by way of an example, I will, if I may, bring back a personal memory; I once asked a well-known Italian philosopher, who was contemplating initiating a project on landscape studies, whether he also intended to consider aesthetics. He replied, almost annoyed, distancing himself from me, raising his eyes to the sky and snorting: “Yes, but... the beautiful landscape...”

It is as if the point of view of aesthetics were made to coincide with the famous statement by Henri-Frédéric Amiel (1903, 65-66) “Every landscape is, as it were, a state of the soul” or, better still, with the subjectivist trivialisation that this statement has undergone, especially in everyday discourses. A trivialisation that, at various times, authors such as François Paulhan (1913, 73-74), Rosario Assunto (1994, 157-175), Andrei Pleșu (2018, 50) and Claude Raffestin (2005, 88) have already stigmatised.

Or it is as if one were to refer to Theodor W. Adorno’s considerations on the present destiny of the reflections on natural beauty, which have “a pedantic, dull, antiquarian quality” (Adorno 2002, 62), that is to say, which are always on the verge of falling into affectation and kitsch. A reference, however, made without taking into account the background of thought in which such considerations have their *raison d’être*, which lead, indeed, to a deeply philosophical reevaluation of natural beauty against its disqualification within Idealism (Figal 1977; Tepe 2001, 77-98; D’Angelo 2001, 55-57; Tafalla 2011; Matteucci 2012, 97-172; Serrão 2013, 24-25; Cook 2014).

Or again, it is as if one were to agree with the view, related to Pierre Bourdieu (1984) or other orientations generally referable to critical thought and cultural studies, that aesthetics, connected as it is to the rise of the bourgeois class in the West and not a secondary component of the education of the upper (male) classes (Shiner 2001, 79-98, 130-151), always denotes a social differentiation and, therefore, a dissimilarity in the access to culture, or even an attitude of power that reverberates in the relationships among social groups, genders and cultures (on landscape, see Cosgrove 1998, 1-2 and *passim*). All aspects that, as such, must be thought of not as a matter of agreement, but rather as a matter of deconstruction, both in general and in their application to landscape theories and to the policies of preservation (D’Angelo 2010, 39-40; 2011, 66; Zusman 2019, 289-291).

In short, it is as if aesthetics were considered something related to “beautiful souls” or false consciousness, incapable of starting incisive discourses on landscape, as though they were to be tolerated—where it happens—only by virtue of a certain nobility, a nobility recognised in its history or its past, but with the certainty that the important issues lie elsewhere and that its contribution is, after all, only ornamental. In this way, such views all end up replacing aesthetics, or the aesthetic attitude, with an “aesthetic prejudice”, if we want to adopt a suggestion of the geographers Isabelle Dumont and Claudio Cerreti (2009, 76). Such a prejudice, however, cannot be but a social construct with its own history: as such, it embodies an ideological sense and possesses a political weight that must also be highlighted and unmasked.

### **Aesthetics and beauty**

To question this widespread conception and begin to make a step forward from a critical point of view, I shall start from an analysis aimed at deconstructing the link, which seems indissoluble, between aesthetics and beauty. If, in fact, this connection proves to be anything but inseparable, even the aesthetics of landscape will cease to be circumscribed to the “beautiful landscape”. In this regard, one of the strongest stances which has emerged in recent years is that expressed by the Italian philosopher Paolo D’Angelo. D’Angelo, in his 2011 book *Estetica*, speaks *apertis verbis* of the “misunderstanding of beauty” and argues: “Beauty is not a central concept of aesthetics, indeed beauty, in its current meaning, is, substantially, an extra-aesthetic value” (D’Angelo 2011, 125; translation by the author). In an article published the following year, as well as in a lesson addressed to the students of a high school in Rome, the philosopher raises, if possible, the stakes, naming both interventions *Contro la bellezza*, “Against

*beauty*” (D’Angelo 2012; 2014). He obviously does not want to deny that this notion has been central within the history of aesthetics for a couple of millennia (D’Angelo 2012, 119); rather, he intends to dwell on a real conceptual confusion which, in his view, continues to cause more than one misunderstanding. Hence the invitation to distinguish an evaluative or verdictive meaning and a descriptive meaning:

On the one hand [...], when I say that a work of art is beautiful, I mostly intend only to affirm that it is a successful work of art, which achieves its purpose, which has earned my approval. Here ‘beautiful’ has a value that [...] we can call verdictive: it gives a judgment on the artefact, it tells us that it aroused in us a positive reaction, which allowed us to accomplish an aesthetic experience; however, it does not tell us anything about the nature of the object and of our experience. It is a pure sign of approval, which could be replaced by any other sign (D’Angelo 2012, 119-120; translation by the author).

In the evaluative sense, therefore, “beautiful” simply means that “there is something that produces an aesthetic experience” (D’Angelo 2011, 126; translation by the author). The descriptive meaning is instead totally different:

When we use ‘beautiful’ in this descriptive meaning, we intend not only to praise the work in question, but to emphasise that it has the characteristics of pleasantness, loveliness, agreeableness, which are lacking in the works for which we would refuse to use ‘beautiful’ in the same sense (D’Angelo 2011, 127; translation by the author).

In the descriptive sense, we are therefore referring to a “value outside of art, to indicate what we would call beautiful in life” (D’Angelo 2014,

6; translation by the author). This implies that, according to this meaning, “beautiful” can be used in relation to certain artworks, but not to other ones: as exemplified by D’Angelo himself, Titian’s *Venus of Urbino* is beautiful, but not a male figure by Francis Bacon, a composition by Haydn is beautiful, but not *A Survivor from Warsaw* by Schönberg, a canonical staging of Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake* is beautiful, but not some performances of *La Fura dels Baus* (D’Angelo 2011, 127; 2012, 120).

To better understand the difference between the two meanings, D’Angelo refers to what the Italian philosopher Guido Calogero (1960, 125-128) called “Pygmalion’s Proof,” imagining, as in the well-known myth, that the painted or sculpted figures can come to life before us. The result will be the following:

Well, if the painting depicted a vase of flowers or a florid and smiling child, like Rubens’ children, you will continue to be happy, while you will be less happy if the painting represented a monster by Bosch or the corpse of a plague-stricken person, as in Poussin’s *The Plague at Ashdod* (D’Angelo 2012, 124; translation by the author).

He concludes that, in its descriptive meaning, beauty is *per se* an extra-aesthetic value, which maintains only “a relationship of tangency” with the aesthetic dimension (D’Angelo 2011, 129; 2012, 126). This means that when it migrates into the latter it must undergo a transformation:

‘Beauty,’ in a descriptive sense, is an extra-aesthetic value, [...] and it is a value that cannot shift from the extra-aesthetic domain, where it lives, to the aesthetic domain, for example, to the art world, without undergoing a very deep mutation, which turns it into a completely different thing, that is, into the success of an aesthetic organization of experience (D’Angelo 2011, 128-129; translation by the author).

## Landscape experience and representation

The question that can be asked at this point is whether these considerations and distinctions can also be applied to the landscape experience. D'Angelo, as seen, refers to representations, artistic or not: it seems that only within the structure of representation is it in fact possible to distinguish the beauty of the subjects depicted or evoked (descriptive) from the beauty of their realization in images, sounds or words (verdictive).

At first glance, a difficulty seems to arise. If we consider the landscape experience as a direct experience, inasmuch as the manifestation of the landscape is not mediated by a representation, then in this experience there seems to be only room for the descriptive meaning of beauty, that is, for the extra-aesthetic one. However, this might not be D'Angelo's conclusion: recalling that he holds that in the verdictive sense "beautiful" means "there is something that produces an aesthetic experience", and that the aesthetic experience is configured as "the success of an aesthetic organization of experience", one can detect evidence of a more articulated way of thinking. In fact, were beauty in an aesthetic sense to be found only in experiences mediated by representations, then it would coincide with artistic beauty (meaning "artistic" in a broad sense). Regarding it this way, D'Angelo might end up falling back into positions similar to those he recognised—and criticised—for example in Mikel Dufrenne and Hans Robert Jauss, that is, positions which tend to assimilate the aesthetic experience with that which is related to works of art (D'Angelo 2010, 39; 2011, 65). For the Italian philosopher, in short, the aesthetic experience is configured as a "redoubling of the experience that normally appears", in which the characters of the common experience undergo "a different organization and finalization". Different finalization, because it "detaches

from the immediate purpose, without any identifiable goal to achieve”; different organization, because it is oriented upon itself, allowing “the nature of the experience to emerge with a certain force” (D’Angelo 2013, 10-11; see D’Angelo 2010, 43; 2011, 79). This configuration, therefore, overlooks the question of representation, so that we can speak—and *de facto* we do speak—of aesthetic experience, for instance, “with regard to a painting and a landscape, to a poem and a design object” (D’Angelo 2010, 39; 2011, 65; translation by the author).

These conceptual clarifications are not explicitly recalled when D’Angelo examines the problem of beauty. Anyway, *tertium non datur*: either we must think that such distinctions continue to be valid in the background, or, given that “beautiful” in this sense, as already seen, “does not tell us anything about the nature of the object and of our experience”, we must conclude that the discourse on beauty and the discourse on experience remain separate from each other. In the first case, as well as speaking of aesthetic experience, we can therefore also speak of beauty in verdictive terms in relation to experiences that are not mediated by representations or evocations: for example, about landscapes. In the second case, this is denied, and the only meaning of beauty at stake here is the extra-aesthetic one, typical of everyday language and experience. To speak of it in aesthetic terms would mean falling back into that misunderstanding from which D’Angelo made the moves.

It should be deduced that, in the case of landscape experience, in which it would seem to deal with a direct experience, the beauty involved is only that of descriptive order: a particular landscape is regarded as beautiful, ugly, sublime, picturesque, degraded, and so on, because this is how we live it, because this is how we experience it, without any mediation linked to representations: by simplifying, the landscape experience concerns life and not art.

The words used for this description, however, allow for some suspicion to emerge. In this regard, the term “picturesque” is exemplary. In the experience of nature emerging in this aesthetic theory in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, nature was regarded as similar to pictures and shaped on the works of painters who were particularly representative of the landscape genre: hence its link with the theories of ideal landscape (Pleşu 2018, 126-131). William Gilpin’s statement that the picturesque beauty is “that kind of beauty which would look well in a picture” (Gilpin 1808, 328; already 1802, xii) is quoted several times in this regard.

But even talking about degraded landscapes, whatever the social presuppositions and the vicissitudes of taste that led to making such a judgment about certain specific landscapes may be (Dumont and Cerreti 2009, especially 87-93; also Burckhardt 2015, 33-38; and Nogué 2016, 13), it nevertheless implies a reference to an ideal model—that of a landscape felt as beautiful, good, healthy, authentic, identitarian... Such a model, as an ideal, can only be a representation, created on the basis of canons and criteria that serve to show how that landscape should be were it not in a condition of degradation. Even in the case of a truly existing landscape taken as a model—what Assunto (1994, 219-245) considers as a process of institutionalization—the discourse does not change, as that landscape, in this context, would not be valid *per se*, but rather inasmuch as it is capable of bringing together such characteristics to the extent of becoming a model: it would therefore have value in representative terms. In short, the ideal model, whether or not it finds its correspondences in reality, always acts as a term of comparison and as an example to follow, not only, as obvious, in the issuing of judgments, but also in view of policies of protection and re-evaluation.

Incidentally, it goes without saying that this model can never be neutral with respect to social, ideological, political and aesthetic dynamics:

to deny it would mean surrendering to a false consciousness. Whereas Michael Jakob critically exemplifies that “all the corners of the world that survived industrial civilization must correspond to the Arcadian images that we make of them” (Jakob 2009, 106; translation by the author), Adorno (2002, 68) warns us:

Precisely nature that has not been pacified by human cultivation, nature over which no human hand has passed—alpine moraines and taluses—resembles those industrial mountains of debris from which the socially lauded aesthetic need for nature flees.

### **Landscape experience between immediacy and mediatedness**

This observed, the question arises again: is the landscape experience really a direct experience or is it an experience mediated by a representation? In his precious small book, Jakob describes the history of landscape as characterised by a shift from an exclusivity of landscape as a picture—in paintings, drawings or engravings—to the coexistence, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, between the “landscape as representation” and the “experienced landscape” (Jakob 2009, especially 73-85). However, he places both under the concept of representation, distinguishing between “pictorial representation” and “empirical representation”: the former equivalent to “a *make-visible*, a view of nature through image”, and the latter coinciding with “the possibility of making an image *in situ*” (Jakob 2009, 115; translation by the author). Indeed, from this point of view, Jakob additionally points out that it is impossible to reach a landscape experience “without reproducing, either consciously or unconsciously, pre-existing models or schemes”:

The experience in question, that of the ‘true’ landscape, will actually already be a representation of a representation,

and this up to infinity, given the number of landscape images lodged in our cultural memory (Jakob 2009, 28; translation by the author).

By way of an example, he reports an excerpt from *Fugaku Hyakkei* (“*One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji?*”), a novel by the Japanese writer Dazai Osamu, to show how representations condition the view of a landscape:

Fujiyama, the splendour of Japan: if foreigners find it wonderful, it is because they were talked to about it a thousand times: it has become a dream vision for them. But suppose we meet the Fuji without having been subjected to all this advertising campaign—therefore, naively, innocently, with the heart as a blank page: to what extent would we be able to appreciate it? Nothing is taken for granted. It’s a pretty small mountain. Yes: small in relation to its base. Given its width at the base, the Fuji should be one and a half times taller (Dasai 1993, 68; quoted in Jakob 2009, 28; translation by the author).

From the “disenchantment”, from the “real dismantling of the Fuji” made by Dazai, Jakob observes that even a fictitious innocent view, and the surprise that follows, denotes “a complex cultural construction”: the landscape, therefore, always reveals itself as “the artificial, non-natural result of a culture that perpetually redefines its relationship with nature” (Jakob 2009, 28-29; translation by the author).

The fact of being a social and a cultural construct is a feature of landscape which several scholars draw attention to not precisely from nowadays—we may say from Georg Simmel (2007) onwards. Anyway, in Jakob’s view, the landscape is better defined as a representational construction: physical, as in the case of the landscape painting, or mental, as in the case of what is considered direct experience. In the end, this view is not

so far from Alain Roger's theory of *artialisation*, according to which the way of considering landscapes and places always depends on art, not only in the direct interventions on sites, from gardening to land art (*artialisation in situ*), but also in the case of the perception of real landscapes, which is always guided by painted images (*artialisation in visu*—note the affinity and the difference with Jakob) (Roger 1997, 11-30; 2019).

A similar view also emerges from Lucius Burckhardt's writings (Licata 2016, 80). In an article significantly entitled *Why Is Landscape Beautiful?*, Burckhardt shows that he is aware of the difficulties inherent in the affirmation that the landscape

is oriented to the ideal of the 'locus amoenus', the 'charming place' upheld by painting and literature since the time of Homer and Horace, through that of Claude Le Lorrain and the Romantics and, finally, by our tourism brochures and cigarette advertisements (Burckhardt 2015, 32).

The way in which, in a seminar held in his city, Basel, he tested the relationship with painting is equally significant:

We painted landscapes, and noted how the very composition and structure of a painting help convey the message 'landscape'. If we painted a valley in the foreground, and allowed a mountain range to rise against the sky in the background, it was practically impossible not to produce a landscape. No colour, no drawing is so far removed from reality as to destroy the impression of a landscape. 'Non-landscapes' could be produced in any case, only by departing from conventional ways of composing or framing the image (Burckhardt 2015, 38).

His experiment only failed to produce "a single ugly landscape": a sign that not only, as Burckhardt himself notes, the landscape appears

“to be a construct comprised of conventional visual structures” (ibid.), but also that here “ugly landscape” can only be understood in a verdictive sense, that is, related to the pictorial composition. Instead, the conclusion of the Swiss scholar seems to go in the direction of an ugliness that reverberates on the directly experienced landscape, inasmuch as the pictorial composition, as a *mise-en-oeuvre* of the comparison between the ideal construct and the real landscape, plays, with respect to the latter, a litmus test function. As he points out:

To espy a landscape in our environment is a creative act brought forth by excluding and filtering certain elements and, equally, by rhyming together or integrating all we see in a single image, in a manner that is influenced largely by our educational background (Burckhardt 2015, 31).

Every landscape is therefore intended as the result of a creative construction dependent upon cultural processes, in which individual and historical knowledge is sedimented (Henrich 2019, 54): as Burckhardt (2013, 175) also says, there is an “unpainted landscape” in our minds. If this is the case, then the judgment of beauty or ugliness seems not to be merely descriptive, as it refers not only to the landscapes experienced directly, but also, and even foremost, to the mental image that acts as a benchmark, not just ideal but also formal, for such a landscape; therefore, it is a judgment that, if the landscape were correlated only with a direct experience, would fall back into the conceptual confusion from which D’Angelo started.

To take a step forward in the argument, it should be observed that Jakob’s and Burckhardt’s conceptions share not only the strengths but also the weaknesses of Roger’s theory and of similar views, such as Ernst Gombrich’s, according to which it is not natural beauty that inspired art, but rather the opposite, so that—note Gilpin’s implicit reminiscence—“we call a scenery ‘picturesque’ [...] if it reminds us of paintings we

have seen” (Gombrich 1966, 117).

On the one hand, the strengths consist of emphasizing that the perception of landscapes is always conditioned and mediated, educated by images and previous representations, cultural sedimentations, conceptual prejudices and convictions of various nature, which are deposited in the memory and in the personal and collective imaginary. From this point of view, all the above-mentioned authors would agree with the following statement by Adorno (2002, 68): “Natural beauty is ideology where it serves to disguise mediatedness as immediacy”.

On the other hand, to highlight the weaknesses, we can refer to some points of criticism directed by D’Angelo at Roger and Gombrich, and by W. J. T. Mitchell just at Gombrich, and try to extend such points also to Burckhardt and Jakob. Let us return to the example of Mount Fuji: were we to affirm that the experience of it is always mediated by its representations, to the extent that, if one could look at it free from prejudice, perhaps it would not appear so appreciable, we would end up being unable to understand how those representations, by means of which we admire the mount as *wonderful*, were born. As D’Angelo writes,

if we can appreciate nature only if we have seen it transfigured by art, it becomes impossible to understand how the first artistic representation of it has been produced (D’Angelo 2001, 155; translation by the author).

In fact, we should at least admit that there existed a first beholder or a first artist who has looked at his own object in new forms, previously non-existent. From the point of view of the history of landscape painting, Mitchell (1995, 111) argues that “it is hard to see how landscape painting can take priority over landscape perception, when paintings themselves could not be seen as landscapes until the 16<sup>th</sup> century”.

So, despite Gombrich's clarification that "such questions of priority cannot be settled empirically" (Gombrich 1966, p. 117), the reversal of the relationship between painting and experience ends up, according to Mitchell (1995, p. 111), leading to "a very tiny and vicious circle, governed by a 'chicken and egg' relation between painting and vision". Or better still, following D'Angelo's (2001, 156) criticism, it risks falling into a *regressus ad infinitum*—a representation mediated by representations mediated by representations...: a regression that, as we have seen, Jakob explicitly accepts. However, it makes more sense to think of a circularity between experience and images rather than advancing the thesis of a one-way influence: as Martine Joly points out, "all, in reality, know that we are constituted of both memories of images, to which the experience refers, and of memories of experiences, to which the images refer" (Joly 2008, 185; translation by the author).

But, in addition to this, we must also suppose that the discourse made so far is also valid for the question of experience and aesthetic judgment: without an appreciation, or without Fuji being considered susceptible of appreciation, no artist would have represented it or no writer would have spoken of it in terms of admiration. The imbalance between its basis and its height is not then something that is noticed only when one tries to free oneself from convictions, from the representations sedimented in our mind and from the advertising campaign, and that makes one take a step back to its aesthetic appreciation. Rather, the proportionality between the parts is evidently not a sufficient element to judge beauty, as was the case, in an exemplary way, within the "Great Theory" of beauty—from ancient Greece to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Tatarkiewicz 1980, 125-129). Otherwise, it would remain difficult to explain why Fuji, despite being disproportional, has been made the object of so many representations and evocations. It is true that these representations invest not only or not just the aesthetic

dimension, but rather other dimensions, which concern the historical, mythical and religious significance of the mountain for Japanese culture. If this is the case, however, the argument presented by Jakob on the basis of Dazai's passage, which has entirely to do with the aesthetic appreciation, ends up failing or, more simply, it must be recognised that the example is not completely fitting.

And again, even though we continue to admit that the presumed direct landscape experience is equally mediated by representations, as is the experience of landscape in painting, this does not imply an equality between the two kinds of experience, neither in terms of experience, nor in terms of representation. Above all, this is because, as D'Angelo points out, "the experience we have in the real landscape [is not] the same, or even only of the same species, of the experience we have before the painted landscape" (D'Angelo 2001, 158; translation by the author). The example chosen is that of the Sainte-Victoire mountain:

I believe that no reasonable person would affirm that seeing one of the reproductions of the Sainte-Victoire mountain painted by Cézanne is an experience of the same type as that which takes place by going to Provence and contemplating the mountain, or better still, observing it from afar and then approaching it, eventually climbing it (ibid.; translation by the author).

D'Angelo states that this equivalence would only be possible "by reducing the landscape to a view", as a correlative of a "panoramicistic" attitude, as he calls it (ibid.; translation by the author). Even in this case, however, the role of the visual experience of landscape should require to be rethought—leaving aside here some ethical issues (Nogué 2010)—within a more articulated ontology and anthropology of the visual (Nogué 2016, 19; Zusman 2019, 279n2). Incidentally, from this point of view,

Claude Raffestin's attempt to bring the landscape theory into dialogue with Hans Belting's anthropology of images is worth noting (Raffestin 2005, 61-63). Such an ontology would show that the equality between the direct experience and the experience of landscape painting is not convincing even from the point of view of a comparison based on the common dependence of both kinds of experience on the presence of representative structures, least of all on the presence of common formal-compositional structures.

### **Some ideas for landscape aesthetics**

With all this, the problem concerning the role of representative structures in the landscape experience is obviously far from having found a solution. The considerations I have just made simply had the intent of shedding some light on some points on this topic. A step forward should consist of a thematization that frees terms such as “representation” and “image” from ambiguity—even when it recognises their unavoidable indeterminacy (Boehm 2009)—and tries to elaborate an ontology of images not exclusively linked to a representational paradigm (Purgar 2019). And yet, in any case, it should also be noted that the question of beauty occupies only a marginal place in it. In fact, even if one were to consider the landscape experience as always mediated by representations, and if one were to go as far as to distinguish, in this case, too, an evaluative-verdictive notion, related to the representation, and a descriptive notion, related to the subject represented, the conclusion to be reached by following D'Angelo should already appear clear: from a verdictive point of view, beauty is “a pure sign of approval”, which, as such, “does not tell us anything about the nature of the object and our experience”. On the other hand, were the landscape susceptible to an experience not mediated by representations,

then the only beauty of which one should speak in this case would be that which is intended in its descriptive meaning, that is, the one which is *per se* an extra-aesthetic value, which maintains only “a relationship of tangency” with the aesthetic dimension.

In both cases, therefore, given the initial assumptions, speaking of “beautiful landscape” implies the use of a concept that is not at all central to aesthetics. To reduce landscape aesthetics to a discourse on the “beautiful landscape”, or even to admit that such a discourse occupies a prominent place within it, means to understand the discipline in a way in which its key concepts are not adequately focused.

What, then, about landscape aesthetics? What does it do? What are the discourses in which it is involved? The way Burckhardt worked in the above-mentioned seminar, and in general the way in which, together with his wife Annemarie, he has always intended his educational and activist role to be, should already provide some answers. He has elaborated a performative discipline that culminates in stressing the boundaries between art and politics (Hennrich 2019, 54): the “strollology” or “Promenadologie”: a *sui generis* science of strolling, which is to be defined as a “minor subject” that “examines the sequences in which a person perceives his surroundings” (Burckhardt 2015, 9, 225). The group strolls and on-foot explorations organised by the Burckhardts contain a knowledge and a didactic value, even when they assume the aspect of an artistic performance which betrays a possible reference to the situationist legacy (Besse 2018, 104). Indeed, the purpose of ‘strollology’ resides in promoting an integration between the bodily experience made during walking and a process of landscape awareness, in the belief that “one sees that which one has learned to see” (Burckhardt 2015, 267; Hennrich 2019, 55). Its focus lies in deconstructing the preconceived formulations inherent in our landscape experience, showing the role played by these conventional formula-

tions in our perception. Consequently, it helps reconstruct our notion of landscape and reshape our relationship with the places we live. It is as if the Burckhardts wanted to claim that the first lesson we learn by the intentional practice of walking is that “the landscape, the space, is still to be discovered”, as in fact Besse has pointed out (Besse 2018, 104; translation by the author; Hennrich 2019, 54-55).

Hence, ‘strollology’ favours a reconsideration of landscape aesthetics, not only questioning, as we have already seen, the relationship between experienced landscape and represented landscape, but also deconstructing and reconstructing various other issues: for example, (i) the history, which is anything but linear, of the relationship between landscape and the garden, (ii) the different problems connected to planning and safeguarding, (iii) the investigation of the links between aesthetics and the history of landscape and tourist experiences, (iv) the criticism of the post-modern landscape—identified significantly by Burckhardt not only in Disneyland or in theme parks, but also in the supermarket and in the preserved historical city centre (see especially Burckhardt 2015, 87-101)—and finally (v) the way in which ecological discourses, even the most radical ones, are imbued with considerations linked to landscape aesthetics (on this last point, see especially Burckhardt 2015, 61-73; on all questions, see the whole Burckhardt 2015).

Further issues can be added here. To name just one more, landscape aesthetics can help unmask the way in which the discourses on aestheticization lead, in certain cases, the policies of landscape preservation to act as a mechanism of social exclusion and promotion of elites (Duncan and Duncan 2001). But, at the same time, it avoids that such a criticism against aestheticization ends up being a criticism against the aesthetics of landscape as such, thus throwing, as they say, the baby out with the bathwater. In summary, it is a matter of dismantling what, with Dumont and Cerreti,

we have defined as “aesthetic prejudice”, which plays a role as much in the everyday experience and in the common taste as in urban planning and landscaping. By means of the deconstruction of the prejudicial aspects in which the aesthetic dimension has been reduced, it is thus possible to understand that crisis under whose sign we often read the vicissitudes of landscape in the contemporary world, and of which the diffusion of the notion of Anthropocene is also a sign: a crisis that, even before the landscapes, involves interpretative categories, paradigms and reference values (Dumont and Cerreti 2009, especially 80-84; on Anthropocene, see at least Ellis 2018).

From the point of view of the reflection on landscape, the more general purpose towards which aesthetics as a whole is being directed is thus confirmed—a purpose aimed at no longer conceiving the discipline as philosophy of beauty or art in the traditional sense. In this perspective, the Italian philosopher Gianluca Garelli, in his volume dedicated to the question of beauty (*La questione della bellezza*), considers D’Angelo’s stances “largely acceptable”, to the extent that

they seem to recommend not so much a tout court exclusion from philosophy of the problems posed by the theme of beauty, but rather an opportune historiographical relativization of the link between beauty and ‘aesthetics’, and perhaps even a certain reciprocal emancipation of the two terms (Garelli 2016, 13; translation by the author).

Nowadays, more than ever, faced with the cultural, political and social challenges of the third millennium, aesthetics is aimed at rethinking its own disciplinary paradigm, imagining new epistemic configurations, certainly rereading its own past and indeed drawing new lymph from it. However, as noted by Luigi Russo, while not omitting

to credit modern aesthetics with the huge historical merit of having happily reorganised the ancient tradition within the frame of Modernity, likewise, it does not fail in its disciplinary duty to contribute to the interpretation of current times (Russo 2013, 300; translation by the author).

Hence the conception of aesthetics as inclined to rethink itself as a philosophy of *aisthesis*, according to the etymology of the word, directed to a philosophy of feeling or sensibility, in the sense of a philosophy of perception or a philosophy of experience, capable of taking into consideration all those moments of life imbued with aestheticity, starting with everyday life.

Should we wish to observe, this is already a suggestion emerging from Simmel's philosophy—a philosophy which also refers to the highest sphere of *aisthesis*, given that, if it is true that relations with artistic objects play a decisive role or even an exemplary role in it, these relations do not exhaust the interest in the wide range of objects, experiences and relationships that characterise the various forms of human life (Smitmans-Vajda 1997, 17-18; Pinotti 2009, 120; 2017, 22-23). It is therefore a philosophy that, as has been highlighted, above all, by Ingo Meyer, can be placed under the formula "*Jenseits der Schönheit*"—"beyond beauty", taken from the title of a juvenile writing by the German thinker himself (Meyer 2008; also 2017; with reference to Simmel 2005). It is not then an accident that, in Simmel's seminal text on the philosophy of landscape, the words "beautiful" and "beauty" do not appear even once.

# UN-TAMING THE GAZE

BODO ROTT

## **A painter's perspective**

Speaking on the subject of landscape, its perception and its depiction seems an intricate thing. Conveying to others what we see, touch or hear is difficult to accomplish. This is as true for the word as for the image. Discussing landscape inevitably deals with the images of landscape. This includes not only the motif but far more the sensations incorporated in the image and the idea about space. In depiction, the photographic image has gained predominant, if not exclusive authority. This is very much due to its process of creation and the old mystic air of *acheiropoieton* or *autopoiesis* that surrounds it. While the image made by drawing or painting shows a synaesthetic character according to human perception with its totality of senses, photography is restricted to documenting the fracture of a second's exposure to light. It is an abrupt action in a mechanical process.

Visualization via drawing or painting is a slow dialogical process working from memories. This causes the constant oscillation between identification and externalization. It includes a constant shift between close vision and distance. Photography sticks to one constant view and the projection side of the coin. The handmade analogue image is the precipitation of a transformation from many sensical sources into a formed pictorial whole. Photography is a cut-out in time and space of formless data. Its continuous space-illusion though is the contrary of the multilayered discontinuous and erratic view of the human mind on daily life. Complications arise as soon as the image-making includes artistic expression. Photography has therefore needed hand-made intervention and reworking. From the beginning to the present day, digital tools' retouche is necessary.

In reverse, the step from an intuitive to a mathematical pictorial registration have used projective tools. To "see" like a photograph has been and remains always a learning process. According to research (Damisch 1987/ 2010, [Edgerton](#) 1975/ 2001, Panofsky 1964), the Renaissance mixed philosophical, scientific and technical insights from various civilizations and epochs. Two different realizations synthesized the reflections during the 15th century.

### **Brunelleschi`s Experiment**

In an experiment in 1425, the architect Brunelleschi set up an easel in the entrance arch of the duomo. On top he put a wooden board, perforated in the centre by a small peeping hole next to a mirror. The mirrors – identical in size – measured 30 by 30 cm each or half a braccio. The braccio was a kind of industrial standard in Florence, being the standard size of floor-tiles in all official buildings. The view from the arch opened onto the structure of the baptisterium (building). The size of the painting sur-

face was well calculated in relation to the motif. The baptisterium almost completely filled the mirror. This mirror served as a corrective apparatus for the painting. Brunelleschi controlled his drawing by looking through the hole on the back side of the board onto the reflection of the drawing. Simultaneously, he looked at the structure in front of him. (Edgerton 1975/2001) The record mentions the use of a mirror. Another proof of the use of mirrors and bent mirrors that work like lenses is the minute realism that arises in northern European painting in the late Middle Ages.

While Italian perspectival realism gave a mathematical formula without paying much credit to the illusion of materiality, the hyper-detailed realism of Jan van Eyck and others lacked a mathematical reasoning of progradation into virtual space. Both solutions thrive on the experience with the camera obscura ([Figure 1](#)) and the lens-equivalent of the bent mirror-plane, an amalgamation of the projection experiments of oriental scientist Al Hazen (Damisch 1987/2010). Jan van Eyck and fellow-artists liked to include their tool in their paintings, as shown in the painting celebrating the wedding of financier Arnolfini. (Baltrusaitis 1978, Belting 2012, Hockney 2001, Pächt 1989, Panofsky 1964) For a long time before Brunelleschi's experiment, the mirror had been occupying the Europeans' mind:

As when from off the water, or a mirror,  
The sunbeam leaps unto the opposite side,  
Ascending upward in the selfsame measure

That it descends, and deviates as far  
From falling of a stone in line direct,  
(As demonstrate experiment and art,)

So it appeared to me that by a light  
Refracted there before me I was smitten;  
On which account my sight was swift to flee.

(Dante, The Divine Comedy, Purgatorio 15/16-24, [Long-fellow](#))

The method called Linear Perspective derived from antique schemes and experience in archaeological surveying practice concentrated on a construction of geometric space according to distance. Consequently, depiction focused on architecture. Architecture was connected to painting by the murals. The human figure was an alien in this arrangement. The requirements for depicting the human is why renaissance figures often seem like stand-up displays in stage designs. Rather unconsciously, landscape arose as the counterpart to the urban square. Linear Perspective (Foveal Vision) is an idea of the visual process derived from the anatomy of the eye. It puts emphasis on the projection along the foveal line of sight, the area of highest acuity. The 'eye-lenses' centre with its projection onto the retina is taken as the whole visual process. In the image, the vanishing point is installed as the rule and invisible counterpart to the depicted objects. A perspectival image is actually not about the objects depicted but about the location of the beholder. The spectator is reduced to one eye at one specific moment in one fixed place. Perspective works as an intersection of science and art. Geometry is crucial to it. Likeness is taken as similitude (in contrast to the medieval resemblance). Perspective is about mathematical, regular proportional scaling according to distance. It quantifies distance and size, creating a tool for conveying spatial situations to others. (Panofsky 1964) According to Panofsky, perspective adds space as a tool of meaning for medieval painting, which visualized meaning by quantity on the picture-plane and by colour. The image becomes a stage that makes displaying and hiding possible. It has a dialogical orientation: A first-person narrator is positioning the spectator. Perspective is about spatial depth and locating objects. It simulates the view into a room. Ano-

ther requirement is framing, the first formation operation that turns the perceptual cone of vision into a pyramid of vision. (Edgerton 1975/2001) Renaissance-paintings also show that artists rarely fully applied the visual experience of lenses or the constructive imperatives of the vanishing point to the images. Instead, they often softened the effects, making the visual result pleasant for the spectator's eye. Generally, figures were depicted from a certain minimum distance. Extreme perspectives are not part of human natural perception. The distortions were known but fidelity to human perception demanded a balance. That is why Leonardo da Vinci in his *Il Libro Dell'arte O Trattato Della Pittui* recommends a minimum of distance to the object. He strongly resents what we know as expressive qualities of perspectival distortion of a lens very close up to an object. When our consciousness is balancing information from two points of view, it simply eliminates extreme perspectives. Drawings and paintings cling to the human bodily experience and self-recognition. Drawings from life models in pre-photographic history often show figures with arms and legs foreshortened in a strange way. The fact that feet and hands seem out of proportion, often too small, is true only from a photographic point of view. In fact, these distortions give a very authentic picture of the original human perception. In a body we not only see limbs in different proportions according to distance but also according to real size, as learned from touch experience. We know that a foot is not three times as big as a head. Therefore, a nude person with her or his legs turned in the viewers direction may seem to have a huge trunk and shrunken legs in the drawing; the feet are in proper proportion to the head. Such examples show that illusion in the hand-made image is about smoothing spatial steepness. Also, paralleling perspectival depiction merely to survey is a dodgy thing. Paintings always have more to work through than a technical drawing. In Renaissance-painting, this problem is visible in the artificiality of the

architectural space according to the picture plane and the equally artificial standup-display quality of the figures disposed.

Another aspect of hand-made pictures dealing with representation is their connection to movement. The two-eyed sight and the body-movement give a constant shift to the point of view. For a long time, the need for storytelling had enlarged the idea of depiction and included movement. Rubens applied polyfocality to the picture-plane. His goddesses and mythical creatures are montages of views from different angles. They playfully challenge spatial sense and make a strong appeal to our corporeal experience. Ruben's paintings try to combine references to perspective and what I would like to call a slightly imprecise peripheral vision. Peripheral Vision covers all the optical perception outside the foveal line. Its task is the recognition of well-known structures and forms. It works by identification of similarities (Gestalt psychology laws). It is the dominant source of the ambiguities of eye-sight. Moreover, it detects movements (Gestalt psychology laws, R. Arnheim) and delivers the background sensations of detailed visual perception. Focussing starts from there. That is why our perception oscillates between catching details and a whole field of vision and sensations. (Arnheim 1997, Metzger 1975/2008)

In the era of Rubens, the idea of space as an abstract cube was fully developed, of course, pervading painting and architecture alike. It forms the basis for the marvelous spatial effects in baroque churches and palaces. The invention of photography gave further credit to perspective. Modern artists reacted with an analysis of the process of vision. Artists of former epochs collected knowledge about perception but used it to raise the illusionistic potential of their works. Cezanne concentrates on the reflection of the perceptive process. It is the core-subject that pervades all of his paintings, regardless of the motif. He brings back peripheral vision into the picture square. The daily perception condensed into drawings de-

als with complex layers of different kinds of sensations. First, it is based on a close distance view concentrating on surfaces and structures (referring to touch), second, on the concept of a visual whole (as we experience regarding the range of our eyesight and its connection with the sense of hearing) that we return to when not focussing, third, on noting movement. Finally, it selects predominant figurations, which often precede denomination, for further differentiation. From the very beginning, this tension is an undercurrent in the discussion on images. This three-dimensional experience has to be translated into two-dimensional relations and is further complicated by a double view transported by the double sight of the eyes and the intermediation of the brain. One knows the effect of seeing a drawn or painted image and recalling suddenly the photographic basis. A drawing or painting appeals to different kinds of sensations at once. It thrives on and appeals to memory, to memory of sensory experiences, of curvature, of textures, to memories of individual and collective history. While photography is concentrating on a frozen moment, captured in the lens, the figurative painting and drawing conveys an experience that translates many sensations into visual signs. In the arts after 1945, the dispute on space and landscape gained new intensity. Via cubism, American painters distilled their figurative art to a system of polyfocal clusters. Willem de Koonings *Excavation* ([Figure 2](#)) shows very well the accomplishment. Reducing the representational details on the painting, the figurative substructure allowed for placing an emphasis on the spatial interlacing. They make the eye wander endlessly across the surface of the picture. By sticking to a rectangular image outline, they intensified the tension between the image on the wall and the real space in front of it.

## Frank Auerbach

British painter Frank Auerbach names Cezanne as his hero. His paintings though show a very different face ([Figure 3](#)). Like Cezanne, he reduces the chiaroscuro in the paintings. The chromatic detailing of objects has been replaced by a major chord of a dominant colour over the whole canvas with variations and counterpoints structuring the picture-plane. The detailing of objects as forms is substituted by a rhythmic order of the whole surface. The overall topic of Auerbach's work seems to be the bodyliness of persons and objects and the translation into the physicality of paint. His anchor of work is touch. The thick roughness of his paint works like a stimulus to the tactile sense. It also interrupts the illusion of a virtual space while Auerbach still clings on to the convention of the rectangular picture frame ([Figure 4](#)). The drawing enwrapped in paint shows that he also adheres to a more or less perspectival space. His mature work makes use of strong colours. The paintings appear to show landscape or rather city-scape. Auerbach turns their language into a dance of vectors, thus rather depicting the distance between objects than the objects themselves.

## Gordon Matta-Clark – Movement

Gordon Matta-Clark started cutting up semi-detached houses ([Figure 5](#)). His cuts and incisions open the cubic space into ambiguity. They run through the facade and reach through floors. They open the inner space to the environment. His interferences are often very sophisticated despite their raw look. He cuts through a wall with a rectangular form which he mingles with the given opening of a window. Thus, Gordon Matta-Clark recreates spatial fluidity and shifting. He is a landscape-artist focussing on cultural space, like living quarters or industrial areas. The public learned

about Matta-Clark's interventions mainly through his photographs. There he tried to translate the real-life-effect of his interventions into pictorial equivalents. He intersects the externalizing quality of photography with the live experience of walking through a room. Matta-Clark combines photographic fragments with an all-inclusive depiction of places. Recreation of the spatial ambiguity seems to have served as a rule. He intentionally uses the perspectival standard of photography while at the same time challenging it by his rough compositions. The abrupt leaps between points of view arouse an impression of moving about. This creates an irritating chimera of image when he is in no way interested in the convention of the picture-frame. Matta-Clark is very much engaged in the picture. He seems to have searched for an intensified virtuality, not an abandonment of it. When, as he did in some works, he places a cut-out piece of floor in front of the photograph, depicting the room with the hole correspondent to the cut out, he is enriching or rather supporting virtuality by the real-life experience of smell and touch. At the same time, he offers a form of measuring to the beholder ([Figure 6](#)).

### **Michael Heizer – Live-experience instead of virtuality**

The former painter challenged the conventions of picture-making like fellow-artists such as Frank Stella. He deserted virtual space in paintings and his works began to look like sculptures nailed to the wall. Finally, he skipped the gallery space and moved outside. With *Double Negative* ([Figure 7](#)), Heizer dug a geometric double void into the Mormon Mesa, Nevada, between 1969 and 1971. It is seated in the vicinity of Las Vegas amidst an absolute desert. Spectators have to travel there. Las Vegas as a metropolitan city is the counterpart to the extremely remote location of *Double Negative*. The way to get there, with its lack of any route sig-

nalling, already pitches the visitors into disorientation. At the actual location, the visitors and their vehicles are the only relics of civilisation. Double Negative consists of two ditches 230 and 100 metres long, 9m broad and 15 metres deep, cut into a bulge of the Mormon Mesa. There is only the landscape and the void of the artwork. The void has a clear geometrical form - a negative space - which resembles a giant quadrangle. The surrounding landscape and the excavation are in a dialogue of mutual reinforcement. The landscape creates the work, and the empty space, in its artificial form, emphasizes the overpowering magnitude of the mountains and valleys. The structure as a whole in its complex composition and its super-human dimensions can only be realized in full from the air. Heizer tries to replace virtuality by a life-sized experience, that will never be complete. The artwork shows different faces depending on the visitors's position, the weather, the season or daytime. It is also exposed to erosion. In his talks and writings, Heizer fervently challenged the image, demanding the actual physical presence and action of the viewers, but his fame is rooted in the photographs made on site of Double Negative. Compared to the widespread knowledge, especially of this work, only a negligible amount of people have actually visited the dent in the mesa. (Rosen 2005)

## Conclusion

All three artists make a radical approach towards the fraying margins of perception. They try to depict the space itself by its content, the “inbetween”. (Rosen 2005) But the strange thing remains that these three artists, although striving to forge new paths, are in one way or the other working along the Renaissance scheme. Thus, the question is, why is the contemporary view so heavily dependent on photographs, i.e. the Renaissance image of the world? Why – if human perception and the sources for

visual notations are so widespread- doesn't the effort seem worthwhile of moving into a different pictorial language?

### **Bodo Rott – Memory**

The overall subject of my work is memory. That is why I stick to hand-made analogue image-making. The relation of the image and the frame is essential to the spatial aspect of my work. That is why I also affirm the convention of the frame. It connects to the frame of mind I want to compare the present to. The paintings consist of a multitude of drawn images arranged as snippets alluding to slips of paper. The drawings are made from life in a linear woodcut-like style. A mockery-assemblage gives a basic rhyme. It forms a kind of linear fabric out of which emanate motifs that at the same time tend to be dissolved in the visual overload. The drawn images show more or less distorted motifs differing in size, luminance, colour and signalling power. Perspectival depiction is applied in a recurringly contradictory way. The pictorial space is erratic. I am exploring how the intuitive investigation of space can be turned into conveyability with the means of traditional analogue painterly means. It is a painting inside-out as the linear texture and the planar pattern is backed up by shading that introduces a trompe l'oeil-effect which topples the arrangements towards the spectator.

My paintings also work with memory in a historic sense. They allude to the concise style of historic wood cuts of the late medieval, early renaissance culture and their strong appeal to touch. Paintings from the Middle Ages often give a very convincing example of the encounter with the irritating density of cities, for example *The Madonna of Mercy*, the oldest representation of Florence ([Figure 8](#)). My works “Park” ([Figure 9](#)) and “Stubblefield” ([Figure 10](#)) willfully apply irritation by overabundance.

It is the effect of a stage being filled only with main actors, every single one striving for attention. These landscapes are created not by an abstract pondering but by separate individuals. The improvised working method without a preliminary composition corresponds to the sprawling look. For me, this period between 1350 and 1450 is a cusp in the balance of the paradigms still active today and the preceding ones. I am looking out for the place when the swing turned the other way. For me, this is the move into perspectival depiction. It is not about replacing this way of notation. I rather try to find a way of reintegrating a life experience of space and touch into an idea of space that I want to call archaic (not in the art historical way of meaning). I find it in the Malanggan of the South seas as well as in the pre-Columbian cultures and also in the Celtic ornaments or the woodcuts of the late medieval period. Everything is entwined with everything and the spectators' positioning in the Renaissance is turned into a constant repositioning of the spectator. What comes next to my approach is perhaps how Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari describe their concept of nomadic space:

“Whereas the rectilinear (or "regularly" rounded) Egyptian line is negatively motivated by anxiety in the face of all that passes, flows, or varies, and erects the constancy and eternity of an In-Itself, the nomad line is abstract in an entirely different sense, precisely because it has a multiple orientation and passes between points, figures, and contours: it is positively motivated by the smooth space it draws, not by any striation it might perform to ward off anxiety and subordinate the smooth.” (Deleuze/Guattari, 1987)

Exploration of other forms of depiction with a more scientific aim are a most interesting challenge. On this topic, I continually work with students in the teaching contexts of different universities. In teaching the

problem of photographic versus human-made images is omnipresent in the drawing classes of the fine arts department and elsewhere. Students tend not only to use the camera but also adopt its view.

Shading as the main approach to depicting reduces the task of transposing three-dimensional relations into two-dimensional ones to mere sculptural plasticity. A loss of form accompanies this habit. Alternative approaches to the world via drawing seem to lie as a deserted field in our minds, probably for few other reasons than convenience; so I worked on lectures on the visualizations of sensations other than optical.

Another strategy is to invent new optical tools and reuse traditional ones. We constructed optical devices that induced difficulties into the perceptive process or we tested new applications of known optical devices (e.g. for contradictory tasks). As said above, there is no need for replacing one way of visualisation by another. My approach is about enriching the concept of the image by adding visualisations of sensations other than optical to the mere optical ones. This revokes the idea of translating three-dimensional space into two-dimensional relations. An image, be it painting, photograph or other, seen as a place to enter rather than a screen to look at, is what I suggest. Cubism and its followers have broken a path but haven't explored the entire continent.

This arouses the question of a pictorial striation of these other sensations. Despite all objections, perspectival depiction makes its point by the conveyance of spatial information. This is less visible in respect to landscape. The real dimensions of a place are not intelligible by only one photograph. But in technical drawing the transportation of valid information is possible, so that others can construct objects they have never encountered themselves. The exploration of conveyability and verification of information based on haptic or motion-experience is still in the beginning stages.

# CONNIVANCE OR OBSERVATION? RETHINKING LANDSCAPE PHILOSOPHY WITH FRANÇOIS JULLIEN AND CHINESE THOUGHT

PAULO BORGES

François Jullien carries out a thorough work of understanding the matrix of European thought that requires the expatriation of his own coordinates as much as possible (Jullien 2012b, 15-21) to explore its major contrasting terms, leading him to Chinese thought as heterotopy or *other-place* (Foucault 1966, 6-7; Chartier and Marchaisse 2005). This reveals to him the unthought “*implicit choices*” or “prejudices (*parti pris*)” determining the development of European philosophy as “angles of vision” and “grooves” that, although blind to themselves, condition everything coming upon them as the greatest “evidence” (Jullien 2014, 14). This emphasis on differences and contrasts between the Chinese and the European traditions has given rise to several criticisms, among which are those of William Franke, who smooths and questions the contrasts pointed out by Jullien’s hermeneutics from the point of view of the apophatic tradition of Western philosophy and literature (Franke 2018).

In a book published in 2014, entitled *Vivre de Paysage ou L'impensé de la Raison*, Jullien applies his genealogical and comparative hermeneutics to the landscape issue and considers that, since the invention of the word (probably in Flemish, *landschap*, and, in 1549, in French, *paysage*), its definition has not suffered alterations. In the Furetière dictionary (1690), it is defined as “the land extending as far as the eye may go”, while in the more recent *le Robert* it is “the part of a country where nature is presented to an observer”. This definition restates the experience of the landscape as that of a visual object, as the visible “extension” or “part” of a country that is detached from it, inasmuch as it is outlined by vision (Jullien 2014, 14-15). According to the author, this reveals three well-known and therefore “*unthought*” “prejudices” of landscape thinking: 1 – the conception of the landscape “under the shadow of the *part-whole* relationship”, which shapes it from the start as something “reduced and amputated” from a wider space transcending it and of which it is part and parcel; 2 – the conception of the landscape “under the primacy of *visual perception*”, as that which is offered to a “point of view”, which subjects it to the visual monopoly of evidence, i.e. the evidence of *evidence* itself, without questioning the assumption of only having access to the landscape through “prospaction”, by looking to that which lies or stands before, outlining an “horizon” (*horismos*), a limit; 3 – the conception of the landscape as dependent on the “*subject-object* relationship” that gives the grounding, at the same time, to the scientific knowledge from which Europe gathers its power: on one side, there is the “observer”, on the opposite side, there is “nature” and “they are apart from each other, instituted face to face”. The question is whether “landscape thinking”, more than criticizing and denying the “infernial pairing” of subject-object – which would be the equivalent of remaining hostage to it by preserving it as a conditioning reference –, may hope for its own effacement (Jullien 2014, 20-21).

According to Jullien, this threefold preconception of the landscape turns it, firstly, into a partial and homogenous extension in whose abstract measurability the incommensurable of its “*individuation*” is erased, incommensurable without which there is no landscape experience (Jullien 2014, 21-24). Secondly, the landscape is converted into a passive object subjected to the observer’s initiative, who disposes of it as an agent “in accordance with his/her point of view”, thus manifesting the “massive [Western] prejudice” regarding the primacy of visual perception in relation to the world, founded on the unquestioned “Greek choice” of vision as the “highest sense”, both in sensible and in intelligible terms, clearly manifested in the first sentences of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* praising “vision” as the sense that, among all senses, is more apt both to discriminate and to know, which is correlative (Aristóteles 1974, 2). The landscape is thus reduced to the “*aspectual*”, to the exterior “aspect” (*species*) offering itself specifically to the eye, which keeps it at the surface of its visual features and keeps us exterior to it. Vision shows itself in its most separate and less environmental sense, thus making us “*leave the environment*”, distancing itself from the object of perception and fixing it in its proper place, in its “regarding-itself” (*kath’hauto*, in Greek), distinguishing it and determining it through the attribution of predicates. Therefore, vision is “the way leading to ontology”, showing “the way to “essence””, the way to answer the question “what is that which is?” through the identification of “quiddity”, thus losing the “pregnancy”, the “dimension of “ambience”” that is precisely, according to Jullien, that which most originally “promotes” a landscape (Jullien 2014, 24-26). Lastly, the third consequence of the above-mentioned threefold assumption, closely following the second, is the emergence of the landscape, in the context of post-Renaissance, from the scientific invention of “objectivity” through which human beings and world are imagined and thought of as separate, as in watertight contain-

ners confronting each other: on the one hand, “nature” “presenting” the landscape as an “*ob-ject*” and, on the other, an “*ob-server*” placing itself as the “subject” of freedom”. The landscape emerges in relation to the supposed “exteriority of the spectator”, subjected to the geometrization of a homogenous space, without topographic or symbolic singularization, and submitted to the laws of optics: to a subject which withdraws itself into a “point of view” to which the world replies to as a “vanishing point” (Jullien 2014, 27-28). According to Jullien, Romanticism reacted against this by giving a voice to the “repressed of this large theoretical assemblage”, but only inverting its terms by seeking to redirect the landscape into the subject’s intimacy under the sign of sensibility or the imagination, thus being unable to surpass the split instituted between subjective and objective and remaining in an always unsatisfying transition between the one and the other (Jullien 2014, 29-30).

There is, however, an unthought-of in the landscape experience itself that seems to contradict this theoretical framework, grounded on the difference between having something in sight – for instance, an architectural object such as Notre-Dame cathedral, observed from one of the bridges near the Seine – and opening oneself to a landscape. In the sight of Notre-Dame, an *ob-ject* is grasped, something is thrown against the subject’s sight that detains it and imposes itself upon it, making the subject stare at it and reducing all the surroundings to a mere ornament. There is vision because there is focus. However, for there to be a landscape, it is necessary that nothing imposes itself as hegemonic, monopolizing sight. The landscape is varied in nature and supposes the “decentering – de-staring – of sight”, its circulation. It is only when sight *wanders* that the landscape appears. The landscape appears with distancing and removal, diluting the object into a fabric of interlaced and corresponding phenomena, converting sight from the previous having been grasped as an

object into a coming and going in an errancy circulating *between* multiple polarities (Jullien 2014, 30-32). For this reason, according to the author, one cannot describe but only *evoke* a landscape, which entails conjuring it up as an affective and de-objectivated company in relation to which we lose ourselves of all merely aspectual features (Jullien 2014, 34).

The experience of looking into a landscape is less one of observing an object, being detained before its presence as an obstacle, and more that of receptively being open to it by letting it expand itself. The experience of looking into a landscape is less one of projecting the sight into an exterior, seeking information or acquisition – “as in hunting”, where the object is turned into an objective – and more one of receiving the affluence of the world through one’s sight and letting oneself be invaded and traversed by it, letting attention be plunged and sink in it (Jullien 2014, 34-35). In looking at a landscape – in contrast with the cognitive predation of the subject hunting for objects (Corbí 2007, 295-298) – there is an experience of abandonment, a letting oneself go that is only grasped in a vague fashion and which is not the way of “deliberate, voluntary attention” of the “observer” seeking knowledge (Jullien 2014, 34-35). In the landscape experience, the eyes are no longer the agents of sight, which observe trying to determine things and describe objects, but are turned into means or thresholds by which one simply looks, but not into “something”. Although still attentive, sight “*becomes evasive*”, which is described as “fluctuating attention” or “*available*” attention. More than observing, there is then a contemplating where the eyes “are less agents than mediators” through which the landscape may “sink itself” (Jullien 2014, 37) in us. *To contemplate* designates, in this context, a regime of consciousness decentred from the subject and his/her always vectorial perspective, narrowed down by his/her interest in an object and/or an objective. In it, the subject is effaced in the self-unveiling of the surrounding reality. This experience is

similar to what is currently called, in the technical language of meditation exercises, “open awareness”, “awareness without choice” or meditation “without object” (Mingyur Rinpoche and Swanson 2009, 139; Bourgeault 2016, 2, 7, 99).

Jullien concludes with an alternative definition of landscape: “There is “landscape” when this conversion of sight surreptitiously takes place”. This is not the definition of metaphysics, which envisions to turn our sight from the sensorial outside into the intelligible inside, but that of a metamorphosis through which our sight abandons the search for “identifications or information”, predatorially throwing itself upon the world to grasp or capture objects as prey to feed and confirm it, and letting itself “be absorbed” and be immersed in “the network of oppositions-correlations” of the things of the world. In this process, the subject divests him/herself from initiative and from the hegemonic monopoly and makes place for a sight that, instead of being satisfied and exhausted in the fleetingness of the observation, does not stop “evolving” among things, “carried by their polarities” and “forgetting him/herself in their profusion” (Jullien 2014, 37-38).

Applying his philosophy about the different ways of coming into thinking (Jullien 2012a) in regard to the subject of landscape, Jullien considers that Europe came into the landscape experience in a dual and subjective-objectifying way while China resorted to a “completely different entry” to the experience, strange to the “semantics of extension, vision and outline”. The ancient and still modern words to say landscape are *shan shui* and *shan chuan*, “mountain(s)-water(s)” and “mountain(s)-river(s)”. Instead of a “portion of country offered to an observer’s sight”, the landscape is thought as a “correlation between opposites”, one tending upward and the other downward, the vertical and the horizontal, the unmovable and the movable, permanence and variance, the one with shape

and relief and the shapeless that marries with the shapes, the opaque and the transparent, the massive and the disperse, the one seen ahead and the one heard from different sides (Jullien 2014, 39-40). In fact, instead of “landscape”, “unitary term”, China says “a game of endless interactions” between opposites accompanying each other and through which the matrix of the world is conceived and organized. Unlike in Europe, there is no kingdom of the “Subject” mastering the world’s territory from his/her individual point of view and “freely developing his/her initiative there, as God” in an *objectified* world laying passively before his/her sight. A stranger to this perspective, China states the essential polarity through which the world tensionally develops and from which the human being does not stand out, remaining inserted and “*immersed*” in a relationship that is, originally, one of the world with itself (Jullien 2014, 40-41). Nature is but this process-world of continuous interaction between polarities (Jullien 1989), and it is therefore impossible to instantiate a “nature”, a “landscape” and an “observer” who, in function of his/her position and point of view, delimits a horizon upon which to project his/her partiality (Jullien 2014, 41-42). The experience of oneself, identified in the West with the “I-subject”, is not that of being before a world detached from the self as “view” or “spectacle”, but that of never having been anything but fully integrated (Jullien 2014, 44-45) in that “space between Heaven and Earth” Laozi describes as a “bellows” where the breath of life flows (Tse 2010, 87).

Among the many consequences of this distinct experience, we emphasize that, in China, the landscape is never only a location, a visible part of a country or a corner of the world, but the manifestation of the “world’s operation in its totality” in the core of its “unique configuration”. In the game of polar and tensional individuation, the landscape is always “cosmic” since everything inherent to the world’s game may be

found in it: the “mountain(s)-water(s)” or the “mountain(s)-river(s)”, the stable and the flowing, the vertical and the horizontal, the massive and the disperse, and all the remaining aforementioned polarities (Jullien 2014, 45-46). Instead of the “logic of composition”, making the whole be seen as composed of parts, which François Jullien views as presiding over the European way of understanding reality, Chinese thought proceeds by way of a logic of “pairing” (“*appariement*”) where opposites only arise in correspondence, in a “coherence by coupling” (Jullien 2014, 47-48). An eloquent example is the fact of there being no unitary term in Chinese to say “thing”, as in the case of the Latin *causa* and *res*. Instead, in Chinese, the binomial “East-West”, *dong-xi*, is used, expressing horizontally the tensional distancing that makes “things” become, much as the binomial “mountain(s)-water(s)”, the Chinese correspondent for the European “landscape”, expresses it in its physical verticality. The world is engendered by the same correlations, expressed in the famous *yin/yang*, the dark and the bright slopes of the same mountain, or in the Heaven/Earth binomial, the global coupling where the remaining pairs of opposites are inscribed (Jullien 2014, 49-51). Another consequence of this is that the European “landscape” may take on a figurative and abstract sense – spiritual, cultural, social, political landscape –, always presupposing an observer looking from the outside, while the binomial “mountain(s)/water(s)” hardly drifts from its encompassing concreteness (Jullien 2014, 52).

Although the notion of landscape came to being with painting both in Europe and in China, in the latter it came to being about one thousand years earlier, as if there were a natural agreement between painting and landscape that had not to free itself from the European constraints to such evolution, mostly due to the fact that European painting began as the painting of characters. According to the retrospective judgment on Chinese painting of the 11<sup>th</sup> century scholar Su Dongpo, there is a

field deemed inferior that deals with everything having “constant shape” (*chang xing*), including “men, animals, palaces and utensils” and demanding only technical skill from the painter in order to be “formally” reproduced, while the other field, comprising everything that lacks “constant shape”, as with “mountains, rocks, bamboo, trees, waters, waves, vapours, clouds”, is seen as superior because it requires the artist to be able to capture and portray the less evident and more subtle “principle of *internal coherence*, making them become” (*chang li*). This refers to another order of “*constancy*”, at the level of the internal process of continuous mutation and not of the individual reified exterior shape (Jullien 2014, 63-65). Since the first Chinese pictorial theories in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the “first principle” and the “main requirement of painting” is that, through it, on the one hand, “*development and vitality*” – equivalent to “breath-energy” – and, on the other hand, “*internal resonance*” are reached, forming the polarity from whence come “*life and movement*” (*sheng dong*). This vital “enlivening tension” does not appear by portraying characters or faces, which are crystallized and hardened isolated units, lacking otherness and polarity, at the surface of the process of the world. In contrast, it is in the landscape as tensional coupling of mountains-waters and rocks-clouds, considered without steady shape and in unceasing transformation, that the expression of an inexhaustible vitality *par excellence* may be surprised (Jullien 2014, 66-67).

In a world that, as we will see, is made of nothing but “breath” and “energy” (*qi*), even in its physicality, Chinese scholars seek that tensional polarity called mountains-waters where they can re-source its greatest good, “its life”. According to François Jullien, this contrasts with the “two great absolutes” with which Europe was preoccupied for a long time, “Truth” and “Freedom”, conjecturing that maybe disinvestment in them made Europeans become so interested in the landscape (Jullien 2014, 84). In China, painting emerged as a resource when one is physically de-

prived of direct contact with the landscape, not as a way to represent it by reproducing its aspectual side, according to the “Greek choice” for mimesis “made classical in Europe”, but as a resource to make its vitality emerge and be engulfed by it. It is not the case in China of ““seeing” the painting”, but rather to “sink” and “lose” (*qiong*) oneself in its tensional polarities (Jullien 2014, 85-86). That which is sought and praised in the landscape or its painting is not, in a Western fashion, the aesthetic pleasure of beauty but, as stated by the 11<sup>th</sup> century painter Guo Xi in his *Treatise on the Landscape*, to find in it not something contemplated from afar or to be crossed over, but a space where one wanders and inhabits, the pregnancy of a surrounding ambience that makes someone feel fully in “his *element*” (Jullien 2014, 85-87). This expression is used by Nietzsche in a letter to Overbeck regarding his experience of finding in the alpine valley of Engadine an intimate and vital environment (Jullien 2014, 219; Nietzsche, 1004). In fact, it is the experience of living not only before a landscape, or even in a landscape, but of *living from a landscape* (Jullien 2014, 117) that provides the title to François Jullien’s book: *Vivre de Paysage*.

The landscape experience is therefore not reduced to the “perceptive” aspect, becoming “the place of exchanges that make it *intensive*” (Jullien 2014, 87) and “*affective*” insofar as it erases the boundary between interior and exterior, and these are unveiled as tensional, mutually exchangeable poles whose substantiality is dissolved in the increase of the experience of the “between” (Jullien 2014, 87 e 89-90) and of a “co-originality (*coorigi-narité*)” I-world. The author considers this to “remain oddly unknown” in the European thinking of the landscape or, at least, unthought even if it was somehow lived, which is, in our view, a frankly exaggerated judgment. It would suffice to consider the thematization of the landscape experience by a poet-thinker such as Teixeira de Pascoaes, where the feeling of identity springs not only from oneself but from everything around, in a

background of indistinction that is an all-unifying and all-identifying “intimacy” (Pascoaes [1965], 128-29).

Notwithstanding, the *between* proper to the landscape experience or, in Chinese, of the “mountain(s)-water(s)”, includes a subtilization of the world’s physicality that is freed from the limitations of the visible and the invisible without being converted into a Beyond that transcends the sensible concreteness, as in Western metaphysics. There is, therefore, in landscape a “spirit” that detaches itself from what is physical in it by subtle emanation and exhalation, without, however, being separated from it, constituting that which Jullien calls the “*aura* phenomenon” (Jullien 2014, 115-17). Instead of the Western dualism that entified, separated and isolated the physical and the spiritual, China experiences in the landscape the *between* that connects them because the spirit is not a distinct substance, understood in a spiritualist or intellectualist fashion, but the decantation and *quintessentiation* of the physical and the sensible in that which emanates and escapes from it, as in the spirit of wine or of a good perfume. The landscape is the place of an “*emanence*” and the author thinks that this is also the reason Modernity so often resorts to it as a “compensation” and “expression”, under “literary” guise, of the “repressed in that great dualism upon which Western science has prospered” (Jullien 2014, 117-19). In an alternative definition, Jullien considers that “there is landscape” not only when the perceptive is inseparably affective, but also when the split between physical and spiritual is abolished and the latter comes from the former. The landscape “elevates us to the spiritual but *in nature*, in the middle of the world and its perception” (Jullien 2014, 119). There is a transcendence in it, but not as an escape into “any other world” but rather as that which emanates from immanence. There is “spirit” in it, not as the “Being” opposite to the flow of change but rather as the “processual”. In this sense, the landscape is a continuous “*revelation*”, a phenomenal unveil-

ing of the spiritual in the physical, “an enlargement or excess of the world in the midst of the world” and “the opening into the infinite in the midst (of the midst) of the finite” (Jullien 2014, 120).

All this is condensed, after all, in the most elementary word from which Chinese thought addresses what we call “real” and which simultaneously says “that from whence materially come the beings and the things and the flow that goes through them and keeps them in development”: that is the *qi*, where the opposition between “matter” and “spirit” is dispelled and whose primitive spelling evoked the shape of a cloud, being afterwards conceived and written as “the vapor rising from the boiling rice”, suggesting the “transition from the perceptible to the imperceptible” (Jullien 2014, 120-21). In the words of Zhang Zai, the “*breath-energy*” (*qi*) is developed in the “*Great original Void*”, ceaselessly evolving as “the spring of the void and the full, of movement and rest”, in the origin “*of the yin and the yang*”, mutually inciting polarities that form “*the continuous flow of innumerable existents*” and “*the fusion-concentration of the mountains and the waters*” (Jullien 2014, 121-22). In other words, the landscape emerges from the circulation of the cosmic breath that is the origin of everything and which flows in the intimate of each living being, in a continuous, reciprocal transition between the physical and the spiritual and the Heaven and the Earth, a transition that shows the original “emptiness” (Jullien 2014, 125-26). That is the reason the “bottomless bottom” appears in it, as well as the simultaneous “matrix and material” “flow” from whence emerges the world in its “continuous transformation” (Jullien 2014, 127), turning the landscape into a “here, but crossed by a beyond” or, in an expression more in accordance with the spirit of Chinese thought, the “way” (*tao*) through which “the bottomless depth of the Invisible becomes to us, in its development, eminently sensible” (Jullien 2014, 129). The “aura” of the landscape, so hard to be thought of even after Walter Benjamin

(Benjamin 2006, 211-13), is said to be precisely as the “vague”, the “evasive” and “nebulous” that evades classification as visible, invisible, physical, spiritual, diluting every boundary in the unveiling of the *between* that does not belong to any categorial domain and which Jullien considers to be most repugnant to the “thought of distinction”, of “Being”, of the “essence” and of determination that has remained on a massive scale the West’s choice (Jullien 2014, 132-133). In contrast, the purpose of Chinese poetry and painting was, according to François Cheng, to “pursue the mystery born out of the unceasing exchange *between* the living entities”. It is in this “pregnant *between*”, in the “hollow of its interstices”, in the “kingdom of the gap”, that the Tao is manifested (Cheng 2009, 14, 16). For this reason, the landscape is the “reliable mediation to have access to wisdom” (Jullien 2014, 137).

It also seems appropriate and relevant to point out some affinities between Jullien’s view on the landscape experience in China and some developments of Portuguese literature and thought in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While describing that which he called the “new Portuguese poetry” – extending from Antero de Quental to Teixeira de Pascoaes and his contemporaries, the Saudosist poets –, Fernando Pessoa considers that the reason for its “strange and clear originality” is the interpenetration of soul and nature, of the subjective and the objective, in what he calls a simultaneous “*spiritualization of Nature*” and “*materialization of the Spirit*” (Pessoa 1986, 1179). This “communion” in totality leads him to “*find in everything a beyond*” (Pessoa 1986, 1176) and to his conception of it as a “*pantheist Transcendentalism*”. The latter is a paradoxical metaphysics and ontology where, through a non-Aristotelian logic – a logic of the included third instead of the excluded third –, traditionally dichotomic concepts lose their limits of discernibility and become undefined, an example being the view that “matter is spiritual and spirit is material”, which is seen as

pointing to an integrative transcension of “all the systems” (Pessoa 1986, 1189).

If Jullien relates the “aura” of the landscape to the “vague” and indistinct that, in Chinese aesthetics, appears in it, Pessoa also characterizes the “new Portuguese poetry” as having a simultaneously “*vague*”, “*subtle*” and “*complex*” ideation. For the Portuguese poet, “*vague* ideation” is not “*confused* or *confusedly expressed* ideation” but “an ideation that has the vague or the indefinite for its constant object and subject-matter” (Pessoa 1986, 1174-76). This is related to its subtlety and complexity, residing in the aforementioned finding a “*beyond*” in everything, which is less a *transcendent* than a *trans-immanence*, as a simultaneous dislocation and excess of the visible in the invisible and of the invisible in the visible. Providing a foundation for Pessoa’s interpretation, Pascoaes had already emphasized the “mystery” attached to the communion between the human soul and the soul of nature (Pascoaes 1988, 80-82), as well as the “*nebulous vague*” expressed in the feeling-word “*remote*” (Pascoaes 1987, 169), among other distinctive features of Saudosist poetry.

According to Jullien, Western modernity emerged under the sign of literary nostalgia of a repairing “communion with nature”, exalted by the Romantic “pathos”, which the French philosopher views as “the expression of a repressed” by the European scientific reason whose triumph was based on the split between the objectivity of nature and the subjectivity of consciousness and feeling. China, on the other hand, would remain in a different relationship with the world, an alternative to knowledge, that of “*connivance*” (Jullien 2015, 107-114). This relationship, covered by reason and therefore “operating in the shadows”, would be one of a “tacit agreement with things” that remains unthought since it moves in a subliminal, deeper plan, below the relational working of Western reason itself. If the opposite of *knowledge* is ignorance, then its contradictory would be the *con-*

*nivance* that accompanies it even if they are with their backs turned to each other, since knowledge separates from a nature that it establishes as object (see Kant's determination of nature as the "total object of all possible experience") (Jullien 2014, 223), while connivance remains "*in adberence*" and in the secret complicity suggested by its Latin etymology: *connivere*, meaning to be in agreement "by blinking the eyes" (Jullien 2014, 211-213). This conniving agreement is, from the point of view of the Cartesian, clear and distinct ideas, that of a "dark wisdom", remaining integrated in its surroundings and, because it "does not detach an "I" from the "world", it never abstracts itself from a "landscape"", in the sense of the latter's Chinese experience. Therefore, it is a wisdom unable to be formalized, remaining below all "exposition-explanation", more alike, as is reminded by the young Nietzsche in relation to the Greek etymology of the word *wise* (Nietzsche 1974, 38), a liveable savouring or enjoyment, as that of a child at the mother's breast (Jullien 2014, 214) or as in the Taoist meditation of embryonic respiration where one breathes as an embryo in the cosmic uterus (Cohen, Kenneth in Miles-Yépez, Netanel (ed.) 2015, 145). If the first cultures are more "*conniving*" and the later more "*knowledgeable*" and if, with the advent of schooling, writing and disciplinary knowledge, the objects of knowledge are multiplied and isolated, submitted to relationships imposed by the same reason that split them up, covering their "conniving relationship" as the subject of knowledge conquers his autonomy, the deep connivance between human and non-human, between human and the world, still remains and does not disappear, subsisting in silence as ground water "ready to come to the surface once again": "the landscape is this resurfacing" and it is by immersion in it that the very same individual who progresses as the subject of knowledge may regress as conniving (Jullien 2014, 214). The new and ultimate definition of landscape put forward by Jullien is that of there being landscape when knowledge is inverted

into connivance through the mutation of the relation of observation and objectivation “in agreement and tacit communication” with the world (Jullien 2014, 215; Jullien 2015, 111-12) and a “place (*lien*) suddenly becomes a “bond” (*lien*)” (Jullien 2014, 216), while one transitions from “a local dependence” to a “global belongingness” (Jullien 2014, 217).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Shitao spoke of a “co-birth” (*coenfantement*) of the I and the landscape” where each one “delivers the other into the world” (*tuo ai*), giving birth in reciprocity: “the landscape is engendered in me and I am engendered in the landscape” (Jullien 2014, 233). The “original co-implication of the “world” and the “I” emerges in the landscape (Jullien 2014, 234); the Chinese circular, hexagonal or octagonal kiosks, immersed in nature in the middle of mountain slopes are there for that experience, allowing one to turn in every direction and experience the landscape not as an *object* before oneself, but as surroundings where one is immersed. Deprived of furniture, open, they are places where one rests, drinks tea and reads poetry, forgetting “the distinction of the orders and the objects, of the criteria and the qualifications, of loss and success” (Jullien 2014, 241). They are places where the connivance with the landscape that emerges when we let go of “the common world, predictions and ambitions, objectives and obligations” is experienced. In them, the fictional separation between one’s self and the world is removed (Jullien 2014, 241) and one is *between*, i.e., without possible location (Jullien 2014, 243). Something is *realized* there, but one cannot say “what” as it occurs “through diffuse impregnation and decantation”, from knowledge to connivance (Jullien 2014, 239-240). Ultimately, however, the kiosk is a non-local experience that may be found anywhere in the landscape, as long as one has access to it from within; in the same way, the landscape emerges anywhere we may find a kiosk (Jullien 2014, 243), i.e., a point not of reclusion and escape but of full immersion in the process of the world.

# WHEN HUMANS MEET: RE-EVALUATING CURRENT TRENDS IN LANDSCAPE ANTHROPOLOGY THE CASE OF THE SPANISH DEHESA

MAIKE MELLES

## I. Introduction: What's in the Eye of the Beholder?

Early anthropological works of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century provided detailed landscape descriptions to acquaint their reading public with the geographical surroundings of their distant research fields (Hirsch 1995, 1–2). In these cases, landscapes served mostly as the background sceneries to the cultures revealed to the eye of the anthropologist, whose observations were written down and published in ethnographic monographs. Increasingly, however, the relationship between humans and the ‘natural space’ itself became the subject of anthropological research interest (Evans-Pritchard 1940), with landscape being a useful concept to think with. Taking the term to have a conceptual meaning of its own was the starting point for anthropologists to engage in close dialogue with neighbouring disciplines such as landscape archaeology and human geography. Starting in

the 1990s, edited – often cross-disciplinary – volumes on the ‘Politics and perspectives’ of landscapes (Bender 1993a), ‘Perspectives on place and space’ (Hirsch and O’Hanlon 1995) and later on ‘Landscape, memory and history’ (Stewart and Strathern 2003) or ‘The anthropology of space and place’ (Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003) identified landscape as a contested concept laden with culture-specific meanings and situated perspectives and practices.

Therefore, the ‘western’ landscape concept privileging view and scenery, inspiring and being inspired by the techniques of the Italian landscape paintings during the Renaissance (Cosgrove 1998; Olwig 2002), proved unsuitable for contributing to research of non-European landscapes other than as a synchronous moment of comparison (Hirsch 1995, 2) or for the reconstruction of colonialist and imperialist bodies of thought and resulting landscape transformations (Sluyter 2002): in the legitimation of supremacist practices of destruction, expropriation, displacement and killing, notions of the ideal landscape and particularly the idea of ‘improvement’ of native landscapes played a central role, as Morphy (1993) and Anderson (2007) demonstrate well for the case of Australia. Either way, the variety of anthropological, archaeological and human-geographical contributions to landscapes give rise to the conclusion that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to landscapes but that they must be analysed in the light of a specific time and place, the standpoints and the situatedness of the knowledge about them in terms of gender, class, socioeconomic conditions, among others, and the differing spatial and temporal scales pertaining to the landscape. In short: “Landscape has to be contextualised” (Bender 1993b, 2).

However, it is not only in cross-cultural and cross-temporal comparison that the visually defined landscape came to be assessed as an obstacle to the research of “the whole story, the full picture” (Thomas 1993, 25);

also, with regard to its own – in the broadest sense European – history, the scenic vision of landscape turns out to be elitist and detached from the tedious lives of the actual land-shapers. “As an expression of Western civilisation, art and culture, this must be a valuable heritage, worth learning to comprehend and appreciate, but one can question whether this is a culture that is shared by everyone” (Olwig et al. 2016, 2). The idea of the substantive and contextualised landscape – as opposed to an interchangeable commodified scenery – forwarded by Olwig (2005, 2013) seeks to revive the meaning that certain peripheral regions of the North and the Baltic Sea had pertained to the term before the almost full equation of landscape with scenery and painting. As the “diverse place of people, polity and nature” (Olwig 2011, 401), landscapes used to be political facts constituted by a community’s (e.g. a village’s) collective decision-making over communally held lands and the agricultural and farming practices subject to common law.

To be sure, while this historical reconstruction allows for the re-emphasis of the substantive and political dimension of landscape – which in the aforementioned regions has never completely lost this connotation – both the visual and the customary law concept of landscape are contingent. While the visibility-driven approach to landscape has extensively been demonstrated to originate from specific developments in the perspectivism of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment, the more substantial meaning of ‘landscape’ as a collective entity is equally idiosyncratic to the medieval coastal territories in Europe. The contingency of European landscape thinking, however, should not obscure the greater implications underlying an almost exclusively visual perception of landscape: the (perspectival) detachment of the painted landscape from the subject facilitates not only its (merely) cognitive appropriation; there is also a fine line between the controlling gaze of the elitist viewer and the

actual seizure of the physical landscape. This becomes clear not only in view of late medieval settler colonialism – and the age of blatant imperialism that followed – but also the changing patterns of land ownership in Europe itself: land came to be more and more privatised and “looked on as a commodity, disengaged from hereditary patterns of tenure, able to be bought and sold at will” (Thomas 1993, 22). This alienating commodity character of land and landscape was reinforced with the “consuming gaze” of 19<sup>th</sup> century urban middle classes, whose members were in desperate need for leisure and entertainment outside the cities (Green 1995).

Two rather *en vogue* approaches to landscape counter the opposing distance between subject and ‘objective landscape’ established by ‘classical’ landscape theory, or, respectively, aim at liberating landscape thinking from the assumed omnipotence of the single spectator. While both are often labelled ‘relational’ theories – because they see the acting subject entangled (or constituted (Barad 2007), or emerging (Ingold 1993)) in its environments – they pursue almost opposite strategies: whereas one is concerned with drawing attention away from the exclusively human lifeworld, the other equals the total anthropocentrification of landscape theory. The first approach is that of anthropologists such as Anna L. Tsing, who calls for an analysis of more-than-human socialities, as, to her, landscapes “are products of *unintentional design*, that is, the overlapping world-making activities of many agents, human and not human” (Tsing 2015, 152). The second approach that currently enjoys great popularity among landscape anthropologists is the dwelling perspective inspired by phenomenology, championed first and foremost by Tim Ingold (1993). Both visions are directed in their own way against the principle that “(L)andscape has to be contextualised.” Humanity-centred questions of sociohistorical conditions and power are rendered secondary, if not impeding a ‘real’ account of landscape.

But are questions about ecological interrelations or the bodily description of the supposedly universal characteristics of human interaction with the environment all that is left for landscape theory? Is the move away from socio-historical and thus anthropocentric contexts an epistemological gain for landscape anthropology? Are ‘classical’ approaches, which understand landscape as a primarily human and socially contested phenomenon, rightly notorious for being outdated, and are the more recent approaches, which have taken over from them, rightly hyped for their supposedly superior concepts and virtuous cause? Is it true that, given the obviously different approaches of old and new, “their co-existence and contradiction may produce an energising tension” (Harvey and Wilkinson 2019, 180)? In order to critically examine the deliberate oblivion of sociohistorical context in the analysis of landscapes I will draw on my own case study, the dehesa landscape in southwestern Spain. In the remainder of this contribution, I will first roughly sketch both relational approaches; while in the case of the more-than-human landscapes, the pluralization of the actors involved as well as the decentralized concept of power will be emphasized; the account of the dwelling perspective focuses on a body-based approach to the environment and an aversion to anthropological contextualization (II). Subsequently, I will present my case study, the dehesa, with particular reference to my interlocutors’ memories of past rural life in southwestern Spain (III). Chapter IV is devoted to the discussion of the two relational approaches in the light of my ethnographic findings. The results will be summarized in the conclusion (V).

## **II. Relational Approaches to Landscape**

### **II.1 More-than-human Landscapes**

For anthropologist Anna L. Tsing, landscapes are never only man

-made: a whole variety of beings participate in common life and contribute in their way to the establishment of eco-systems.

As sites for more-than-human dramas, landscapes are radical tools for decentring human hubris. Landscapes are not backdrops for historical action: they are themselves active. Watching landscapes in formation shows humans joining other living beings in shaping worlds (Tsing 2015, 152).

While her own case study focuses extensively on the role of fungi, other non-human actors may include animals, plants and substances. This notion of more-than-human socialities is in line with the considerations of multi-species thinkers such as Donna Haraway (2008). For Tsing and Haraway, but also for scholars like Barad (2007) and Bennett (2010), not only animals, but also materials such as water and even litter, are never passive, waiting upon human intervention but are themselves active, as are landscapes. Such an understanding of the mutual shaping of life-worlds by human and non-human actors is deemed indispensable for providing answers to pressing questions of climate and environmental change.

The Anthropocene is thus understood as a synonym for the tremendous destruction of landscapes and livelihoods of people, animals, plants and other beings, because, as Donna Haraway puts it: “Maybe the outrage meriting a name like Anthropocene is about the destruction of places and times of refuge for people and other critters” (Haraway 2015, 160). One of the merits of this thinking is certainly to demonstrate the limits of human action and to properly question human omnipotence: many ecological processes and challenges are far too complex to be solved with a simple ‘fix-it’ approach. Rather, some of the co-habitants, e.g., pests such as tree-destroying fungi, have led to the realization that ‘learning to live with it’ is often the only way. This requires approaches that highlight complex links between different elements of ecosystems such as landscapes.

But what further consequences result from thinking in terms of more-than-human actors? Another concept that is closely related to more-than-human socialities is that of assemblage. Following Deleuze and Guattari's theorem of *agencement* (1987) more or less closely, the term 'assemblage' refers to a temporary grouping of heterogeneous elements. The phenomenon constituted by the assemblage can be located on distinct levels of organisation. A landscape, for example, but also the human body, including the tiniest microbes, may be understood as an assemblage (Haraway 2008). It is important to note the emphasis on the processual nature of this ephemeral structure, a constant becoming of all its components, and the novelty of the assemblage as the sum of the encounters between its elements that exceeds itself. An event itself, an assemblage is never self-contained, but always open and on the verge of changing. This dynamism and openness is due to the elements' characteristic to always strive for new relations to elements outside the unstable structure. Therefore, assemblages can be said to "show us potential histories in the making" (Tsing 2015, 23).

Assemblages are the results of unintended coordination (ibid.) and pose thus a counter-draft to anthropocentric theories, which are accused of clinging to a 'human mastermind.' The accusation is not only that the desire for the conclusive (objective) determination of phenomena causes a losing track of the world's ever-changing complexities, but also that the intentions of human beings are often equated with the consequences of their actions – which turns out to be a fallacy for the Anthropocene, as "without planning or intention, humans have made a mess of our planet" (ibid., 19). This understanding of the Anthropocene as an 'accident' – and not as the teleological climax of a history of human progress – raises questions about the agency and intentionality of or within an assemblage.

Bennett understands any agency as a collective power of action and

effect, which is constituted by “a confederation of human and nonhuman elements” (Bennett 2010, 21); denying individual agency, on the other hand, has enormous consequences for the notions of moral responsibility and political accountability. Agency “becomes distributed across an ontologically heterogeneous field” (ibid., 23) and this implies for Bennett that questions of guilt and ultimate responsibility are misdirected. Whether it is a power outage, a hurricane, or the Iraq War: the cause is always to be found in an entanglement of many components, which is why the phenomenon can only be explained by itself (ibid., 24). People and their intentions may participate in assemblages such as human rights violations in Guantánamo, “but they are not the sole or always the most profound actant in the assemblage” (ibid., 37). Consistently, Bennett argues that “individuals (are) simply incapable of bearing *full* responsibility for their effects” (ibid.). Power is located in an assemblage of human and non-human actors and not attributable solely to human actions.

## II.2 The Dwelling Perspective

Already since the early times of a growing anthropological interest in landscapes (Ingold 1993), calls for phenomenologically inspired and interpretive approaches to landscapes have been made (Tilley 1994, 2004; Tilley and Cameron-Daum 2017). They may be seen as a reaction to the then dominant views of cultural geography, according to which “(L)andscapes have an unquestionably material presence, yet they come into being only at the moment of their apprehension by an external observer” (Cosgrove 2006, 50). This reduction of landscapes to, first, their mere physical existence ‘out there’ and, second, their solely visual perception detaches human dwellers from the land – and may even eradicate them from the ‘dwelling record’ (Barrell 1980). In the phenomenological approach

ach. landscape is essentially lived and experienced – the focus is on the haptic apprehension of landscape by the perceiving subject while the representational engagement with landscape is rejected. Here, landscape is literally grasped and the focus stays with the very basics and *universals* of human engagement with the environment. The making of utensils such as a hand axe or watch serve Ingold as the preferred examples for the “ways of thinking through making, as opposed to making through thinking” (Ingold 2013, xi). Whereas the more-than-human landscape approach introduced above is concerned mainly with the pluralisation of the dramatis personae on stage in order to devolve action and power from the single superhuman to a mesh of relations, concepts like the Anthropocene and questions of structural nature in general fall outside the phenomenological coordinate system.

Tim Ingold is one of the pioneers and is still today the main reference for a phenomenologically inspired approach to landscape. His vision of landscape is emergentist as landscape is form – as opposed to function, which he relates to the term environment as the reality *for* rather than *with* the human being – that emerges through embodiment, i.e. of many (human) bodies dwelling in it (Ingold 1993, 156). Dwelling refers to a set of tasks carried out by “skilled agents” on a daily basis who, while doing so, attend to one another and thus (re-)produce their social ties. This “taskscape” gives rise to features of the landscape which “are constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves” (ibid., 152). The phenomenological approach to landscape claims to bring the human dwellers ‘back in’ by getting to the core of anthropology: the human being, whose body becomes complementary to the landscape. The focus of description is primarily on the manifold ways in which humans attend to their environment, thus giving

rise to a whole range of correspondences (Ingold 2017).

To illustrate his performative approach to landscape, Ingold resorts to a landscape painting, *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel from 1565. The main focus of *The Harvesters* is a harvesting field in which a few farmhands are reaping and tying wheat into bundles while another part of the group is taking a rest beneath the tree in the field. Consulting and describing the ready-made painting to demonstrate his embodied – in the sense of incorporated – approach to landscape is to Ingold justified as the performance of tasks – the harvest carried out by the group of farmhands – gives rise to features of the landscape which long after the human dwelling still “remain available for inspection” (Ingold 1993, 162), e.g., in the context of archaeological surveys. Harvesting or growing grain in general comprises a bundle of activities which fit perfectly into the taskscape: before cultivation, the land may have to be converted into arable land, which in several cases implies extensive deforestation. Ploughing, sowing, manuring, and, finally, reaping the crops with a scythe all leave their mark on the landscape in one way or another. The dweller him/herself – also referred to as organism in its bodily form by Ingold – is equally constituted by complex life-cycle processes (ibid., 163–164).

In addition to directing attention to the mutual constitution of landscape and taskscape, phenomenological approaches to landscape strive to liberate anthropological research from the compulsion to be contextualised.

In the words of Tim Ingold,

(...) I have my doubts about the propensity of anthropological scholarship always to want to put other lives within their social, cultural, and historical contexts. This is like laying them to rest, putting them to bed, so that we need no longer engage with them directly. Embedding lives in

context implies an already completed conversation. It is as though they are no longer enjoined in the world we inhabit but rather set aside as the objects of our concern. They belong to other worlds, not to ours. If we are to return these lives to our one world, then we must recall them from the contexts in which our scholarship has buried them, and bring them back into presence. We will then discover that what we had closed off embraces all we should acknowledge (2018, 169).

Contextualising findings from anthropological research, according to Ingold, means to deny the universal scale of human actions. Once explained in the light of sociohistorical circumstances, they are no longer noteworthy, and anthropologists miss the chance of sharing interest and engage with them beyond the specific circumstances of their investigation. Such a short-lived mutual involvement runs contrary to Ingold's vision of a 'One World Anthropology' (Ingold 2018).

Both the more-than-human landscape approach and the phenomenological dwelling perspective prioritise the very here and now over any long-winded account that interprets the landscape through a sociohistorical lens. This latter 'classical' landscape theory, by contrast, would probably first map out a wide field of social relations, including economic status and power structure, matching happenings 'on the ground' with greater historical developments at the macro level. In other words: landscape would be strongly contextualised and different perspectives contrasted. Of course, this is a very mediated way to describe landscapes, which piles one interpretive layer on another. In this way, every incident and every object become laden with meaning, perhaps even losing touch with the perspectives of other "critters" or seeming aloof from the very basics of universal human engagement with the environment. The two relational approaches introduced here, promise to do away with excessive theorising

of the human social condition and over-emphasis on human intentions and creative power.

In the next chapter, the example of the *dehesa* will show why applying phenomenological and more-than-human approaches in the anthropology of landscape should not lead to the omission of those approaches which place humans at the centre stage and highlight the role of a landscape's context. The following account is an excerpt from my findings based on a year-long fieldwork with a variety of people belonging to the *dehesa* regions of south-western Spain, Andalusia and Extremadura. After an introduction to the *dehesa* in its current state and a short glimpse into the history of the term, I will briefly describe the social relations of rural southwestern Spain until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and share memories my dialogue partners in the field hold about the past lives connected to this landscape. I will then sketch recent changes and continuities and how my interlocutors assess these social developments. In the chapter following the ethnographic insights, I will discuss which contradictions arise in the attempt to include “both the bounded, artefact-based and representational, and the relational, fluid and phenomenological” (Harvey and Wilkinson 2019, 180) in an anthropological account of the *dehesa*.

### III.1 The Dehesa of Southwestern Spain

The *dehesa* spreads across southwestern Spain. From an eco-scientific perspective, it is a savannah-like landscape with more or less fertile grass soils and a sparse layer of trees, mainly holm and cork oaks (Figure 1). The *dehesa* cannot only be found in southwestern Spain, but also in Portugal, where it is called *montado*, and in parts of North Africa. Its primary use is as pasture for the extensive livestock farming of cattle, sheep, pigs and, to a lesser extent, goats. Forestry practices such as the extraction

of firewood and the cork harvest every nine years, during which the outer bark of the cork oak is removed, are also associated with the dehesa. The cultivation of fodder crops for animal feed is carried out mainly in the distribution areas of the dehesa where flatter and more fertile soils allow for it (mostly in Extremadura). Because the dehesa is generally agricultural land, it is divided into farms, which in Spanish are called *fincas*.

Nowadays, the dehesa is known to a wider public mainly for its role in the rearing of the Iberian pig, from which comes the famous Iberian ham (*jamón ibérico*). A premium-quality ham comes from a purebred Iberian pig that has lived most of its life in the dehesa, or at least for the two to three months of the acorn fattening (*montanera*). The extensive farming conditions as well as the tremendous share of acorns in its final weight gain make for a recognisable nutty taste of the ham. It is only in this landscape with its abundant oak trees where enough acorns for the *montanera* can be provided. As the dwelling site of the Iberian pig, the dehesa has become part of a thriving heritage complex, including museums, festivals, tastings and further touristic possibilities and events, as well as four EU law-based Protected Designations of Origin and a national quality standard for Iberian ham. In some parts of eastern Extremadura, however, the Iberian pig does not constitute part of the local dehesa culture. Here, in the *Siberia Extremeña*, the past and present of the dehesa is more linked to sheep farming and transhumance. While in the past, various domestic animal breeds were farmed in all dehesa areas, a certain specialisation in pig, sheep or cattle farming can be observed today. With socioeconomic development, a change from pastoralism to post-pastoralism, i.e., to farming based on sedentary livestock production, has occurred (see below).

The dehesa has a diverse and sometimes not so straightforward history. In the Middle Ages and early modern times, the term dehesa denoted pasture land intended for exclusive use either by the village population

(*dehesa concejil*) or private individuals such as nobles (*dehesa privada*). The first form of dehesa was associated with firmly established communal rights of use of the village population, which throughout history were repeatedly defended against foreign use, for example from the shepherds on the transhumance (Carmona Ruiz 1998, 120–133). But the second case of the private dehesa also usually entailed certain rights of use for the villagers. The term dehesa was thus an expression of access to land guaranteed above all by common law. Not only the best pastures were secured, but also the precious acorns used to fatten pigs during the *montanera*. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, however, the ownership patterns changed increasingly in favour of wealthy private individuals, who bought more and more land with their fortunes, resulting in enormous private land holdings at their disposal. Those parts of the population, on the other hand, who did not own their own land but had successfully defended their rights of use time and again over centuries, lost their land areas to the newly emerging bourgeoisie (Guzmán Álvarez 2016, 8).

### **III.2 “Prolonged Middle Ages”: Memories of Scarcity and Blatant Inequalities**

The already existing structures of social inequality became increasingly absolute: a few privileged people owned latifundia of several hundred or thousands of hectares, including dehesa areas. These conditions lasted more or less until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; at least many people still recount that “until the late 60s (...) the land was like, (it) could have been any century.” (Interview with one land-owning farmer in Andalusia, Spring 2018)

The dehesa had become synonymous with large properties which were worked upon by dozens of farmhands. Whole families – including

children – lived and worked on the farms to make ends meet: while the male members were employed in all kinds of farming activities – herding of flocks, harvesting, forestry works such as pruning and felling of trees – women were also found working on the farm but taking care of the landowning family’s household, too. For the *dueños* (landlords), the spacious and often generously furnished main building was usually nothing more than the destination for a recreative weekend retreat. The landowning families preferred to live in the cities where houses were more comfortable, e.g., equipped with electricity. Therefore, they usually charged a foreman or manager (*encargado*) with the supervision of the farm and the workers. This absenteeism of the owners from their landed properties or *fincas* is still characteristic of the dehesa areas – though the workers usually no longer live on the farm either.

What was life like for the farmworkers? Many working families lived on the farms, either in stone huts or in the *chozos*, makeshift shelters made of straw that served as the refuge for the shepherds (sometimes with their families). Until 50 years ago, the *chozos* were scattered all over the dehesa landscape. Shepherding meant staying with the flocks for 24 hours, walking long distances during the day in the search for rich pastures and waterholes, and seeking enclosure for the sheep at night in the so-called *majada*, an area usually enclosed by a drystone wall. Every *majada* had a *chozo* for the shepherd. Pablo, an elderly villager whom I met during my fieldwork, remembers those days very well. As he explains, there were usually two older shepherds and one shepherd boy referred to as *zagal*. While the older shepherds could return to their homes every third day, the young boy of eight years had to stay one month, or at least 15 days, with the flock until he could see his family again. Pablo shares scary stories of wolves chasing away the sheep or snakes which secretly kept him company during his rest under the tree. The shepherds would eat twice a day, *migas*

(breadcrumbs soaked in garlic water) in the morning and ‘milk soup’ in the evening, “every day.” From the dehesa to the village it took him three hours on the donkey; much longer if on foot.

But on the farm itself, life was not easy either: “If the *señorito* of the land wants something, ‘Ah, bring me this,’ then you have to go there at ten, at eleven at night, to see what he wants, to bring it to him,” remembers Julio, an employee who works on a dehesa farm in Andalusia. Although it never concerned himself, his parents’ and grandparents’ generation who used to be workers on the large farms always had to be on the spot. The workers’ children also had to work and, unlike the children of the *dueños*, who usually went to boarding schools, they did not receive education. Many families suffered hunger and lived in rudimentary houses, or, as one landowner puts it: “It was very primitive.” Lucía, the housekeeper on another farm, recalls that, as a child, her mother lived with her family in one of the huts that were on the farm. Their life was marked by scarcity. When I asked Lucía what her ancestors used to eat, she replied: “A sardine, the four of them. And a piece of bread. And when they found an acorn in the field and the boss would catch her eating the acorn... *One acorn*,” - indicating punishment for such minor misdemeanour. “A lot of hunger, a lot of hunger.”

Shepherds and working families lived from whatever they found at their doorstep, as is evidenced by the private collection of objects that Emilio, another elderly villager, has gathered. He has carefully renovated his entire attic and turned it into a small private museum (Figure 2). He has even artistically painted the tiles on the floor. His *museo*, as he likes to call it himself, houses all kinds of objects from the everyday life of the village and rural population in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “I saw people throwing things away and I thought, better I save them from the dump.” This was around the 1980s, “when people could afford other stuff, like

chinaware.” Now in the attic you can admire a whole collection of utensils such as knives, trowels or keys of antique gates, receptacles such as pots or ceramic jugs and tubs, beehives and stools made of cork. With great care, Emilio has cleaned and repaired these items so that they look as if they could be used again at any time. Asked about his motivation, he says he does not want “all this to be lost; you have to remember.”

The great social inequality meant, for example, that only a few landowners possessed precious porcelain dishes, while the working families drank water and *gazpacho* from the *cucharones*, cork ladles which are made by cutting out the cork oak’s burls - nodule-like alterations along the trunk or branches. However, differences in possessions and the standards of living that accompany them, as well as the arduous work, are not the only memories that the villagers bear. The differences in power and the despotism with which the *dueños* treated their workers also play a major role.

Lucía, when asked if her ancestors (her mother with her family) lived on the *finca*, responds:

Yes, and badly so. In one bed three or four would lie down. On one bed of branches, and my mother said that it was raining a lot and that they had to work in the fields. It would rain and you would put yourself into the pigsty. It would rain. (...) Then what happened? Since you didn’t get together eight hours of work, you didn’t get paid for the day. You would clean the householders’ *finca* for little money. When you got together eight hours, then you got paid for the day. But now you’ve set them off to clean the *finca*, one, another, another, another. And there was – a lot happened. The husband worked in the fields. The wife worked in the fields. And now maybe the daughters, because they had them in the house, of the boss, let’s say, cleaning, and they abused them.

Incidents of (sexual) abuse are not uncommon for the semi-feudal relations that prevailed on the south-western Spanish farms until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During a longer conversation, Emilio, too, indicates that his mother went to the house of the *dueños* not only to clean, but also had to be available for other purposes. Often my interlocutors, instead of hesitantly setting out further details of those cruelties, indicated the film *Los Santos Inocentes* (“The Holy Innocents”), a Spanish feature film from the 1980s, which, according to them, reflects “exactly what it was like. It’s all in there.”

### III.3 The Post-pastoral Dehesa

Of course, apart from what may be called a continuance of feudal structures in land ownership, social relations have changed tremendously since the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Socioeconomic development and the ‘crisis of traditional agriculture’ due to technical innovations facilitated the industrialisation of agriculture and made manual labour obsolete (Acosta Naranjo 2002, 77; Acosta Naranjo 2008, 49–60). The loss of the main source for employment led to the exodus of numerous Extremaduran and Andalusian villagers to cities such as Madrid and Barcelona, where they found occupation in the booming construction sector, leaving the villages’ populations more than halved in many places. Siruela, a municipality in the *Siberia Extremeña* (Extremadura) and one of my research sites, may be exemplary here: The number of *de jure* inhabitants decreased from 5.340 in 1960 to 3.635 in 1970 (-32%). In 1980, the population had shrunk to 2.631, which equals its halving in comparison to 1960 (INE 2020a). According to the latest census, 1.903 people live in Siruela (INE 2020b).

The dehesas, on the other hand, transformed from vast areas crowded with *chozos* and roamed by shepherds and swineherds with their flocks to

enclosed meadows divided into smaller units. Once peopled and bustling with activity, the dehesa farms today are maintained by one or two workers only or in some cases have even been completely abandoned and become overgrown. “There are no shepherds anymore; there are only *ganaderos*,” Rafael, who as a child also used to be a *zagal*, explains sneeringly, *ganadero* ‘simply’ refers to a livestock farmer. The decisive difference is that while formerly, “there were no plots, there was no wire (fence)”, nowadays, according to the elderly villagers, the farmers can leave their flocks in the enclosed pastures and just drop by to pour out the feed. Today they come by car, while “before on the donkey. And sometimes on foot.” Whereas shepherds and their young assistants used to stay away from home for a long time and during dark nights, today the sheep farmers can return to their houses and families every night, enjoying a much higher living standard than many of their ancestors. This change in farming practices from mobile shepherding to sedentary pastoral farming also has consequences on the dehesa itself: “Today, in the (part of the dehesa) where there were maybe a hundred sheep, there are three or four hundred,” one of the elderly villagers notes, and concludes: “They eat more with their legs than with their mouth.” Extensive livestock farming of a comparably large flock of sheep in a pasture firmly enclosed by fences leads to overgrazing and the degradation of the dehesas’ soils.

Lucía, too, states that some things have changed in the dehesa-based communities: “Before, it was working for the rich. (...) Today everyone has some rights.” While before “you couldn’t study, you didn’t know how to be a person, you had to work since you were little, you didn’t have clothes, you didn’t have a car, you couldn’t have a good time, back then, but today we have a car, we have television, we have everything.” On the other hand, class distinctions continue to be severe and perceived as such. While some farmworkers like Julio dream of having their own piece of

land, they will never be able to buy one – “Unless you win the lottery!” – Lucía dryly concludes that “some people have a tradition of owning land and others a tradition of working. Here it is said, who is born with a star...”

#### IV. Discussion: “Energising tensions”?

The small excerpt from the dehesa’s history and my ethnographic data has clearly reflected the complexities around this landscape. While in the Middle Ages, the term dehesa often referred to communal lands, with the best pastures protected against foreign use, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards dehesa farms were mostly privately owned and represented the living and working place of numerous destitute working families who were commonly subject to exploitative and even despotic practices of their *dueños*. Even if people were lucky not to fall victim to these atrocities, life on the farms was marked by scarcity and hunger. Of course, I could have introduced the dehesa quite differently: I could have shared romanticising views on how the complex organisms of humans, pigs and trees would together shape the dehesa – admittedly, I could have also mentioned the latent protagonism of phytophthora, the tree-killing fungus to which numerous holm oaks fall prey, threatening the livelihood of local farmers. Of course, it makes sense to wonder what stress a tree of 200 years must have undergone when management practices changed drastically with the intensification of agriculture in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I could have also given an account of the dehesa from a dwelling perspective: in fact, a farm worker’s dwelling on a Spanish dehesa farm in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century would have closely resembled the way of life of the harvesters depicted by Pieter Bruegel: living from whatever is found at the doorstep, carrying out agricultural activities such as collecting

the heavy fieldstones on a clearance cairn to improve arable land areas, roaming the dehesa with a flock of sheep – all these activities evoke the supposedly pleasing simplicity of basic manufacturing and manual agricultural practices. However, living in the fields quite literally and the resultant cleared and flourishing dehesa landscape were owed to those carrying out exhaustive work under the exploitative conditions of semi-feudalism. To be sure, relational approaches may indeed raise awareness of ‘life on the ground,’ for instance in the context of the often-aloof bureaucratic EU policy, an example of which is given by sugar cane growing in Barbados (Richardson-Ngwenya 2012). Another merit of phenomenologically inspired approaches that Harvey and Wilkinson refer to are the contributions they can make to the apprehension of landscapes and their heritages by giving voice to the experiences of humans from the past and present who inhabit(ed) and shape(d) the landscape and who fall out of representation (Harvey and Wilkinson 2019, 180).

In fact, the central motivation to share my interlocutors’ memories of hardship is exactly that they are *not* represented in the thriving feel-good heritage business dominated by *jamón ibérico*. However, does it really take phenomenology to remind anthropologists that fieldwork and its methodological mainstay, participant observation, is about getting truly involved with the subjects of their research? Rather, I sometimes fear that the more ‘radical’ phenomenologists in anthropology end up being more concerned with their own environmental sentiments. While Ingold is quite right to highlight the danger of fixing anthropological knowledge in ethnographies without taking it seriously, I wonder whether issues of representation have not already been discussed extensively since the start of the Writing Culture debate in anthropology – although this by no means implies that they have been dealt with in any way conclusively.

I have demonstrated that we often cannot choose whether or not to take on an anthropocentric approach. I perceive – and during the fieldwork learned to perceive – the dehesa and landscape in general first and foremost as a social phenomenon in the way it represents itself to human actors. Without the human mind, landscapes would never be framed as such. Fieldwork, taking into account more-than-human socialities, is still in its infancy. It is not without reason that Haraway asks: “What is a good ethnography under these circumstances? Truly, how does one practise it?” (Haraway et al. 2016, 550) Doing anthropological research is primarily to engage with human fellows, their perceptions and valuations. This is not to say that anthropologists should not deal with ecological questions or bodily sensations. An exclusive adoption of either approach, however, would run the danger of leaving the picture incomplete: while in the phenomenological approach, the question of the Anthropocene would not even arise, more-than-human landscape approaches miss inquiring about the social relations which form part and parcel of landscapes and ecology. What is more: The concept of power emanating from assemblage theories such as Bennett’s is highly problematic as it fatally suggests that changing exploitative structures is left to the erratic alterations of the assemblages from which they result – and that it is not humans who must be held accountable for their actions.

All too easily, the modest and close-to-nature way of rural workers’ life on mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century dehesa farms could be valued as exemplary in resource-saving and romanticised as eco-friendly– and often is so in the current discourses on traditional knowledge and sustainability. Given that pastoralism was better for the soils of the dehesa than the overgrazing of enclosed meadows, it could also be argued that a return to shepherding practices is desirable. However, apart from the need to reorganise land ownership communally, shepherding is an occupation that is not much

valued: a return to mobile sheep farming would therefore have to come along with a general valorisation of this work and allow the shepherd a decent living standard. Ownership structures form an important part of social structures. As indicated, the *latifundia* of *dehesa* have generally been maintained as such. The common rights that used to be part and parcel of the *dehesa* are in many cases long forgotten. What would it mean to reinstall them and enable community members of pastoral villages to make a living based on the lands that surround them? What does it mean for environmental protection if the major part of the *dehesa* land is in a few private hands? Another conflict that I can only indicate here concerns the kind of (ecologically informed) knowledge that is deemed valuable by the *dueños* and environmentalists as opposed to the ignorance ascribed to the villagers (“They don’t know *why* they value their lands”, as one activist pointed out to me). These are the current issues which come to strike the anthropologist in the field and that a critically informed approach to the *dehesa* should highlight.

## V. Conclusion

The aim of this contribution has been to critically examine recent trends in landscape anthropology. The relatively new relational theories comprise both phenomenologically inspired and more-than-human approaches. While the first equals the almost total ‘anthropocentrism’ of landscape theory and strives to de-contextualise and universalise human engagement with the environment, the second seeks to pluralise the actors on the landscape stage while developing a decentralised concept of power. Excerpts from my fieldwork in the Spanish *dehesa* have demonstrated that in landscape anthropology, ‘classical’ anthropocentric approaches that highlight social structures and seek to embed their observations in a

sociohistorical context still prove indispensable. This is both a necessity – anthropological fieldwork means to engage first and foremost with other human beings – and a matter of a critically informed standpoint. The central questions of great social importance arising for the case of the dehesa cannot be addressed exclusively with either a phenomenological or more-than-human lens. Rather, social relations always form part and parcel of human-nature relations, which include pressing ecological concerns.

SENSITIVITY AND AFFECTION

# THE ROLE OF MIMESIS IN THE EMBODIMENT OF LANDSCAPE: APULIA AT THE TIME OF XYLELLA

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ENRICO MILAZZO

## Introduction

Apulia is a land of secular olive growing. As central protagonists of the Apulian landscape, olive trees permeate different kinds of representations. This article aims to explore the relationship between olive trees and the humans living with them. We will tackle this relationship from the landscape point of view. Therefore, we focus our attention on two main topics: aesthetics - representation, forms - and senses - body, perception. These theoretical tools are addressed in order to understand the process of landscape transformation as a result of the epidemic of harmful bacteria.

In the Salento region, the South-Eastern part of the Italian peninsula, symptoms of decline have been observed in olive trees by farmers since 2008. Between the end of 2012 and the first months of 2013, the scientific

and institutional processes of investigation began, and in a few months the decline syndrome was ascribed to the sole presence of the quarantine bacteria *Xylella fastidiosa* ssp. *Pauca*. There are two elements depicting this scenario: a scientific definition of the pathology (OQDR: Olive Quick Decline Syndrome), and an institutional inscription of the bacteria as a quarantine organism. As a result, biosecurity measures were applied over the European Union phytosanitary policies (Bandiera 2020). Since the very first moves of the institutions acting to implement the containment policies in the attempt to stop the spread of the microscopical *Xylella*, a counter-hegemonic epistemology has arisen from a variety of social and rural movements of the area. They have embraced the struggle for different conceptions of agriculture, ecosystemic interaction, and more than anything, how to produce knowledge.

The contrast between the institutional and movement interpretations of the disaster can be described both on the scientific and somewhat practical grounds. On the scientific level of the epidemic definition, the movements did not in fact accept the ascription to the bacteria *Xylella fastidiosa* as being the sole responsibility of the decline syndrome. The movements claimed for the need to take the so-called environmental factors into account. This choice, grounded on scientific research, different from that considered as decisive by the official scientific organs, shifted the focus from the bacteria and the pathology to the overall condition of the olive trees' environment. Drawn from these premises, the contrast has pointed to the practical ways of managing the epidemic and the chances of recovering a depleted olive grove. Both the institutions and movements have fought for years for the exclusive right to appropriate the concept of 'good practices', something that gives measure to just how much the problem has had to be faced empirically by both the institutions and the local landowners.

The epidemic governance of hegemonic institutions compromised almost every dimension of community social life. The socio-pathological construction (Colella 2019) of the epidemic dislocated economy, health and self-determination. The south-Apulian communities witnessed not only the disruption of their secular ecosystem, but also their marginalization in the decision-making process. In one sentence: the very possibility for the communities to territorialize their own landscape. Precisely because the locus - 'the field'- of the struggle was a very practical one, many different forms of knowledge felt they were 'called' into action. And with them, they brought their own different ways of producing knowledge into the fight. Unpredictably, the empirical knowledge of many experienced farmers tightened alliance with those disciplines that the institutions had put aside, like biology or microbiology. The merging of the pragmatic level with the epistemological one here stands out clearly and has the landscape as its witness.

Discarding the sole economic and phytosanitary concerns of the Italian State and the EU, we argue that olive trees territorialize far more than the productive dimension of life. Only understanding the dynamics of 'becoming other' implied by the landscape makes it possible to grasp the epistemological conflict that took place around containment policies.

What are the main lines of movement and the segments that traced the counter-hegemonic interpretation of the crisis? How were the signs of the landscape's default seen, perceived and explained? Senses and aesthetics entangle in the following paragraphs, where we take into account two ethnographic cases from our 9-month-field-research between Salento and Valle d'Itria. The promiscuity between human bodies and non-human entities (material and immaterial, contingent and historical) appears as a key element in the unfolding of landscape perception. Starting from bodily perceptions, we follow: first, Antonio's history of healing, and its relation

with olive oil; secondly, Marco's perceptive and artistic capacities to fit into an ecosystemic equilibria comprised of multiple entities. The mingling of aesthetics and senses allows the landscape to emerge as a mirror from which to learn and (re-)gain new (or ancient) knowledge, and a meter to measure our ability to read and remain with the signs of the environment. We deepen the way in which psychic and bodily perception functioned as proper tools to interpret and react to the epidemic of the 'olive trees quick decline syndrome'. Their understanding of the implosion of the ecosystemic landscape tackles the landscape as a form of holding a consciousness of Self/Other relationship. Desire and rationality, as we draw from the first paragraph, are the first steps of this path, presumably taken altogether, like a jump upwards- that is a slip in the void, too- lying at the origin of human relation with space entities.

### **Olive tree: the spike of modernity...**

Considering the first step of this contribution, we shall recall the most inspiring combination between the history of olive trees and the history of humans living with them. It is, in a few words, the unfolding of the confrontation between different ways of territorialization, which goes back to the roots of mythopoesis towards the organization of world entities into a modern and rational setting.

Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment first excursus "Odysseus, or myth and enlightenment" concerns Odysseus' metaphorical experience. Odysseus, according to the masterpiece of critical theory, is the representation of the modern man, using reason instead of strength, camouflaging, playing out his cunning character. The trip back to Ithaca is the trip of the subject that takes the distance from the phantasmatic and irrational realm of Nature. It is also the trip through a controlled space

(Farinelli 2009), defined by names: the castaway's trip anticipates the work of the compass. The organ through which this disarticulation is made possible is the cunning. It's an organ because it articulates the relationship between the sacrifice and the exchange. Odysseus's rationality develops over the double character of the sacrifice, the magic abandonment of the single to the collective on the one hand, and the self-preservation of the self, thanks to the technique of this magic on the other: "This split between the rational and the irrational aspects of sacrifice gives cunning a point at which to take hold. [...] If the principle of sacrifice was proven transient by its irrationality, at the same time it survives through its rationality" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 42). Cunning, then, allows Ulysses to trick the divinities, losing himself into the wild, but then finding once again the way home. And then another storm, and another way to trick the sacrifice. He establishes an exchange, a rational and scope-oriented using of the sacrifice: "Odysseus lives according to the ancient principle which originally constituted bourgeois society. One had to choose between cheating and going under" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 49). When the Machiavellian laws of strength and power are useless for the hero, he camouflages himself within the peripheral laws of powerful divinities. One of the most important epithets of Ulysses is *πολύτροπος* (polytropos): made of multiple forms, various. His unusual cunning assumes a deeper definition: it is made possible by trickery, by the ability of pretending to be other than what he is. We find this epithet during his encounter with Circe, when he escapes the magic of the divinity, but also with Polyphemus, where he hides behind a sheep, pretending to be 'Nobody'. In this long-standing metaphor of the modern man, the olive tree is a perpetual ally of Ulysses. Recalling Braudel, we might even depict the olive tree as the condition of possibility of Ulysses' world, defining its very sealable limits: "The Mediterranean starts in the North with the ap-

pearance of the first olive trees and ends in the South with the appearance of the first palm trees” (Braudel, 1987, p.17). Even more importantly, Ulysses blinds Polyphemus with an olive stick, thereby managing to escape. The process of smoothing and sharpening the olive stick that he found in the cave is well described during the episode. What is more, the olive tree is at the core of the story: the final trick is made by the wife of Odysseus, Penelope. In order to be sure of Odysseus’ identity, she asks him to move their marriage bed. Only her real husband would have known that the bed was built on the log of an ancient olive tree, impossible to be moved. The centrality of olive trees is highlighted by the relevance of olive oil in Greek society - a prize for Olympic games winners -. But the ability of modelling this wood is precisely the alteration of forms that Ulysses was able to accomplish. The olive tree is the tree of tradition, around which Odysseus built his house. To work such a contorted wood is a modern technique. The ability to create a straight form from a contorted one is the beginning of modern geometry, of drawing cartographical borders. We could say that if Odysseus is the metaphor of modern man, the olive tree is the metaphor for modern technique. This metaphor draws a direct relation between forms and communication. Far from being a neutral element in the story of Ulysses, the olive tree territorialized the tradition of Ulysses’s world, its history and values. The presence and centrality of olive symbolism then is to be understood as part of the narration that the story is telling. This story talks about the society of humans which Ulysses is part of, and how they organize the entities in the cosmos, where humans are separated by animals and other entities of nature, as well as from some kind of humanities, dehumanized by members of the same species. During the centuries, from its centrality in the Roman diet to the Christian tradition, the olive continued territorializing elements of ‘high’ culture. Diet is a matter of power as well as identity. When Charlemagne

became the emperor of the Romans, he had the difficulty of mediating between the Roman food tradition (oil, wine and cereals) and that of the Franks (meat, beer, hunting). The symbol of power was territorialized by different customs of eating: the king of Franks had to be represented as unmoderated, while the power for the Romans was represented by moderation and healthiness. Χριστός (christòs) means 'oily' in Greek, and the olive tree is present in the garden of Gethsemani (which in Aramaic means oil mill) - where Christ came to God. Oil and Olive branches are part of the most important Christian rites: Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick and the Sacred Order are some of the sacraments that involve the use of olive oil.

Glances at the modern era will provide a spectrum of the different kinds of cultural places that olive trees territorialize. For instance, the progressive proliferation of olive growing during the middle ages reverses in the modern era. Olive growing was encouraged by the need for lubricant for the new textile machinery of northern Europe. As the wild and original olive brush had been transformed into a tree, olive oil could be transformed into something else too (it is sufficient to recall the importance of olive oil for illumination before paraffin and kerosene appeared). In 1739, Charles III of Bourbon, one of the 'enlightened sovereigns', derated taxes over olive tree cultivation and implantation (Mastrolia, 1983). Especially in Apulia, the plantation of olive trees marked a significant change in the landscape. While the oil production came to enrich more the British shipping companies than the Apulian landowners, the whole production was based on the free agrarian labour force. This labour force is the so-called 'peasant civilization', that characterized southern Italy until the late 'sixties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Pasolini, for instance, critically described this 'process of modernization', or better still, this 'anthropological revolution', as those workers were considered barely human. Olive trees were the subject of

their enslavement; the olive mill used to be an underground hole where air was wet from donkey breath and fermenting olives. In those environments, a sublime alliance between the dehumanized labour force and the subject and tools of their de-humanization took place (Yusoff, 2017). So high, like Christ, so low, like the hypogeous mills (Taussig 2019). The symbolic power of the olive tree also territorialized the rites and cults of those less than human bodies. Thanks to the lifelong research of the Italian anthropologist Ernesto De Martino (1962), we can theorize how olive oil permeated the cults of this civilization.

The subjugated condition of the servants was examined by De Martino in relation to the state of possession that would animate both women and men, young or old. Falling regularly, at the onset of the wheat-picking season, into a pre-announced state of depression and weariness, the possessed were said to be bitten by a mythical spider, the taranta. In order to resolve this condition, the possessed, who had lost all their strength, would wake up only at the hearing of a certain music. Rhythm, or rather, the capacity to embody the regular and yet enthralling rhythm was the only possibility for the possessed person to re-shape a disposable world. De Martino said the possessed servants were thus shaping all the deep injustice and privations into a conatus, or what could be said to be a protest, a rejection of one's subjugated condition. The conatus, the never-ending dance and the music playing, were powerfully encroached by the symbolic world of land-workers, made up of the haphazard material proximity between the servants and the rural world entities and the cultural objects significant for the possessed' perception, including smells and odours, colours and shapes. All that mattered was to make the possessed rise up again from their exhausting cycle, comprised of swaying on the ground covered with a white sheet, dancing and then falling down again and again. Beside the ears of wheat and the images of the saints, music was the cul-

tural protagonist of the recurrence of this sensitivity re-activation of the presence in the world. In this regard, it is very important to underline how the recovery from this state of existential depression and possession was affordable only through recourse to the community at large, with all the other servants and the cultural-material references intervening in order to symbolically re-construct the real word of the possessed. If the ‘suonatori’ (the musicians) played the most important role, nonetheless, we can see in the picture, between the rural references and objects that permeated the symbolic universe of the peasant culture, a branch of an olive tree placed on the head as a crown. ([Figure 1](#))

But, what kind of cultural place do the elements of the landscape territorialize today? What kind of social performance do they partake in? The society of Moderns, according to Latour (1991), does not show any cult at all, or rather, it pretends not to be founded on beliefs, but on the objectivity of science. Bodily perceptions fall outside the definition of a fact, too, as subjective and susceptible to - magical- illusion. Yet we can easily uncover the enchantment of modernization. Even if modern science disenchanting humanity, natural and non-human entities, this doesn’t imply the disappearance of ‘magic’ meaningful connections between things and events, or between beings and the earth. Michael Taussig, recalling both Marx and Benjamin, first highlighted how commodities (things) keep a magic capacity to shape existential links with the body (1980). This process requires a kind of mingling, between the magic of the process of commodification and the magic of the process of embodiment and sacralization. The politics of commodities can be reshaped as politics of the body because, and especially the bodies in suffering, become drivers of different signification, symbolization and interpretations of the world (Taussig, 1993; Csordas 1997). In one way or another, the magic remains as the mutable power that crisscrosses an object or its representations and makes the object itself an agent of a sort of power.

From an epistemological point of view, as Latour affirms, the scientific fact, so essential for turning an enchanted world into a modern one, has become a factish - an encounter between the rationality of the fact and the magic of the fetish, and the other way around (Latour, 2017). The factish, with both its technical and imaginative features, participates in the morphological movement of the real world. Even if, as a fact, it comes from a sanitized and pasteurized space of modern laboratories, it falls from its peak into the uncertain and still magically interpretable world as a factish. It's when scientific knowledge and its products (technologies) engage with life and its - epigenetic- movements that the stratigraphic floor of the earth's surface becomes the real laboratory.

### **...and way back.**

This longstanding conflict between modern rationality and limits of the biophysical world concerns also the history of olive trees, as we saw with Ulysses. We can directly consider some events that concern Apulia and olives nowadays.

The first I want to recall here is the construction of the biggest steel mill of Europe, the ex- Ilva of Taranto, now under the management of the multinational company ArcelorMittal. The 1962 documentary 'Pianeta Acciaio' (The Steel Planet) by Emilio Marsili, well documents 'the moment' in which this huge mill was built. Olive trees were there, substituted by the production lines of the industry, the iron of the new working machines, eradicating trees to plant progress in a land distanced from modernity. The spirit of the documentary and all its plot - especially the voice from the outside - is to walk on the edge of this great transformation of the landscape. We emphasise the importance of landscape for understanding humans. These aesthetical transformations lie on the strata of an-

thropological politics. The keywords of modernity are narrated rhetorically, interviews and shootings are assembled in order to show the contrast between the 'ancient landscape' - and its world - with the new lifestyle brought by the new industry: 'steel is everywhere around us'. After almost sixty years since the factory's establishment, the suffering and disease caused by the steel mill generates a different territorialization than that which was expected. Everyone has an existential connection with the steel-mill. The factory, larger than the city, and its production of death become the drivers of subjectivity and space.

Since 2012, another environmental and political conflict has arisen in Salento concerning the construction of a huge pipeline from Azerbaijan to Italy, passing over the olive tree landscape. In this case too, the olive trees and the fundamental elements of the landscape (e.g., the ancient dry-stone walls or the sea-shores) are the core of the movements' claims, and just like in Taranto, they stand in the fields as obstacles to progress. This time, however, there is no real 'modernity shock'. The olive trees were not to be eradicated, thrown down by the force of steel, but 'transplanted' to a 'provisional abode'. Similarly, some of the dry-stone walls were taken-down by the multinational, with the promise of putting them back. Leaving aside the unrecoverable wounds suffered by the olive trees during the transplanting, or the difficulty of reproducing walls made by almost-lost mastery techniques, the multinational TAP used this 'put-back' rhetoric to shadow the extent of the works and the protesters' claims. The activists brought olive branches as symbols of their resistance, and sometimes used the stones taken from the ancient walls to sabotage the works. The nature of these things, such as the olive trees and the dry-stone walls inhabiting the landscape, was turned around and camouflaged by the police and the multinational company, while the protesters used them to resist against the inevitable environmental impact of the pipeline and

decompression site. This kind of merging with the landscape, endorsed by the local community, perceives the entities in the landscape not just as items that can be replaced and re-produced. The people humanized those entities, exactly as was shown by the ‘mourning’ within the protest when two of the ‘kidnapped’ olive trees were found to be infected by *Xylella* during the ‘captivity’. The two olive trees became ‘heroes’, fallen during their imprisonment. The metamorphosis of the olive spike in Odysseus’ hands never stops.

The crisis caused by *Xylella fastidiosa* corresponds at the same time with the peak and the progressive erosion of the dialectic opposition between modern and traditional. The dualisms of modernity removed the power of the unknown. The definition and depuration of the objects of knowledge is the frame that shapes the relation between what is needed to be known and what has to remain unknown. The intellectual tools are challenged for their inadequacy in providing a thought for action<sup>1</sup>, because knowledge doesn’t come as an impartial instrument. Instead, it reveals the proliferation of ontologies trying to define the problem and the consequent resolution. As Colella (2019) properly shows, the relationship between done and undone science in the case of *Xylella* is pivotal in the understanding of the conflict that arose around biosecurity measures. Every position has a scientific outcome: we are not advocating for a return to the ancient Mediterranean enchantment, rather, we aim to clarify the potential of the relation between crisis, disease and landscape. Looking at mimesis’ fundamental role in the understanding of the alterity of non-human entities (animals, plants but also technology and matter), we look at the unfolding of an ‘underground’ knowledge in Apulia. The connection between

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1 This is precisely the reason why we use a concept like landscape, as Meinig (1979) stated: “The idea of landscape runs counter to the recognition of any simple binary relationship between men and nature”

science and senses, between the somatic knowledge and the scientific one, is the frame from where to look at these epistemological controversies and their relationship with the production of landscape.

### **Ethnography of the landscape: Antonio's mill**

The first time we went by Antonio's oil mill was the end of winter. The rain was falling down on the rose limestone of Salento. As the water touches the ground, it starts to dissolve the molecules of calcium, part of the limestone rock, thanks to the action of carbon dioxide present in the atmosphere. Drop by drop water dissolves the limestone rock and creates different kinds of forms, both on the surface and underneath. The karstic landscape has a typical red soil on the surface, made up of different matter that does not dissolve with the rainwater. What remains goes deeper underground, creating a subterranean landscape made of flowing rivers, big holes and dark places. For instance, Salento lacks water on the surface; the waterworks bring water from the end of Appennino, the mountain range that cuts through Italy. Only occasionally are bore-wells deep enough to bring water to the surface. The more superficial holes were used as oil mills, where the fermentation of olives took place, and the work for grinding them. This subterranean landscape has always been connected with the superficial one: in addition, the bore-wells used to be a harbour for the 'negative', things that were hidden, like weapons and dead bodies. The depths of the bore-wells were a connection with the unreachable underground ([Figure 2](#): "Trappeti"). While waiting for Antonio, rain was falling on our car; the windows had completely steamed up.

Antonio's mill is in the centre of a small village, deep down in Salento's stretch of olive groves. Since 2002, Antonio has been courageously recovering an ancient method of producing olive oil, with a traditional

stone-wheel olive oil mill. It was very unusual because competition, prices and maintenance costs are all against the traditional ways of production. Even the taste of the final product is an obstacle for the sale, as the criteria and the paradigms for defining a 'good olive oil' have evolved in an opposing direction than that of a stone-pressed one. The oil mill Antonio re-opened had been closed for more than twenty-five years, and not even the older community members could recall precisely the taste and the properties of the olive oil produced there. A parallel process of 'invention of tradition', in fact, has occurred in Salento in the last few decades: the ancient way of olive-pressing was put aside, and a conventional and quick way of pressing became established as the 'traditional' method. The typical olive oil in Salento, homemade by many families, is pressed with modern lines of production of sterile steel with the help of hot water to squeeze the most quantity of oil possible from the olives. It is no secret that the majority of olive oil produced for family consumption in Salento is not top quality. There are many reasons, including the timing of the olive harvest and pressing, and the working capacity of the machines (or the lack of olive mills in some areas).

Antonio's competitor was not just this homemade olive oil, but also the smaller, yet present, high-quality olive oil production. Only some entrepreneurs in Salento were able to bring up standards to make an extra-virgin olive oil. They are fixed by international agreements and imply biochemical analysis of the product (a well-known criterion is the grade of acidity) as well as 'more-modern' techniques. The culture of top-quality extra-virgin olive oil is tied very strictly with scientific tools and conceptions of measurable properties. This kind of production can be reached only thanks to perfect timing and the most modern machines, capable of reducing the oxidation of the liquid during the pressing. At the end of the pressing line, the golden liquid, so close to the idea that we so comfortably

associate with health and holiness, spurs the air with a tantalising smell and taste.

The colour of the sacred, as Taussig (2009) would have it, seems here to be gold, just like the golden olive oil. This *topos*, the ideal representation of olive oil as golden, pure and healthy, clashes with the experience of Antonio. If the ‘familiar’ olive oil in Salento is shy-yellow, Antonio’s traditional olive oil is deep dark green. And yet Antonio’s mill is so renowned that even Hellen Mirren sends her olives there. Apart from the taste, the quality of this olive oil is in its particular relationship with timing and delicacy. As Antonio explained to us, the secret of his olive oil is that it takes hours to make only a few litres of this product. Time builds up a different relationship between the olives’ properties and the kernel-breaking machine: in a conventional oil mill, the breaking of the olive is fast and hot, while Antonio’s giant stone wheels are gentle and slow. For Antonio, this explains the thrilling organoleptic properties of his green olive oil, remaining far longer than in other olive oils. ‘Can something that is done in 15 minutes be better than something that takes 4 hours to be completed?’

The organoleptic and biochemical dimension of extra-virgin olive oil was something that made Antonio both comfortable and uncomfortable: he was firm in the specificity of his product and its qualities, but he suffered the incomprehension of many colleagues and experts. On the one hand, Antonio criticized the standardization of quality measuring, incapable with its canons of giving back the true value of his own product, but on the other hand he did rely on what the molecular analysis showed about it. Yet, something that the analysis did not say per se was Antonio’s final assertion that his stone-cold-pressed olive oil was healthier than anyone else’s. There we really moved into an area of non-knowledge. There is not a shared recognition that stone-slowly-pressed olive oil would be healthier than the others. We also recognized that Antonio supported

his affirmation mainly with the argument around ‘time’ (and the consequent better quality of polyphenols). Then why would Antonio have been so strict and precise on the matter of healthiness? We had to come back to him a second time and listen to the whole story.

Antonio was a medical student, but he was suffering from a very serious disease: a psycho-somatic originated disorder, which is assumed to be chronic and not really treatable, ‘ulcerative recto-colitis’. The defacement of Antonio’s body was severe, and he had to interrupt his academic studies. He then decided to open up the stone-wheels oil mill and everything changed: after some time, he began daily consumption of his own traditionally-pressed olive oil and the illness began to withdraw. The physicians at first had told him that the disease was stress-related because the secret of this pathology resides in an unknown relationship between the intestine and the brain, upon which there is no doable prognosis. In medicine, this kind of disorder is not fully explained because the causal paradigm of explanation doesn’t work. As the ‘psycho-somatic’ label reveals, physicians only relate to an unclear complex of causes (just as the category of ‘stress’ testifies), upon none of which is it possible or easy to act. Today, Antonio is healthy and the illness has not appeared again. His conviction is that his own olive oil saved him (from cancer or Kron’s disease too, a typical epilogue of this kind of illness). His physician, instead, could not confirm the olive-oil healing power, lacking scientific evidence, but on the other hand, the stress-related explanation didn’t work either, because opening up that kind of olive oil mill in Salento cannot be considered less stressful than studying medicine. We argue that there is no clear distinction within this space in-between intestine and mind. Did the biochemical capacities of polyphenols do the healing? Or rather, did the cultural place of the green olive oil bless Antonio’s psyche? There is no way of knowing if olive oil acted directly upon the equilibria of the molecular components inside the

intestine, or rather, if it worked as a cultural device on Antonio's mind, that in turn operated an endogenous improvement in the intestine (as the physicians would have it- weirdly, because it is even more unclear than the first explanation, that nevertheless lacks scientific evidence).

Opening up the indeterminacy of this intimate and unknown event provoked Antonio to problematize the current situation of the olive trees affected by Xylella. There are at least three overlapping points between Antonio's illness and the olive tree's depletion. The first is unclarity. Both the conditions are in fact surrounded by a cloud of indeterminacy due to the fact that neither of them has a simplified solution or even a simplified cause. Both the events regiment a state of non-knowledge (Gross 2007). The second point are the concauses. Both the situations strengthen our belief that there is no reason to force the research of a single cause. The understanding, or rather, the key to grasping something from unclarity resides in the possibility of keeping more than one cause together. The third point in common is, thus, the 'mixture' (Coccia 2018). As Antonio came to tell us, with some emotion even, he truly believed that first the disruption and then the re-establishing of his body equilibria was entangled with the diffusion of a general condition. Here we have the emergence of a topos, sadly rooted in marginal areas like Salento, of a generalized crisis, that unfolds and affects specifically the health of humans and of the landscape. It was by no accident - in the local community's feeling- that the rate of cancer had risen so drastically in Salento during the past 20 years<sup>2</sup>, and that suddenly a devastating bacteria destroyed centuries-old olive trees. The perception of an environment in disruption was stronger than ever. Yet, as the crisis involves everything and everyone, 'mixture', the only possible

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2 Tumor League of the Province of Lecce, reworking Istat data from 2014. <https://www.legatumorilecce.org/epidemiologia/>. There is a research project called 'Geneo' that is working on connecting soil pollution to cancer rate percentage <http://www.geneosalento.it/>.

response was uniform: grasping the environment's entities altogether.

Antonio, in fact, would recall the two main conditions for his olive oil to work as a medicine, functioning also as his craftsmanship philosophy: he would use only biological and organically grown olives, and more willingly, autoctonos olive cultivars. These two conditions are not negotiable for Antonio's domestic daily consumption - or medicine. They were, for him, the reason why the method turned out so effective in re-establishing body health. Yet, autoctonos varieties are the most susceptible to the bacteria, and the authorities even forbid the re-plantation of the same trees, allowing only 'resistant' and non-autoctonos varieties (like Frantoio and Leccino). Antonio was confident that some 'local' trees would have survived, because, as microbiologists and some activists already sustained at the time, and as he himself had known for a long time, the pathogen could have been stopped only by an observant, biological and truthful practice of care. The only solution was, in fact, to increase the general state of health of the tree, or in other words, to favour the ecosystem capacity of re-adjusting the lost equilibria. This can happen through the improvement of the microbiological life of the soil, especially through microbial life, which includes fungi as well as bacteria and insects. So, the story unfolds unpredictably underground, as it begins with the subterranean rivers of Salento, continues inside the 'frantoi ipogei' (stone-carved olive mills), and comes to the invisible relationships in the soil under the olive trees.

### **'Soil is an open-air intestine'**

This entanglement between invisibility and indeterminacy builds up the epistemological dimension of the crisis. A different set of concepts has been enacted on the landscape by those who learnt how to 'act in mix-

ture' or to become 'sensible' (Coccia 2016; 2018). Antonio's ethnographic case supports the idea that we need to include in our understanding of the environmental crisis the knowledge unfolding from unseen structures (Ginzburg 1986). There is an unseen structure at work, built upon the embodied similarity between soil and intestine. Just like the intestine, the soil is inhabited by a great number of entities (microbes and bacteria mainly) which are way more important than hegemonic disciplines are ready to admit. Microbes and bacteria, the invisible entities both in soil and the intestine, play a fundamental role in determining the overall condition of the health of the entities that are visible to us (like ourselves, the organs or the plants and the trees). But how do common people get to include these entities in their understanding if they can neither see them nor are they valued enough by scientific disciplines? The answer relies on a perception that entrusts a certain kind of knowledge, accepted and formalized before or aside from modern epistemologies into a sensitive body of know-hows and practices. If we look at pre-modern knowledge, there is a paradigm that fits well with this schema, drawn from middle-age 'science': 'Sapor-Sapientia', Taste and Knowledge (Stabile 2008). They share the same verbal root, 'sapio'. In origin, the foundational tool for knowledge was in fact sensorial and perceptive, as 'something that is known, tastes of something'. Such an assumption was upheld by pre-modern scientists who entered into a sensorial relationship with the objects of knowledge, precisely through the act of 'tasting' them. In the Italian language, this sense is still ruling, as 'sapere' means at the same time 'to know' and 'to taste of something'. The perceptive roots of knowledge clarify the reason why Antonio 'likes' so much the taste of his own olive oil, as through the aesthetics of his olive oil (the colour, the smell and mainly the taste) he embodies the perceptive knowledge that the olive oil brings with it. The aftermath of this embodiment fits into a schematic and dogmatic knowle-

dge with great difficulty, as unlike those of modern allopathic medicine or plant pathology do. One reason may be when the elements grouped together are too large to permit a complete mastery over the system. Yet, the mastery doesn't disappear, it is rather a different kind of acting, with different alliances and entities. This recalls the microbiologist Dr. Giovannetti's attempt at recovering depleted olive trees - a counsellor among Antonio's best clients, even financed by the institution at some point. It consisted in several applications of a wide complex of microbes underground, restoring strength and functions to all the invisible entities of the 'olive system'. Just as we cannot explain what acted inside Antonio's intestine, Dr. Giovannetti doesn't know exactly what strains of microbes worked well for the olive trees, which eventually recovered their full greenness.

We have been calling the 'negative' the un-mastered entities and the way of knowing them, resembling what the gnostic authors and philosophers saw through the middle ages: a constitutive part of our world was subjugated in favour of another part that was more usable and instrumental. They divided the two ways of knowing such different parts of the world: the *pathein* and the *mathein*. Behind the former, there is the idea that with the feeling (the *pathos*), the perception and the sensitive involvement of the body, one could grasp knowledge, 'going deeper than the rational principle'. The *pathein* was meant for the humans to mingle with all the other entities, and refused the idea of a rigid singularity, that of the *mathein*, the only order and unity, a regular hierarchy of separated things, parts of a rational system (Lettieri 2016).

What drives the body and the mind of individuals towards a different way-of-knowing? What does it take to embrace a different way-of-seeing, or the 'enskillment' needed to comprehend the mixture of the entities shaping our health and the condition of the surrounding environment? What faculty permits us to conceive an action otherwise unpredictable

under the rule of scientific disciplines (ineffective, in the case of Xylella and psychosomatic disorders)? In order to understand the signs of the landscape, which stands undoubtedly as a founding presence and as the unique source of our comprehension, we must draw from the mimetic faculty, as it unfolds in Marco's ethnographic case.

### **Marco's mimicry in via Volito**

Crossing the main road that leads to San Gregorio, the old narrow Messapian way called 'Via Volito' winds tortuously to the sea. We ran into Marco's place on a sunny day; after a walk and superb speculation over the landscape, we were passing by along the millenary Via Volito. Marco offers hospitality to tourists and people that travel this ancient road: some bread, olive oil and tomatoes, all handmade by himself. He used to be a well-known architect, but then he left the professional activity and started to dedicate all his time to house-keeping, his land and his faithful friend, the donkey 'Nina'. Yet, he is still practicing some kind of drawings and building: he projected his entire house and built it with the raw materials at his disposal from his land. Marco sees his house as a material body made of the very same nature of the surrounding entities.

It falls right in line then, that when we started to talk about the problems of this land 'at the end of the world'. The church in Capo Leuca is called *finibus terrae*; there is only the sea after that. Marco had a lot to say about them, but, in particular, his concerns were expressed through his artistic works and paintings. Landscape has always dealt with paintings and with crafting skills, like at the beginning of the modern era, when the idea of landscape was highly connected with the discoveries over representation techniques. Think about the studies over perspective led by Alberti and other Italian sixteenth century artists. As Cosgrove (1985) and many

other landscape theorists asserted, the representations were demonstrations of power: the power of the sovereign over territory, the power of the rational organization of space led by humans. Science, art and practical skills were mingled in this revolution of forms: ‘painting is a science because of its foundation on mathematical perspective and on the study of nature’ (Cosgrove 1985, 52). Besides the purpose of representing the morphology of the territory, the result came to be the negative of the image of anthropic control and relations with a space. Later, the landscape aesthetics were touched by the enchantment of Romanticism, where the amusement of Nature marked the principal inspiration for painting. Humboldt saw this sense of amusement while beholding the majesty of Nature as an engaging point from which to develop a scientific analysis. Returning from long study trips, he was always detecting that kind of sensibility in the bourgeois salons of his peers in Berlin. In Eighteenth century northern Europe, Nature was already there as a whole group of entities disconnected and detached from humans, to be studied, categorized and analysed. As a result, the aesthetic sensibility was directed towards the beauty of Nature, the emotion produced by a storm, the huge profile of the mountain, etc. In a way, this aesthetic sensibility was already displaying the occurring shift of the observation point. This could be considered a valid reason why the landscape becomes again central concerning the Anthropocene perspective. The assumption of entering a new geological era called Anthropocene, presumes the erosion of the epistemological distinction between Nature (driven by the laws of biology, chemistry and natural sciences) and Culture (an ensemble of relativistic studies, like the humanities). As Meinig stated in 1979: “landscape runs counter to recognition of any simple binary relationship between man and nature” (Meinig, 1979, p. 2). In this perspective, the changing ecological reality inhabits the landscape with hybrid forms of technology and biology. In the Anthropocene, landscape gets involved in the rhizomatic connections of different actors, both human and not (Lori-

mer 2012). Painting is a way of producing landscape, as a series of embodied performances that involve humans as well as non-human presences in space (Ingold, 1993). The attention on non-human agency in landscape production bridges the gap between the slow rhythm of Heideggerian dwelling and the chaotic movement of anthropocenic hybrid entities. As Tsing proposed (2015), landscape is as a pivotal concept for its patchy characteristic, relating things apparently disconnected, coming from different scales. In Apulia olive growing there's more than one landscape, as there are different interrelations of practices connected with the care of olives as well as different ontologies. Marco's representations of the changing Apulian landscape will be useful in understanding the role of interspecies relationships in the sensible process of reason.

The crisis of relations produced by the landscape of dying trees inspired Marco's creativity in different ways. The first painting is called 'Salento tormentato' (Figure 3). Through this representation the author correlates the conflict over the containment of the bacteria with the Universal Exhibition (Expo) that took place in Milan, 2015. The whole Expo was focused on the title 'Feeding the Planet. Energies for the future'. On a green shaded background, the title is connected with the toxicities of landfilled waste and with Xylella itself: "The theme was to feed the earth. And how do you feed it? By throwing away bins of pesticides, of all these things here... and then all this produces Xylella, that bin always produces Expo 2015". The etiology of the two events is the same for Marco; the reference to the landfill is connected to another environmental condition about which we heard a lot about in Salento, the one emerged from the confessions of the repentant mafia Carmine Schiavone<sup>3</sup>, or the toxic waste

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3 From an article of the newspaper 'Fatto Quotidiano', 2013 <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2013/11/26/rifiuti-tossici-nel-salento-dietrofront-della-procura-di-lecce-aperta-inchiesta/792123/>, ultima visione 07/09/2018.

landfills under 'highway 275'. Combining the elements of the landscape, toxicity included, Marco explores the path of logical and linguistic knowledge: Xylella is not to be seen as an isolated case of disease, but instead, as a symptom of a more general condition of the relationship with the more-than-human world. This condition has a direct connection with the human body, represented through the syringe at the top of the painting, but also, and even more emphatically, through the frames of human bodies and their becoming cross-shaped. Death, as well as toxicity, has a significant role in this process of aesthetically grasping the relationship with the movement of life over this space. Again, the changing of forms corresponds to a changing of senses and reason over the metamorphic reality of landscape. Landscape forms result as a practice communication between species. As we said, the Apulian olive growing landscape is permeated by different practices that interact with each other. Every single part of the olive tree is interesting by its diversity of sensitive and scientific knowledge: from the foliage to the roots and soil. The variety of practices display an aesthetic difference between the fields. One of the most important activities for olive cultivation is pruning, an ancient technique of cutting olive branches in order to avoid the tree becoming too high and to help create easy-to-harvest branches. The balance between the needs of the plant and the needs of human cultivation is a continuous moving border between the agency of plants and humans. The alternance between shadow and light, between the tree's photosynthesis and the human interaction, gives birth to different forms of relating with non-human alterity. Practice always deals with aesthetics: the mutual interspecies territorialization generates a coevolution of forms, from this, a logic is generated. Deleuze and Guattari (1980) tell the encounter between the orchid and the wasp. What does the male wasp see when it runs into an orchid? It sees another wasp, sexually appealing. Aesthetic and sensitively appealing,

as well as a common practice of surviving, are the kinds of relationships that generate forms, with the confusion and the absences that transmit. Relational ties are semiotics: signs of the landscape are communication among living creatures. Senses respond, as touched by rhythmic memories of interconnection, to presence, both real and surrogate. The decline of olive trees lighted up the senses with a new colour. The presence of the immobile olive trees has a different ecology from the surrogate and hybrid bacteria, accused of being the main actor of the decline syndrome. *Xylella* territorializes on olive trees, in turn deterritorializing the Salento landscape.

The changing landscape and the struggle between the two movements of olive tree territorialization and *Xylella*'s deterritorialization are iconic in Marco's assemblage between a painting and a sculpture. The sculpture represents the image of a crucified olive-wood Christ, with "Salento, w l'ignoranza"<sup>4</sup> written above it (Figure 4). The sacrifice of Christ is compared with the sacrifice of olive trees, textured by institutional biosecurity reasons. Again, olive trees as a metamorphic reference represent the challenges of civilizations. Centuries after Ulysses and Christ, the form of the olive tree represents the reference's term between knowledge and non-knowledge. The first 'ignorance' to be aware of, and to feed, is the ignorance of the senses. It permeates a fragmented rhythm of both an awakened and dreamt life. Between memories and things that are on the border between stories and imaginations, senses suggest a non-verbal communication. As we discussed earlier with romanticism and Humboldt', here senses appear as the realm of the negative, an undefining reality of living. The construction of sense over senses, the logic coming from the unknown is the ignorance that Marco is claiming. Olive trees sacrificed in

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4 "Salento, long live ignorance"

order to turn around the ignorance guiding the construction of reason. If Emanuele Coccia sees Reason as a sense (Coccia 2016), this is because the common definition of ignorance is strictly tied to sensitivity. Biosecurity measures, for example, perpetrate a definition of ignorance built on the modern construction of Nature, where the landscape's elements are classified and respond to the cause-effect principle, statistically measured in an aseptic space. What is to be known are the numbers: the movement's lines of the insect-vector, the probability of contagion and the calculation of future risks for European agriculture. The kind of non-knowledge Marco is rehabilitating is the non-knowledge coming from death, dispossession and neglect. The dying olive trees represent the sacrifice made for carving a different space of ignorance coming from the crisis in the Anthropocene. The latter has to be carved on olive wood, as Ulysses did before.

How do ignorance (an approximation of non-knowledge), the Anthropocene crisis and landscape painting encroach the process of knowledge construction? If we think along the lines of territorialization that we tried to follow, there is one last segment underlined by Marco's story. We have to look into pragmatics, in particular how Marco's living-in-the-landscape opens up a way of knowing. Marco's artworks are the outcome, as Ingold would have it (2016), of an art of inquiry, 'where every work is an experiment'. As Ingold depicts it, Marco's inquiry is specifically a journey into the modes of knowledge construction, involving the body and the senses, as well as the surrounding world of entities. Marco, in fact, draws his painting from his experience in the field.

He followed the signs of the landscape to make sense out of the olive trees' depletion, and he did so by attempting to put together knowledge that would better correspond with it. Marco tried many different tests and proofs, moving between the knowledge coming from the scientific disci-

plines and the ‘non-knowledge’ drawn from the empiric traditional wisdom. His posture was adjusted from time to time to his own sensitive perception of the environmental changes. This was not without ‘prediction’: but it did not resemble a predetermined calculation. Marco accomplished the effort of corresponding with the surrounding entities, exceptionally trusting his body’s capacities to mixture. This capacity is strictly tied with the mimetic faculty that also works out as a representational tie between every form. For example, Marco wanted to see for himself the guilty insect-vector of Xylella, the little cicada called ‘Sputacchina’. He had to play with them, using the wind and the intuitive prediction of the tiny insect’s jumps, until he finally caught one. He had to feel like the Sputacchina, to look at it face to face: there he realized that every attempt (dangerously enforced by the institutions) of controlling and killing all of them, to prevent Xylella spreading, was unreasonable/unsensible. It was a kind of non-sensitive nonsense. Marco embodied the deep meaning of the crisis: the mastery of the environment cannot be acted upon single segments. Instead, Marco looked for a correspondence between his work and the ecosystem work, following resemblances and resonances crossing his own body and the non-human entities. Mimetically, he participated in the co-production of the landscape surrounding his house, living within the Anthropocene crisis, resisting it by learning from it. One has to mimetize in order to recognize the agency of non-human entities. The landscape’s capacity to be shaped by itself may not be that clear, until an unseen bacteria starts to spread inside it. Yet, unseen doesn’t mean unperceived (for Marco): he found Xylella’s form in what surrounds him, and he mimetized it as a way of knowing not just the olive trees’ depletion per se, but also the very ontological ideas of sacrifice (the olive-Christ painting) and suffering (Salento’s torments).

## Conclusion

Our main concern about *Xylella fastidiosa* in Salento has been around knowledge and the landscape lines stemming from it. The confrontation saw two or more actors fighting on how to react to the epidemic, or in other words, on how to conceive the whole problem. The specific matter was knowledge because the epistemological perspective mattered the most in defining the actions that had to be undertaken to combat the dying of olive trees. Actions that, nonetheless, could have been of two kinds only: modern, ultra-rational and institutional (entirely human), or subterranean, mixed, even empirically rooted in traditional knowledge (with a certain degree of trust in the agency of non-human-entities).

We have asserted that, on the one hand, only specific combinations of senses and aesthetic relevance could have driven an alternative, counter-hegemonic understanding of the olive trees' depletion. On the rational-institutional side, instead, we have described how within a strictly modern-driven epistemic milieu, the erosion of a clear object of knowledge took place. The incompleteness of the understanding was counter-weighted by the efficacy claim of a unique and rational set of accepted actions. This process is well-established in the project of a modern and rational epistemology that, nonetheless, did not annihilate the subterranean lines of movement that strictly mingle human actions with landscape transformations. We tried to advocate for the metamorphic and symbolic ties between human decisions (and their embodied knowledge) and the non-human entities living in the environment. We read this relationship through three different figures: Ulysses, Antonio and Marco.

Ulysses permitted us to follow him: first, how with the picking up of an olive tree's spiked branch, the grabbing with the hand sealed a pact, an alliance which determines the symbolic and cultural organization of human/non-human entities' relationship. This act from which stems a logic

of space, well encroached as an inter-species relational bond, is nothing less than a description of a kind of Other/Self relationship between the human and the landscape entities. The primitive Self desires to grasp the Other into his hand and gives birth to a world. But it goes much further, when Ulysses mixes up this primordial relationship with mimetic excess, tying to the olive tree a meaning that changes every time he picks up a spiked branch. The cunning blinding of Polyphemus or Penelope's olive-bed-trunk riddle are the examples of this metamorphosis and linguistic change that wrecks once and for all the subject-object making of meaning. It is the opening of 'the rhizomatic realm of possibility, effecting the potentialization of the possible', that we can see at the infancy of modernity, as 'opposed to arborescent possibility, which marks a closure, an impotence', with which we identify the actual unspeakable and muted relationship with the modern Apulian landscape of the institutional mind-set. (Deleuze and Guattari 1980).

We have tried to follow those rhizomatic and barely-bodily perceivable lines of landscape movements territorializing humans' decisions through the ethnographic tale of Antonio's wrecked stomach/ecosystem. We have just outlined how olive trees came to permeate both the 'being-in-the-world' and 'symbolic systems' of the social communities in Salento, as we pointed out the rationalization and modernization of olive tree growing and pressing practices during the last century. Yet, some olive trees' 'lines of flight' kept moving underneath the soil. They did disappear to the 'short sight' of the rational stance, but they kept permeating the body of those whose sensibility mattered more than knowledge. We watched lines leave one plateau (olive trees' soil) and proceed to another (Antonio's intestine).

Marco, similarly, tried to re-connect the dots of the pattern complicated by the presence of the bacteria *Xyella*. Marco showed us the pos-

sibility of conceiving habitus as ‘a profound example of tactile knowing, very much as Benjamin had in mind, because only at the depth of habit is radical change effected, where unconscious strata of culture are built into social routines as bodily disposition’ (Taussig 1993). No wonder, Benjamin asks us to consider architecture as an example of habituated physiognomic knowledge, which means the capacity to make sense of an extension of reason, or make reason an extension of sense, as Marco arrives to conceive ‘a tactility of vision’. The rational sense par excellence (sight) becomes the ally of the most sensuous one (tactility), destroying the concept of a detached and firm knowledge. Rather, such tactility of vision finally demonstrates excitedly how the very concept of knowing is something that becomes displaced by a ‘relating to’. Tactile appropriation guides the practice into the mastering of the sight: that’s how Marco painted, unleashing his imaginative power on the world surrounding him, reconnecting the dots, letting his own mimicry and the non-human entities re-create each other's body and habits.

‘We made circles of convergence. Each plateau can be read starting anywhere and can be related to any other plateau’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, 23). If the circles are like levels of the landscape, and the convergence is something that results as a form of knowledge, Antonio and Marco’s experiences made them ‘aware of the patterns and necessities that had hitherto invisibly ruled their lives’ (Taussig 1993).

This happened as they activated something that Benjamin calls ‘optical unconscious’, which means nothing less than the capacity to create a new sensorium, involving a new-subject object relation. This can happen through mimetic and sensuous connections between the body of the perceivers (Antonio and Marco) and of the perceived (landscape entities). This ‘magic of contact’, in other words, results in the inclusion of the ‘physiognomic aspects’ (Benjamin 1931) of the visual world and of the

landscape into their perception and knowledge. They created ‘a copy’ of the world which was not just rational and measurable, but that was transpassed by a bodily tension obtained through mimetic reproduction: they made familiar with objects (the inhabiting entities) and comprehended their hidden details. The copy of the world they were confronting, thus, was created altogether with the other entities inhabiting reality. That’s why they saw how every line transpassing the many levels of the environment had something to do with *Xylella fastidiosa*. Those details, unfamiliar to the aloof institution and scientific laboratory, did not get included into scientific knowledge. Details were discarded as they couldn't fit into a rational system of human action, that cannot kneel or step back in front of the majestic show of environmental complex power. Even at the time of the Anthropocene.

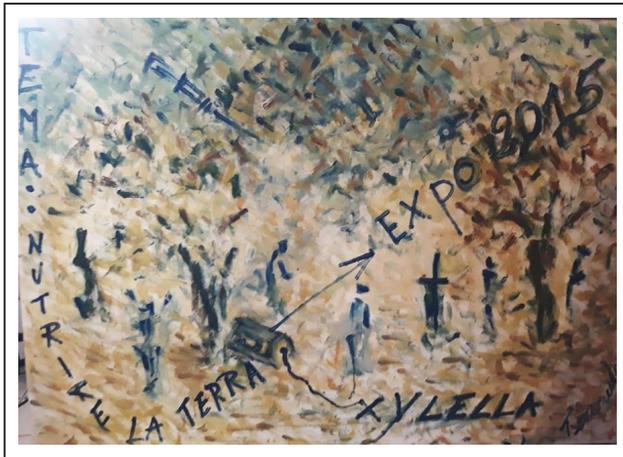


Figure 3. Salento Tormentato. Terraiolo, 2015

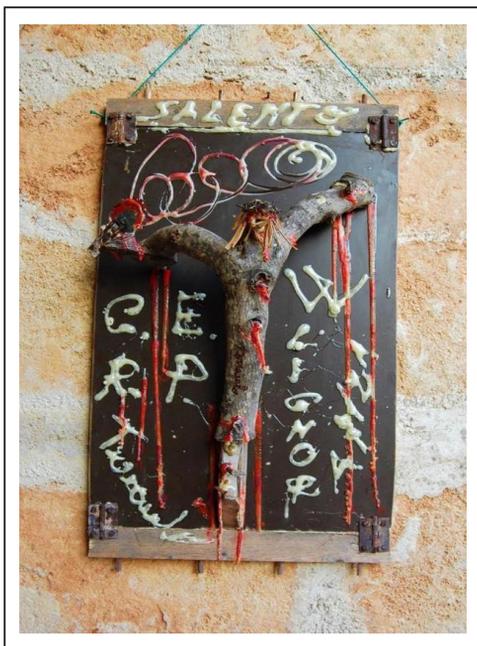


Figure 4. La crocifissione degli ulivi. Terraiolo, 2016

# THE ENJOYMENT OF LANDSCAPE IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES: INTERSTICES, ATMOSPHERES AND POETIC IMAGES

ARTHUR SIMÕES CAETANO CABRAL

## Introduction

At first glance, very little can be credited to the city's interstitial spaces in terms of landscape potential. What landscape approach could be recognized in tight spaces of land, where the horizon is barely revealed, where the gaze is cloistered? How clumsy or merely casual spaces, which remain unrelated to the intentions that shape cities and remain immiscible in them, could offer meanings to the senses and emotions? And, if possible, what kind of landscapes could exist in such situations?

Such questions could, from the outset, dissolve any interest in investigating the possibilities of landscape experience in the urban interstices. Such interests would also fall apart if it were accepted as irrefutable data that there is no space for the landscape in the reality of large cities, where nature is often assumed to be antagonistic to the human artifice, to be ta-

med, dominated, transformed and enhanced by him. With modernity and the emergence of mechanism, nature is transformed by scientific thought. In the eyes of science, the Earth appears devoid of the inapprehensible dimension that is inherent to it, that allows man to inaugurate his worlds and that characterizes, historically, the different ways in which humanity relates to nature. The procedures of scientific views on nature, according to Eric Dardel (1990, 109), are associated with the fragmentation and dissection of reality in view of the apprehension of each part that constitutes it and the improvement of natural elements, considering the meeting of human needs. The objectification of scientific geography thus breaks with the cosmic order, according to which each body is related to the other within a universal nature, in the cosmicity of the Earth.

These restrictions, which were initially observed in the approach to the landscape in the urban environment, may be even more incisive: if there is no chance for landscape contemplation in cities, “*in situ*”, if there are no environments associated with the sensitive manifestations of nature, what place could landscape painting occupy in big cities, “*in visu*”? Or, in other words, how would it be possible to experience the landscape in the contemporary urban environment and, moreover, how to express that experience?

The landscape potentials existing in the urban environment are not evident and often go unnoticed in the daily lives of large cities. However, as contradictory as it may seem, opportunities to experience the landscape in the city can reside precisely in interstitial spaces. And, paradoxical as it may sound, landscape painting and the poetic images manifested in it can favour the proof, in sensitive terms, of this hypothesis. Despite their appearance, these statements are not exactly paradoxes or contradictions. It would be more accurate to say that what sustains them is nothing other than the liminality that, inherent in the landscape, allows for coexistence,

in a single instant, between unveiling and concealment; that, inherent to art, makes possible the inauguration of a new world and evocation of the existing one; that, inherent in the poetic imagination, occurs in the mediation between the contemplation of the real and the deformation of new images; that inherent to urban interstices, finally, characterizes them as residues of the rational organization of the territory and as opportunities for opening up to the future of nature and, therefore, of landscapes.

### **Urban interstices**

In order to investigate the possibilities of landscape experience in the interstices of large contemporary cities, it is necessary to define, at least in initial and provisional lines, what is meant by landscape and the perspective by which it will be understood here. Although quite widespread and frequently used in a common sense, the notion of landscape is not always easily explainable and admits very different conceptions and understandings, demanding an explanation of the specific ways in which it will be approached here based on the thinking of different authors who offer conceptual support to the reflections and empirical investigations proposed in this text. However, among so many different meanings, the challenges for such definition soon appear.

On the one hand, if strictly understood as a manifestation in sensible forms of the temporality of nature, in which coexist, in the present, past and future moment, as the temporalization of infinity, the landscape is clearly unfeasible in cities in post-industrial contexts, where the acceleration of the rhythm of life and the exacerbation of human temporality lead to the progressive consumption of time, the consummation of its finitude and the negation of any possibility of sensible enjoyment of nature (ASSUNTO 2011, 354). In this case, to think of the landscape in the great

contemporary cities would mean to direct thought to something that does not exist, which would advise against thinking it or imposing a premature end to it.

On the other hand, the increasing diversification of landscape considerations makes it possible to see the risks of its weakening or dispersion, despite the conceptual depth required by the term: one often speaks of soundscape, lunar landscape, cyber landscape submarine landscape, as if the notion of landscape was something so undifferentiated or generic that it would admit (or even demand) the adoption of any predicatives. Among the many loans of the term, there is the frequent use of the expression urban landscape, often related indiscriminately to the morphology of cities, the formal configuration of their buildings and their free spaces, to urban scenes, to everything you see in the urban environment. In this case, to think landscape in contemporary cities would mean to devote thought to anything or everything that may come into existence, which would also counter-indicate thinking or lead thought indefinitely to matters that do not necessarily concern landscape.

Between one extreme and another of such positions, it is proposed in this text that the landscape be thought of as a phenomenon of aesthetic nature, that is, as an act of enjoyment situated below and beyond the boundaries between subject and object, which, although rare or exceptional to the reality of today's large cities, may exist in specific situations of the urban environment. It is assumed that, even in situations of "total urbanization" - as in the case of the city of São Paulo, which is the object of the study that underlies this text -, human doing is unable to completely erase the traces of nature nor to silence the original force with which its elements insist on appearing, albeit veiledly, between the spaces of cities.

Indeed, the interstices of large cities are endowed with certain gaps

or openings to go to that remain unsubmitive to the efforts of totalizing rationalization and denial of nature. From this perspective, the idea of urban interstices is understood here as a counterpoint or negative of urban forms, as a diffuse and mixed territory in cities beyond the limits of the intentions that define it. These are spaces that appear between the meanings of intentionally designed areas of cities and reveal, in the features that characterize them, the impossibility of completeness of human doing and the marks of its unfinished, on the one hand, and the original power with which nature insistently permeates the urban on the other.

Thus, this text proposes a reflection on the possibility of the occurrence of apparently improbable phenomena, that is, the landscapes in the interstices of large cities. In an attempt to approach the understanding of the concepts related to the notion of landscape, the adoption of objectivist or subjectivist approaches would discourage the continuation of these reflections, since, objectively, nature is a being largely absent in large cities and that subjective projections are unable to supply the apparent objectivity of such absence.

However, the recent emergence of new conceptions regarding the aesthetic perception of nature and, mainly, the renewed position that nature has assumed in theories related to aesthetics, corroborate the understanding of the possibilities for sensitive recognition of nature in the interstices of large contemporary urban centers and their enjoyment in landscape terms. As we will see below, these perspectives also contribute to the recognition of the landscape potential of interstitial situations in cities and to the understanding of the depth that poetic making in landscaping assumes in contemporary times, which, as we assume, always presupposes the bodily experience of landscape and the concerns, images and feelings brought up in this experience.

## Atmospheres and aesthetic perception of nature

Resisting to be classified as an objective fact liable to measurements or dissections, enjoyment of the landscape occurs, rather, halfway between the subject and the object or, more properly, it implies an “exposure of subjectivity to something like an 'outside' that leads it, throwing it, sometimes violently, out of its limits” (translation by the author) (BESSE 2009, 52). There are also studies that state that, in the aesthetic perception of nature, we perceive not exactly things, but atmospheres, understood not as mere subjective reactions, but "semi-things". Atmospheres do not depend only on the subject's dispositions, as observed “in those situations where we notice the discrepancy between our feeling and the atmosphere that comes to us” (translation by the author), as Paolo d'Angelo (2010, 95) says when referring to the “model atmospheric” developed by Gernot Böhme. In addition, for many authors, it is necessary to consider the landscape refractory in terms of representation. It is the position of Erwin Straus (2000, 382), for whom landscape painting

does not represent what we see, in particular what we record, when considering a given place (...), it makes the invisible visible, but as something stolen, removed (translation by the author).

From all these perspectives that understand the landscape as an “*in situ*” experience and as a pictorial expression, “*in visu*”, it is possible to infer a certain condition of liminality, that is, the existence of thresholds through which we relate to the Earth.

Considering the possible associations between such conceptions, we will comment on the notions of atmospheres and of atmospheric that Gernot Böhme elaborated in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when proposing a new aesthetic of nature. In general terms, we can say, supported by Böhme, that what we apprehend sensibly when contemplating nature

– an event that we assume to be possible in the interstices of large cities – presents itself to us as semi-things rather than objects. In other words, we assume that the sensitive experience of the landscape and its expression are directly related to the primary perceptual fact of the atmospheres, which are shaped by the appearance of phenomena in which we are inevitably immersed, participating in them in a corporeal way, and in which other elements present cannot be identified objectively or highlighted in their individuality.

For Böhme (2010), atmospheres are formed both by our state of mind and by the sensitive aspects of the beings around us – without being defined exclusively by any of them –, constituting the inaugural form of aesthetic perception through which we can access the otherness of nature. Such aspects reinforce the interest in approaching the landscape experience based on the notion of atmospheres, as in the contemporary urban environment the natural elements appear profoundly altered or silenced and the bodily experience is repressed by the objectivity with which the city and urban life define themselves. We intend, therefore, to detect possible atmospheres formed by the affective co-involvement established between the manifestations of the original force of *nature* that permeates the big cities and the *human being*, who, as a living body, goes through it.

According to Böhme, sensitive knowledge is available to everyone and assumes great importance in everyday life – a condition of great interest for verifying the possibilities of enjoying the landscape in urban interstices in the most prosaic situations. It follows from this statement that no form of erudition is necessary for anyone to know the world around them in an aesthetic way. The thesis presented by Böhme is that the fundamental questions that must guide today's aesthetics are those pertaining to the realm of nature and design, that is, the aesthetic work related to the diffuse aestheticization of the world of life, spaces or use of objects.

Böhme's conceptions for an aesthetics of nature are directly associated with the notion of affective co-involvement. As the living body moves in space and makes itself available to contact with aspects not of things, individualized, but of the set of elements that participate in sensitive realities that co-involve it, it is possible to recognize nature aesthetically (BÖHME 2010, 56). In general terms, Böhme infers that the way in which nature appears to us when accessed through sensitivity, in a corporeal way, is significantly different from the situations in which it is analysed under the mediation of any technological apparatus, in the instrumental context that characterizes, for example, natural science research.

The elements that participate in the atmospheres are not fully distinguishable from each other and are rarely individualizable. That is why they present themselves as semi-things rather than things. The semi-things can be understood, then, as ephemeral existences, which are defined by the sensitive aspects with which they can be recognized in the still undifferentiated medium of affective co-involvement in the atmospheres. This means that the primary perceptual fact given in the atmospheres is relatively independent of the singular, of the elements given in isolation, which can be objectified. It is only through a process of abstraction that we can perceive things individually or objectively, as

originally, perception is still an undifferentiated process in which the subjective and objective poles participate and is constitutively woven by aspects of the different senses (translation by the author) (D'ANGELO 2010, 95).

For Böhme, the difficulties and problems imposed on the possibility of representation or expression of what is presented to us in terms of atmospheres are evident. At the limit, atmospheres do not have objectively identifiable, reportable or representable components. The elements

that compose and characterize them dissolve and hide in space, defining general and ephemeral affective tones. It seems appropriate to say that the poetic making must refer not to the objective traits, but to the actual interpenetration of the individual with the realities that surround him, to the affective tones that characterize the primary perception as the unity and fusion of subject and object.

This statement finds support in Böhme's thinking with regard, specifically, to what he calls aesthetic work. If, on the one hand, everyday familiarity with the atmospheres and the ways in which we participate in them can favour the development and deepening of a new aesthetic through philosophical approaches, on the other hand, the aesthetic professions, in the author's words, constitute a basis equally significant for such development. This is because it is up to such activities, not the development of objects, properly speaking, but the creation of atmospheres (BÖHME 2010, 90). In other words, more than the design of a thing, of a space or, more generally, of a formal composition, we can say that the possibility of creation and expression of atmospheres depends directly on the ability of poetic making to propose affective, sensitive and imaginative experiences, whether in words, in painting, in interventions in space, or in many other possible means.

In this sense, the notion of atmospheres can favor the understanding of the possibility of aesthetic experiences of nature in the contemporary urban environment, known to be refractory to these experiences, where they are restricted, at best, to previously demarcated and regulated areas (parks, etc.). From the perspective of the atmospheric model, it is possible to recognize the landscape and make it convincing through aesthetic work in large cities today, not so much by investigating the objective presence of remaining natural elements – not least because they are quite improbable

and exceptional to contemporary urban reality –, but, mainly, by the attempt of aesthetic enjoyment of suggestions of nature or manifestations, even if indirect, of their originary power present in atmospheres to be experienced in a corporeal way in the urban interstices.

In addition to its contributions from Böhme's thought for the detection of the landscape potential of urban interstices, the concept of atmospheres favours the establishment of bridges between the direct experience of landscape “*in situ*” and the possibilities of its poetic expression through painting, “*in visu*”. For Böhme (2010, 107), the ability to articulate and make communicable this form of sensitive knowledge of nature belongs to poetic making. We therefore understand that, in the case of the landscape in the interstices of contemporary cities, the painting refers not to the objective documentation of the natural elements possibly present in the cities, but to the poetic expression of atmospheres in which nature manifests itself, bringing up, “*in visu*”, the power of imagination and the cosmicization that imagination provides.

More than imitating the real world, art has the ability of referring to what is inexpressible in it. Landscape painting, under such a perspective, leads the gaze and imagination to inhabit atmospheres that extrapolate the surface of the canvas, that deepen in ponds or streams of dark waters, that unfold in the recesses of the mountains, that fly far in insurmountable plains or sublimate light western horizons. Effective in colour, in brush movements, in the artist's gestures, such atmospheres evoke the dimensions of nature that affect us emotionally without ever revealing themselves completely. In other words, landscape painting expresses “*in visu*” the affective co-involvement given “*in situ*” in the direct experience of the landscape. It attributes sensitive forms not to the “things” of nature, but to the “semi-things”, that is, to the appearance of nature's atmosphere.

## Landscape painting and poetic images of nature

Although landscape enjoyment “*in situ*” and the landscape presented by the painting, “*in visu*”, take place in different conditions and have specific characteristics with regard to the sensitive experience, their familiarities are underlined by authors who affirm that “where we actually see landscape and not already a sum of isolated natural objects, we have a work of art ‘*in statu nascendi*’” (translation by the author) (SIMMEL 2011, 47). It can be inferred from Georg Simmel's thought, in other words, that the set of elements endowed with meanings to which the landscape corresponds, as it originates from the voluntary and interested encounter between the eyes and the outside world, presents the meaning not of simple grouping, summing or overlapping, but rather a work of art at the moment of its birth, that is, at the crossing of the fine border through which the work originates and presents itself in sensitive forms.

If we reverse the order of this statement, we can say that the work of art appears from the aesthetic contact between man and nature, a contact that qualifies the poetic act from which the establishment of the human world in its relationship with the Earth arises. Such links that unite landscape and art justify the inclusion of landscape painting as one of the means, in parallel to the bodily experience, to ascertain the permanence, in the urban interstices, of certain “atmospheres” that impregnate the experience of landscape expressed in paintings and, eventually, certify them in act.

The recognition that landscape does not rely on objective or morphological concepts or representations is recurrent in thinking about landscape painting, although such detachment from mere objectivity does not, on the contrary, constitute a “sentimentalism” based only on the subject. Good landscape painting surpasses the factual (RYCKMANS 2007) and

seeks to achieve “the high and pure truth of nature” (translation by the author), as opposed to that which is simply sentimental or destined to the mere recognition of the forms of a certain place (CARUS 1991, 49). It can contain “everything that is human and everything else, everything that extends before and beyond man [...] it is nature that is born, a world that happens” (translation by the author) (RILKE 2009, 57).

Merleau-Ponty's (1964) writings on the phenomenology of perception and, specifically, on painting in “Eye and Mind” and in “The visible and the invisible” inevitably impose themselves to tie this line of thought and to address the nexuses that unite landscape, art and poetic imagination - nexuses that, once reaffirmed, as we intend to gauge, enable the possibility of landscape enjoyment in the interstices of large contemporary cities.

Regarding the points of contact between the enjoyment of the landscape “*in visu*” and “*in situ*”, it is also assumed that the experience that landscape painting can express is not foreign to the “escape” towards the landscape to live it as a phenomenological experience by walking (BESSE 2009) and that endeavors to say it, no longer through “the ways in which (matter) can subscribe”, but as an “implosion of their own forms” (translation by the author) (LYOTARD 2018).

### **Final considerations**

In view of the atmospheres that can be constituted in the urban interstices, it seems reasonable to consider the possibility of enjoying the landscape in the great contemporary urban centers related to the poetic images that emerge on the surface as we browse the interstitial spaces. Associated with primordial materiality and always present in the way in which nature manifests itself, even in the most adverse situations, these images can emerge as we experience the world and let ourselves dream

of the matter that constitute it. Participating in the sensitive experience (“*in situ*”), the imagination of matter animates in us all sorts of daydreams that are invested in air, fire, earth and water; participating in art (“*in visu*”), the images germinated in the primitiveness of these elements gain poetic expression.

If, on the one hand, the landscape proves improbable in the daily lives of large cities, on the other hand, we intend to assess whether, based on poetic daydreams and artistic expressions, its enjoyment in atmospheric terms is possible in the urban interstices. Therefore, we assume that in the interstices of large cities it is possible to face the otherness of nature. In addition, the atmospheres that are constituted in the urban interstices and that can be experienced “*in situ*” or “*in visu*” can be directly related to the landscape insofar as such atmospheres place us in front of this “other”, that is, of the manifestations of nature in such a way that they always appear in a surprising way and arouse interest in the landscape in us.

# THE LANDSCAPE AS A RECOGNIZABLE FORM OF THE HUMAN ETHOS A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE PHILOSOPHY

SANDRA MARIA PATRÍCIO RIBEIRO

## **Rethinking psychology...**

It seems impossible to clearly delimit what psychology is. As for its objective, it has been said that "there is no way to define the subject matter of psychology so that the definition will please all psychologists" (Marx & Hillix 1963, p. 31), and this must be true. As for its historical trajectory, it would help even less: although it is a temporally short story. Some mark its beginning in the year 1879, when Wilhelm Wundt founded the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology at the University of Leipzig, the first international centre for training psychologists; there are so many controversies that it would be hardly enlightening – and extremely boring – to try to examine in detail the many versions available.

It remains for me, therefore, only to try to show, roughly speaking, some lines of break that give psychology its characteristic multifaceted

aspect – its decanted multiversity, present since the first projects of construction of a scientific psychology. Having arisen with Modernity, they took more defined forms from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a moment around which emerged almost simultaneously the various projects of scientific psychology that still today – more or less transmuted into schools, approaches, currents, etc. – support the thoughts and practices of psychologists. Just to give you an idea of how this story updates, let's consider a certain group of entries in the Dictionary of Psychology of the American Psychological Association (APA):

Scientific psychology: the body of psychological facts, theories, and techniques that have been developed and validated through the use of the scientific method. They thus depend on objective measurement and the replication of results under controlled or known conditions. See experimental psychology (APA 2020).

Experimental psychology: the scientific study of behaviour, motives, or cognition in a laboratory or other controlled setting in order to predict, explain, or influence behaviour or other psychological phenomena. Experimental psychology aims at establishing quantified relationships and explanatory theory through the analysis of responses under various controlled conditions and the synthesis of adequate theoretical accounts from the results of these observations. See also empirical psychology (APA 2020).

Empirical psychology: an approach to the study and explanation of psychological phenomena that emphasizes objective observation (see observational study) and the experimental method as the source of information about the phenomena under consideration. Compare rational psychology. See also experimental psychology (APA 2020).

Rational psychology: an approach to the study and explanation of psychological phenomena that emphasizes philosophy, logic, and deductive reason as sources of insight into the principles that underlie the mind and that make experience possible. This approach is in sharp contrast to that of empirical psychology. See also philosophical psychology. [proposed by Laurens Perseus Hickok] (APA 2020).

Philosophical psychology: the branch of psychology that studies the philosophical issues relevant to the discipline and the philosophical assumptions that underlie its theories and methods. It approaches psychology from a wide perspective informed by a knowledge of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, the history of ideas, the philosophy of science, and the tools of formal philosophical analysis. Philosophical psychologists tend to concentrate on the larger issues arising from the field rather than on model building and data gathering. See also rational psychology (APA 2020).

These entries establish a clear contrast between the "philosophical" and "rational" modalities of psychology, and, on the other hand, the modality presented as being properly "scientific" – the latter directly linked to empirical and to observation, measurement and experimentation procedures. It is easy to see the classification that underlies this group of entries: everything is understood as though scientific psychology were a univocal field, in which the object and methods of study were already clearly defined. In this peaceful scientific field, the so-called "philosophical" and "rational" psychologies would maintain a certain affinity with philosophical themes and methods – but for this very reason, they would be something like a precarious appendix, something beyond or below scientific psychology. On the other hand, the methods of scientific psychology

would seem to be worth truly little, almost nothing, for the investigation of the major *issues* proposed by philosophy and the underlying principles, soon becoming inapprehensible through observation efforts and objective and replicable measurement.

However, scientific psychology is far from a pacified field. It will be worth presenting here the vision offered by Professor Luís Cláudio Figueiredo on this subject, in the work *“Matrizes do Pensamento Psicológico”* / *Matrices of psychological thought* (Figueiredo 1991; all excerpts from this work cited below were translated into English by the author). He proposes a panorama based, yes, on a duality, but no longer between scientific psychology and any other form of psychology, which could then be called unscientific. For this thinker, duality would take place between matrices of psychological thought that gained expression in the various projects of construction of psychology as independent science, all aspiring to correspond to the purposes and methods “Scientifics”. In this frame, on the one hand would be gathered the “scientificists” matrices (represented by the nomothetic and quantifier projects; atomistic and mechanistic; functionalist and organicist; environmentalist and nativist and related interactionism’s), in the midst of which, according to the author, “the specificity of the object (the subjective life and singularity of the individual) tends to be unknown in favour of a more or less successful and convincing imitation of the models of practice current in the natural sciences” (Figueiredo 1991, 26-27). On the other hand, there would be the “romantic and post-romantic” matrices (represented by the vitalist and naturist projects; comprehensive projects, of historicist or structuralist slants; and phenomenological and existentialist projects), in the midst of which “the specificity of the object is recognized and emphasized – acts and experiences [N.A.: in portuguese, *“vivência”*; in german, *“Erlebnis”*] of a subject, endowed with value and meaning for him – and the total independence of psychology before the other sciences is claimed” (Figueiredo 1991, 27).

It should be noted that the author clarifies that it is not a watertight duality; on the contrary, the mutual antagonism existing between these thought matrices would engender an unstoppable dynamism: in one direction, the psychology(s) of the "scientificist" matrix tend to be compromised not only with the production of basic knowledge and techniques, but also with the legitimization of social practices of control and domination – which tend to result in contestations "whose theoretical manifestations in the field of psychology emerge from romantic matrices" (Figueiredo 1991, 32); in the opposite direction, the psychologies of "romantic and post-romantic" matrix (with the exception of structuralisms, which should not be discussed here) tend to legitimize "the retraction of the subject over himself in an inconsequential and formal inflation of subjectivity" (Figueiredo 1991, 38), without ever problematizing the objective conditions that sustain, concretely, this subjectivity.

Finally, and after examining one-on-one the main psychology projects engendered by these matrices, Figueiredo comes to the conclusion that the epistemological diversity (even fragmentation) of psychology that purports to be scientific is neither fortuitous nor constitutes a kind of sign of "immaturity" of the field; rather, it would correspond "to different forms of relationships that the subjects establish among themselves in the context of life in society" (Figueiredo 1991, 205). On the same page, Figueiredo emphasizes that the multiplicity of approaches in psychology should not be attributed to "human nature", but rather to the "complexity and 'contradictingness' of the forms of social relationships". To demonstrate this, the author reviews the various unsuccessful attempts to unify the field (either in relation to its object or in relation to its methods), as well as the alternative and always suggested, but impractical, due to the lack of consensual exclusion criteria, elimination of "unscientific" forms of psychology.

In short, under the classification proposed by Figueiredo, scientific psychology emerges as a split, self-contradictory and dissonant field – and without any possibility of genuine harmonization. In fact, the definition of the object of study of psychology is surrounded by profound ruptures and dissonances: for some, the "behaviour of living beings"; for others, anything that can be subsumed to the expression "other psychological phenomena"; for others, "the subjective life and the singularity of the individual (particularly the human)".

It is important to point out that, in this, a simple distribution is included: on the one hand, something visible, directly observable on its surface (the behaviour of living beings); on the other hand, something that would correspond to a hidden and enigmatic interiority (another psychological phenomenon, that is, psychic phenomena that does not consensually fit into the category "behaviour", or even subjective life and the singularity of individuals).

However, this seemingly simple division between a psychology that would focus on "something visible" and another, which would focus on "a hidden and enigmatic interiority" is quite problematic. Just remember, for example, that "visible surfaces" unfold from the "manifest" behaviour of individuals and human and non-human groups, directly observable under natural or controlled conditions, up to the anatomo-physiological and functional structures internal to the organism, uncovered through more or less invasive techniques, surgery or imaging, developed in the field of neuroscience – not to mention mixed methods, such as functional analysis of behaviour, which allow for verification and description of relationships of interdependence between "directly observable" conditions and contingencies and behaviour, whether manifest or "covert".

Another remarkable aspect is that, often, the visible/hidden bipartition is confusedly associated with the (equally problematic) bipartitions present in the field of scientific psychology – for example, all the work of Neuroscience presupposes a bipartition between the neural "substrate" and its "functioning", from which all mental processes and behaviour of the organism would derive (note that this assumption remains necessary, even considering that the neural substrate can be modified from the consequences of the mental processes and behaviour that it engendered – something that can be called "learning"). Another bipartition, now between the "interior" and the "exterior" of the organism, can be exemplified by the mental structures and functions studied by psychogenetics and Gestalt psychology, or by the psychodynamic processes studied by the various psychoanalytic currents. No wonder, therefore, the dissonance (not to say "hullabaloo") that prevails in the field of scientific psychology!

Resuming now the much shortened review I made on the position adopted by Luís Cláudio Figueiredo, I have to say that I fully agree with him about the constitutive and irreducible plurality of psychology, which he demonstrates brilliantly and abundantly; however, I must also say that, unlike him, I feel inclined to indeed correlate the duality that he points out in the matrices of psychological thought to human nature – and not only, like him, to the "complexity and contradictingness of the forms of social relationships".

I think that the duality pointed out by Figueiredo between the scientificist matrices and the romantic and post-romantic matrices does indeed correspond to the hybrid nature of the human; a hybridism that constitutes our condition, which our thought and our language seem to be inclined, perhaps condemned, to recognize and express in the form of more or less confused semantic dualities – the dualities "substrate/functioning" and "interior/exterior" seem to me to be especially inherent to our corporeal and living nature. I think that such dualities are always irreducible,

either because they are inherent to the object of psychology, no matter how we want to define it, or because they are inherent to the scientific work conducted by the cognizer subject (the researcher), or because both things are factually imbricated. However, I think it does not help much to attribute them to the complexity and contradictingness of the forms of social relationships and, in any case, this would only make us move away from the problems posed by the psychological enterprise and move in the direction towards Sociology, where other problems would come onto the agenda.

For my part, I believe that a more productive step would be a retreat from the object, towards the common scope that brings together, under the heading of the scientific psychology, the various projects historically suggested for its construction.

In summary terms, it is necessary to remember that all projects of construction of a scientific psychology aimed at (and aim) to produce safe and stable knowledge about the interiority and/or the behavioural manifestations of the empirical subject – especially the human subject – although they defend different paths to their aims and take as an object of study different "portions" of such interiority and/or behaviour (e.g., consciousness, physiology, memory, motivation, innate or acquired structures that sustain mental or motor operations, the unconscious, etc.), and which pay greater or lesser attention to the external context (e.g., the environment, the territory, the enclosure, the institution, etc.) in which the subject is inserted. It seems to me correct to state that all projects of scientific psychology presuppose, tacitly or explicitly, that such safe and stable knowledge, once achieved, will be able to guide effective procedures of prediction and control over the interiority and/or the behavioural manifestations of empirical subjects in concrete situations – either from

an agency external to such subjects (State, social institutions, etc.), or from itself, that is, self-control (for the benefit, for example, of more satisfactory choices, better habits, happier life, etc.).

A second step, still of retreat, would be to consider more carefully some notions that demarcate the contours of the field of psychology: *psyche*, mind, behaviour and subjectivity.

I begin with the notion expressed by the word *psyche*, which came to give name to psychology – apparently, coined by Marko Marulic towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, (Krstic 1964), by derivation of the Greek term *psyche-* (breath or courage, spirit, soul) + *logia* (study). I have already had the opportunity of addressing the subject before (Ribeiro et al. 2017), and it is worth repeating here some things I said then: the Greek word *psyche*, from which psychology derives, originally meant breath or courage. From the point of view of etymology, it is verified that the word *psyche*, like soul and spirit, all come from Indo-European roots that express the idea of "blow", "breath" (Besselaar 1994). Thus, for example, Latin nouns *anima* (= "breath, soul") and *animus* (= "spirit, panache, courage") derive from the Greek noun *ánemos* (= "wind"); the Latin noun *spiritus* (= "wind, breath") is related to the verb *spirare* (= "blowing"); the Sanskrit *atmán* (= "breath", and hence "soul"). From a philological point of view, *psyche* was related, throughout the ages, both to the ethereal substance that would exhale at the last breath, leaving the body, previously alive and active, reduced to the condition of an inert corpse and, by extension, to the principles or final causes of all manifestations of life; on this point, Garth Kemerling's Dictionary of Philosophical Terms and Names presents a concise account of this journey, which is worth transcribing:

ψυχή [psychê] - Greek term for soul as the essential principle of life and the locus of consciousness. Although used pre-philosophically simply in reference to the "breath of

life," the term was associated by presocratic philosophers, including especially Anaxagoras, with an explanatory principle. Pythagorean thought proposed that the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  be understood as the persistent element in the life of an individual. Plato expanded upon this view with a detailed account of the tripartite soul, with associated human virtues, and an argument for the immortality of its rational component. Aristotle restored a broader sense of the term, using it for the several functions characteristic of living things generally. Neoplatonic thinkers made it the cosmic principle of all motion (Kemerling 2011).

Recovering here these brief notes of etymological and philological character, I intend only to point out the disconcerting breadth of the word *psyche*. Overtime, this mysterious word has been imbricated in all studies concerning living beings (and particularly to Human), whether indicating a metaphysical essentiality as in myths and even in various philosophers, or by indicating aspects immanent to the proper way of human existence as in the physical conceptions that, since ancient times, sought to understand how each moving organism (including the human organism) could establish relationships with the world around it.

So, if psychology is the study of the *psyche*, and the psyche is something like a principle or final cause of all manifestations of life, what psychology is it about? And how, by what methods could psychology approach such a vast object of study? Being unfeasible to undertake within the limits of this text the discussions implicit in the answers offered to this simple question, it remains for me only to suggest its contours. Let's look, for example, at how two recent sources define Psychology: first, the World Health Organization (WHO), through its Health Sciences Descriptors (DeHS/MeSH): "The science dealing with the study of mental processes and behaviour in man and animals" (DeHS/MeSH 1999); then, the Ame-

rican Psychological Association (APA) in its aforementioned dictionary: "The study of mind and behaviour" (APA 2020).

But we should not be deceived by the supposedly enlightening conciseness of these definitions: words such as "mind" or "behaviour", looked at more closely, are as mysterious as *psyche*. Suffice it to note that "mind" (from Latin, *mens mēntis*) can still mean today anything from "intellect", to "soul" or "spirit" (Cunha 2007), updating meanings that go back to the traditional Latin sources, in which the term is used with the meaning of understanding, intellectual power, courage, intention, purpose, project, memory, remembrance, imagination, thought, volition and affection (Cintra & Cretela Jr. 1944).

Likewise, "behaviour" (including in its French versions, *comportement*; English, behaviour; German, *Verhalten*) carries vast meanings, applying, for the sake of truth, to all manifestations of the life of an organism. It is worth remembering the definition given by Henri Piéron of behaviour, as a word that "designates the ways of being and acting of animals and human beings, the objective manifestations of their global activity" (Piéron 1951). Moreover, also B. F. Skinner "almost" identifies behaviour and life, as in the following passages:

"Behaviour is a primary characteristic of living things. We almost identify it with life itself. Anything which moves is likely to be called alive - especially when the movement has direction or acts to alter the environment" (Skinner 1953, 45);

"Reflexes and other innate patterns of behaviour evolve because they increase the chances of survival of the species. Operantes grow strong because they are followed by important consequences in the life of the individual" (Skinner 1953, 90).

Ultimately, we may have “exchanged six for half a dozen” when, judging the word "soul" too broadly and mysteriously to serve scientific purposes; we have deprecated it in favour of "mind" and "behaviour." The possible gains (and losses) that result from this for the various ways of thinking and practicing psychology could not be discussed within the limits of this essay; what I intend to note here is that, with greater or lesser accuracy, all these words - psyche, mind, behaviour - point in the direction of the set of all interactions maintained by each and every living organism, while its life endures, with the environment (or “ambient”, another ambiguous term to which I will return shortly).

It certainly seems that "studying the soul" – his/her own and that of all around him/her – has been of crucial importance for every human being since our advent on earth. Even if the word psyche may have been, over time, pruned in its multiple aspects, each of its "cuts" – essence of life, volition, mind, behaviour, etc. – sustained and still sustain a vital meaning. We need, at every moment, to know what is in our souls and, equally, what goes on in the souls of others, that is, of all those with whom we interact directly or indirectly – although, of course, we cannot always know it for sure and we can often incur errors. In any case, the duration and quality of our lives (including the duration and quality of the lives of others, which are of importance to our own lives) depend on this, literally.

There is another occurrence of both amplitude and ambiguity with the notion of subjectivity, often adopted to circumscribe the object of study of psychology. Of course, this may sound paradoxical in the scientific field: how could it be feasible to objectively consider subjectivity, to the point where we can understand its meaning? The resolution proposed by Professor Arno Engelmann is to admit that "The individual finds a bipartition of the perceived skin in such a way that only two states can occur:

the external or objective state outside the perceived skin and the internal or subjective state inside the perceived skin" (Engelmann 2002). In this key, "subjectivity" can perhaps be understood as the ability, exhibited by living organisms, to control from "within" the flows that cross the bipartite border of the skin, from the integumentary system that opens to "both sides" – a frontier that, at the same time, separates and approximates what constitutes an organism (the components and functions that specify them – including the mental functions of the human), from what is "around" them – their environment or "ambiance".

Starting from this way of conceiving "subjectivity", it must be admitted that such a notion does not refer to something exclusively mental – there is much more under the skin than the mind – there is, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1968) rightly pointed out, the "flesh"; nor does it refer to something exclusively personal – under the skin of a person there are many contents, components, formatting and functions, which are common to the species, culture, nationality, historical time, social position, etc., to which it belongs. In contrast, the notion of "objectivity" reports something that, although external to the subjective entity, mobilizes this entity to employ its own resources and potentialities – so to speak, the resources and potentialities of its body and soul – to feel, perceive and apprehend this something, and to react to it according to its own intents.

Finally, it seems to me that this key to understanding "subjectivity", anchored as it is in the inner / outer boundary of the human organism, is capable of articulating and coupling different conceptual devices for the search for the account of concrete interactions between these fields.

On the other hand, it will be worth remembering that there is, in Portuguese, another word – "*ambiente*" (environment) – which also refers to what is "on both sides", in such a way that it can designate everything that surrounds and involves a living being and, at the same time, everything

that she/he aspires or *ambitions* to (Cunha 2007). Not by chance, this same word, “ambiance”, is often inserted in the definitions offered both to the notions of behaviour and mind, as well as to that of subjectivity, that is, to the substitute notions of the *psyche*.

In fact, all these notions arise around something that the human gaze seems to be naturally compelled to discern in the reality of the world – but it must be quite clear that in saying this I am not suggesting either a materialistic conception or an idealistic conception, whether of the “*ambiente*” (environment), the mind, behaviour or subjectivity; on the contrary, I want to suggest that all these notions are so particularly symptomatic that our knowledge of reality must be generated by some peculiar form of conjunction between materials and ideas (indeed, a conjunction that some areas of psychology, such as psychophysics and psychosomatics, have long tried to understand, despite very incipient results).

Finally, I would like to say that, as I see it, all these notions have something in common – namely, they all refer to some kind of border interface between the substrate and the functioning of living organisms, and between these organisms and things that exist around them. In relation to the nature of the type of border that I am referring to and the processes that occur there, almost everything is yet to be studied and nothing can be said for sure; nevertheless, I venture to say that it is in these *interfaces*, in the boundary between the substrate and the functioning of living organisms, and in the boundary between these organisms and the things that exist around them, that the *psyche* happens to be moulded (or formed).

Here, it is necessary to interpolate two reminders; firstly: although several species seem, in our eyes, to coexist in the same environment, each of them “lives in” (*inhabits*) a specific “environmental segment” (*habitat*), according to the needs and sense-perceptual and behavioural capacities of the individuals that belong to it (the *habitus*, that is, the *psyche* proper of

these individuals – or, as instructed by, eg, the concept of *Umwelt* professed by Jakob von Uexküll, which can perhaps be translated as “self-world” or “self-centered world”); secondly: in the specific case of Humans, the environment (say, our “own world”) needs to be understood as a diverse unit that combines two dimensions: one, physical-biological (latitude, longitude, altitude, climate, fauna, flora, geology, relief, hydrography, etc.) and another, historical-cultural (economy, politics, customs, languages, etc.).

From this perspective, it can be said that the word *psyche* would indicate, at a minimum, everything that is formed (or reformed, or transformed, or metamorphosed, or deformed) into a human organism – namely: its “mind”, its “body”, its “behaviour”, its “subjectivity” – as a result of its interaction, over the vital time, with its physical, biological, historical and cultural environment – an environment that the organism perceives and represents and in which it operates, according to the contingencies currently in force and to the extent of its current interests and possibilities.

To conclude this topic, I would like to underline that, as it appears to me, the same interior/exterior and substratum / functioning dualities highlighted in the field of scientific psychology are also reflected in the field of landscape philosophy and that, from my point of view, in this common problem lies the possibility of making fruitful the dialogue proposed in this first interdisciplinary conference. I believe that, in the first place, it is necessary to address frontier issues that may involve both psychologists and philosophers, and thus guide our future meetings. The rest of my considerations move in this direction...

## **A common problem between Psychology and Landscape Philosophy**

In the conflicting field of Scientific Psychology, in which ranks could

Landscape Philosophy find interlocutors? In my view, the question is somewhat impertinent, and I believe the best answer would be "in any platoons". More important is to ask: how do the dialogues between psychologists and philosophers interested in the landscape take place? So far, it seems to me that this has been happening under the influx of more or less fortuitous affinities, sometimes arising from accidental sympathies, other times - and this is more complicated - arising from the common use of somewhat ambiguous terms, which gives for everyone the impression that they are "speaking the same language" when, in fact, they are not always doing so. The latter seems especially frequent when the conversation involves psychologist supporters of some of the matrices, in the nomenclature proposed by Figueiredo, romantic and post-romantic (which, incidentally, tend to be more prone to an approximation of the studies on the landscape), although this "confusion of languages" (to use the expression of psychoanalytic Sandor Ferenczi) may occur in an identical way in the dialogues involving the so-called scientificists matrices. In both cases, the first problem to be faced is terminological, and its solution will be conditioned to the willingness and capacity of the interlocutors (philosophers and psychologists) to carry out, mutually and cooperatively, "transductions" of the notions and concepts that each of them employs to refer to reality – without this, there may be much "conversation", but not a genuine dialogue between such areas.

Thus, I believe that the best contribution I can make to our dialogue is to illustrate my own way of transducing some of the issues proposed by the Philosophy of Landscape. For such illustration, I want to take a problem explained by several thinkers present in this field, which appears summarized by Professor Adriana Veríssimo Serrão in a short passage of her text "Landscape as a problem of philosophy":

"When it is examined, in 'The limits of current theories of landscape and landscape as aesthetic identity of places', the main orientations in which the oldest theories were divided – the pictorial or vedutisti and the physico-biological or naturalistic –, Paolo D'Angelo shows well the need to overcome the alternative between subjectivism and objectivism that underlies them, elaborating and encompassing a relational concept, capable of combining the subjective plane with objective dimensions" (Serrão 2011, 31).

Can philosophers who address this problem of philosophy expect any contribution from scientific psychology? Directly, I don't think so. And, however, I believe that both psychologists and philosophers have a similar conceptual task, which implies similar challenges, namely: the task of elaborating and encompassing a relational concept (of first, the *psyche* and second, the landscape) "capable of combining the subjective plane with objective dimensions".

I believe that part of the difficulty that arises in the dialogue between philosophers and psychologists (or even between psychologists of different orientations) derives from the fact that each of these areas (or even each "matrix of thought" that prevails in its ambit) tend to focus on different portions of reality, ancestrally delimited by notions and concepts inherited from very disparate traditions, and I do not disregard another part of the difficulties that may result from the composite, hybrid nature, these portions of reality that we take for study, or from reciprocal influences that may exist between them – among these notions, this essay gives centrality to those of *psyche* and landscape.

Considering that the bipartitions "substratum/functioning" and "interior/exterior" may be inherent to human nature, and therefore will necessarily be reflected in any sector of our thought and action, as suggested above, how could we advance in the task that now occupies us of elabora-

ting a concept of *psyche* of landscape, encompassing and relational, capable of combining the subjective plane with objective dimensions?

Returning to the considerations I have made above, I wish to underline something that many of my readers will surely have noticed: a certain "mirroring" between, on the one hand, the aspect that I am privileging in my considerations on the notions most intrinsically related to psychology, that is, the moulding (or forming) of the *psyche*, as a result of the continuous interaction between the organism with the environment in which it lives and, on the other hand, the proposition of the philosopher Rosário Assunto (1915-1994) with respect to the landscape, which he conceives as a form "in which is expressed a synthetic unity, a priori of 'matter' (territory)' and 'content-or-function' (environment)" (Assunto 2011).

In fact, it seems to me that the psyche can be equally understood as a "form" in which the synthetic unity, a priori of matter (the organic body, or organism) and content-or-function (mind and behaviour) is expressed. In this key, the notion of *psyche* refers directly to the interior of human beings (maybe not just humans, but I'm going to swipe around thinking this now.) taken individually or, as Arno Engelmann proposed, to subjectivity (the internal or subjective state inside the perceived skin).

In other words, the notion of *psyche* refers to the singular form assumed by an empirical unity composita, which is shown to the observation of others (from other human beings, among them the philosophers and scientists) as current totality of organism, mind and behaviour – a unity-diverse, indissoluble in the empirical plane, of physical, biological, historical and cultural components, components that are in continuous interaction with their correlates external to the organism (i.e., with the environment). Thus, the interior and exterior of the human organism would constitute two systems analytically discernible, but which influence each other, that is, they are moulding / forming each other. Figuratively, I would say that

to the human eye and in optimal conditions, the interior face is shown as *psyche*, the outer face as landscape; therefore, I believe that the notions of *psyche* and landscape require, in some way that we must investigate and correlative – and that it will be more productive if we investigate this co-laboriously...

### **A common ethical perspective for Scientific Psychology and Landscape Philosophy?**

The speculations exposed above warn, as I have suggested on other occasions (Ribeiro & Bartalini 2019), of the gravity of formal changes that have taken place on either side, be it in the landscape or in the psyche of its inhabitants. When one understands landscape and *psyche* as forms that interact and mirror themselves, in a situation of continuous and reciprocal moulding / forming, it should be considered that any change may be expressing changes of content-or-function that, starting at any of the poles, will soon revert inexorably to the other, engendering a continuous and not always predictable process of transformations. It must therefore be borne in mind that these transformations may determine benign or malignant consequences, depending on the nature of the change in question, especially for living beings who cohabit the same place.

The question that arises is: can there be a common ethical perspective that guides the simultaneous thinking and practice of psychologists and philosophers of landscape? I believe so, and that this common ethical perspective is given by the search for knowledge that can ground a good life for all, for the longest time possible. On the other hand, a common ethical perspective does not guarantee the establishment of fruitful cooperation; to advance in the understanding of the relations between *psyche* and landscape it is necessary to count on the contributions of all matrices of psychological thought. Above all, we must avoid that, by the ways of

somewhat ambiguous thematic and notional affinities, dialogue remains restricted to psychologists of "romantic and post-romantic" inspiration because, while these dialogues can be extremely enriching, such exclusivity can result in a hypertrophy of abstractionism, subjectivism and anthropocentrism that tends to characterize this modality of psychology – going, therefore, in the opposite direction of the encompassing and relational elaboration, capable of combining the subjective plane with objective dimensions, the concepts of *psyche* and landscape. Therefore, philosophers and psychologists of all modalities, including the so-called "scientificists", together with scholars from various disciplines, must converse insistently; should launch on each other their own problems and knowledge and their working hypotheses. This path of methodological hybridization may not be easy; on the contrary, it can be long and arduous, especially because it involves the sharing and articulation not only of knowledge and jargon, but especially of very disparate and specialized methods.

### **Seeking a hybrid methodological perspective for the study of the landscape...**

Firstly, I think it is appropriate to advance the idea that we need to examine the issues and theories relating to the ethics of landscape right there where they present themselves concretely, in the empirical world. As a social psychologist, I believe that it is necessary to observe and, when possible, measure and even conduct experiments on ethical problems that emerge in the daily lives of people and groups. At the very least, it seems necessary and urgent to review and integrate all available knowledge – and produce new knowledge – about the continuous and reciprocal influences between the place of life (situation), subjectivity ("psychic life" or "interiority") and personal and social behavior (individual and collective life, as it is externalized in actions, conducts, procedures, habits, etc.), as well as the

vicissitudes and typical consequences verified in the interactions of these three areas for the individual and collective life of human beings.

For etymological and philological reasons, I have attributed to the set of these complex influences the designation "*ethos*". In this direction, I have defended the thesis that ethos is a natural relationship, as that of the continuous and reciprocal moulding between a place and the life of its inhabitants (Ribeiro 2018). I must say that the dialogue I have had in recent years with landscape philosophers has played a fundamental inspiring role in the elaboration of this perspective that I present here (but, of course, the responsibility for the misconceptions and mistakes that I may have made is entirely mine); moreover, I believe that it can be adjusted, better defined and positioned, through effective collaboration with scholars of the Philosophy of landscape.

I'm fully aware that the perspective outlined above is still precarious and unstable, and that I have only been able to formulate it in rather obscure terms. Besides this, it is from this perspective that I have been conducting some interdisciplinary dialogue and guide studies in social psychology (sub-area to which I am institutionally linked) on the ethical relationship (i.e., on the relationship I am designating by the word "*ethos*"). This perspective, as already said, assumes as a working hypothesis that the interior and exterior of the human organism constitute two systems analytically discernible, but really in continuous interaction (i.e.: that they continually change, that are moulding/forming each other, that influence each other). In this perspective, the notions of *psyche* and landscape seem to be correlative to each other, and would correspond to the perceptible formations, respectively, inside and outside the human organism.

However, not always does the human look, whether poetic or prosaic, contemplative or pragmatic, philosophical or scientific, recognize the form of a particular place as a landscape. It is said about many places

that the landscape has been corrupted, destroyed, that it does not exist there. The same thing happens with the psyche: there are people whose psyche is said to have been corrupted in some way, that he/she is ill, degenerated, and even that the person is "inhuman" or "soulless". That is why I made, a few paragraphs ago, a caveat about the inner face showing itself as psyche, the outer face as landscape: this must happen, yes, but only in optimal conditions. The question that arises is: what are these "optimal conditions"? This is another issue that interests both the landscape philosopher and the psychologist. From the point of view of Scientific Psychology, this is a problem to be investigated empirically using, first of all, the investigative traditions that are already at hand. An important part of the work of Scientific Psychology, in any of the theoretical-methodological approaches it contains, is to try to find out which conditions (internal or external, past or present) are correlated to the psychic functioning and current behaviour of people - in most situations, this is the best that the scientific psychologist, as such, is qualified to do; it is the best contribution that psychology can offer to landscape studies.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the forms taken by the places, as well as by subjectivities and behaviour, derive from the interactions that these different aspects of human ethos maintain among themselves according to (*in function to*) of life – this to recall another inspiring passage of Rosario Assunto: "... with regard to the environment, the territory is the raw material, while the environment is the territory, just as nature and man organized it according to life" (Assunto 2011, 128). Thus, the form of a place will be seen by someone good and beautiful, as "landscape", only to the extent that, in his/her eyes, it seems to correspond to the current form of his/her subjectivity and his/her behaviour – it appears to be propitious to his/her own life; it is in this sense that I think it is lawful to approach landscape as a recognizable form of human ethos.

# TRANSFORMING URBAN ENVIRONMENTS INTO LANDSCAPES

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARCHETYPAL PSYCHOLOGY TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANDSCAPE

LIGIA BRUHN DE SOUZA ARANHA  
PEDRO TEIXEIRA CARVALHO

In this paper, we present some considerations of Archetypal Psychology to consider the possible relationship between soul and landscape. If, on the one hand, a psychologist's job is soul-making, and we could say that, in landscape, this becomes more favourable – the opposite, that a landscape is only made through the soul, also seems to be true. We aim to develop such a statement through a dialogue with the key thinkers about landscape in present times, bringing together Hillman and Jung's ideas, thinking of 'imagining' as an intervention strategy for the crisis we are experiencing in major urban environments. Ultimately, we will illustrate this possibility with two situations from which the soul may appear, and show itself in and through landscape, shifting from *anima mundi*, the soul of the world, to the soul *in* the world, as proposed by Barcellos (2018).

Today, the environmental crisis is a recurring topic, along with the ecological concern to preserve the environment and nature, as we are reminded by Borges (2019). Creating neighbourhood associations to bring green areas to cities, finding other purposes for urban waste, and saving water, are always on the agenda, but still do not seem sufficient for a behavioural change in the citizens inhabiting these major urban centres.

However, what emerges is an ecology and environmentalism termed as superficial or anthropocentric, according to Naess (1973, apud Borges 2019): the first, associated with the archetype of the Great Mother, universal nourisher, as indicated by Barcellos (2018) – whose ultimate goal is to protect the environment from human exploration; the second, in the extreme opposite, aiming at protecting humans from the consequences of such human forms inhabiting the Earth (Borges 2019, 155).

Zoja (2000) refers to the myth of growth as “the essence of modernity” (translation by the authors, Zoja, 2000, 6). According to him, a fantasy has been created of infinite growth (seeking immortality), leaving aside the notion of limit, so dear to Greek thought (métron). Since Simmel (1903/2005), it has been thought that living in large cities brings about negative consequences to the human psyche. There would be excess stimuli, to which inhabitants would start being exposed on a daily basis, and such cognitive overload would explain these subjects’ *blasé* behavior.

Heidegger (1954/1999), in turn, when thinking of the habitational crisis of his time (also applicable to present times), emphasizes it is not in the lack of housing, but in uprooting, non-thinking of the essence of inhabiting. Large cities are gradually muffled by the rushed, gray life: “*They turned into mere agglomerations dominated by the tireless and exhausting traffic of cars.*” (translation by the authors, Ribeiro et al. 2018, 40)

What, we wonder, are we failing to understand in order to concretize an effective change in urban environments? Just as the vow made

by a couple, “to hold, in sickness and in health, till death do us part” is not a guarantee of a genuinely affective bond, or the effective length of the bond while they live, we may say the sheer claim of “environmental awareness” is not enough. What would really make us embrace the idea of producing good places to live? Using as guidance the theoretical *corpus* of James Hillman’s Archetypal Psychology, we read this question once more, psychologizing it: how can we think of the importance of the soul in regard to landscape-making? With this reformulation, we attempt to bring forward in our paper an ethical reflection on landscape – ethics, here, in the sense of something related to *ethos*, i.e., to an intrinsic relationship among place, subjectivity and behaviour, as proposed by Ribeiro (2018). From this perspective, we are taking the soul (*anima*) as the core element in our discussion, along with its constitutive activity *par excellence*: imagining.

Let us start by the question: what makes a place a landscape, where one wishes to be, where life may be gestated and lived? According to Assunto (2011 apud Ribeiro & Bartalini, 2019), the landscape is the sensitive form of a place, it is what we may apprehend. Therefore, landscape, for this author, is a concrete form acquired by space from our view, demanding our interaction and reflection on our place of living: “*the reality we must study and upon which, if necessary, we should intervene is always the ‘landscape, not the ‘environment’, let alone the ‘territory’*” (translation by the authors, Assunto 2011, 129).

The definition by Dardel (1990, apud Ribeiro & Bartalini, 2019) seems to be very interesting as it approaches our intended discussion: according to the author, the landscape has a “dominating affective tonality” (idem, 42), implicating the human being in all his/her existential dimension. Resuming our question, we may think that what makes a place a landscape depends exactly on the affective look we assign to it – which, in other words, may be translated as looking through the soul.

We may find echoes in Berque (1998), proposing “a cointegration between subject and landscape, a unitary set that is self-produced and self-reproduced” (Berque 1998, 86); a combination of *topos* and *chora*, animated by the “continuous coming and going, by the pulsation of our existence” which is concretely singularized in each place inhabited by humankind (Berque 2012) – such conception points towards the dimension of the landscape in terms of trajectory, towards the comprehension of a “mesological trajectory” which constitutes it; indeed, for Berque, it is a “*medial, historical combination of subjective and objective, of physical and phenomenal, of ecologic and symbolic, producing a mediance (...) which is expressed (as) landscape*” (translation by the authors, Berque apud Ribeiro 2018, 146). Ribeiro (2018) attempts to retrieve the bonds between this formulation by Berque and that which he states as his inspiration, the concept of “anthropologic trajectory” as defined in 1960 by Gilbert Durand: “*the constant exchange existing at the imaginary level between subjective and assimilative drives, and the objective intimations flowing from the cosmic and social environment*” (translation by the authors, Durand apud Ribeiro 2018, 125). The author considers, therefore, that from a psychological standpoint, trajectory may be equally understood from the mesological direction, as well as from an anthropologic direction: it is always about between the organism inside and outside, between the objective and the subjective, *between* the needs and desires that drove the subject and the physical, biotic and historical-cultural contingencies currently in effect in their environment, *between* sensitive and symbolic.

This ultimately leads us back to evaluating what we understand by soul, as well as its psychic activity: imagining. As highlighted by Hillman (1993), there has been a trend from modernity to bring the soul to the metaphors of interiority. This has made “*things remain outside the soul*” (translation by the authors, Hillman 1993, 11). Recalling the ontological dictum of analytic psychology, Jung’s *esse in anima* (2011, §73), Hillman reminds us

that the being is in the soul – the soul is not in the being. *Ergo, anima mundi*: the soul is in the world, it is out there. The soul (*anima*) being the image of profoundness (Hillman, 1990), it is up to us to look at the world seeking the soul in it, the profoundness in things. The proposition of Archetypal Psychology, with its definition of soul, consists in seeking “*formal intelligibility in the phenomenal world*” (translation by the authors, Hillman 1992, 67). We would dare say that such a definition would bring Archetypal Psychology closer to a possibility of landscape-making through the soul, as only *through* it may the phenomenal world make itself intelligible.

Thinking, with Jung (2012, §889), that the soul’s specific activity is to imagine, we intend to conclude our essay by opening the voice to the images. Imagination (or creative fantasy) consists of a synthetic, unified way of perceiving reality. It is through the images we produce that we translate reality, *a priori* inaccessible. “*Fantasy was and will always be the one that lays a bridge between the irreconcilable demands of the subject and the object*” (translation by the authors, Jung, 2012, §889) – i.e., imagining is also making a trajectory. The soul’s specific activity lies, inextricably, between the subject and the object, and may also be qualified as ‘trajective’ – therefore, a potential means of making landscape. Imagining the landscape, a deliteralization of it through archetypal psychology, as emphasized by Bartalini (2018), filling it with its own adjectives, looking at it not from historical perspectives, but from a “story-based” perspective, told as a way of rekindling the images often brought to us by large cities.

And how can imagination somehow contribute to turning urban environments into landscapes? In our understanding, and based on Archetypal Psychology, by adding depth to the experience of inhabiting, of taking roots, of belonging to a place. According to Hillman, we can only go deeper in the experience through the soul, and to him, *anima* means profoundness (Hillman, 1989). The soul is depth, just like the spirit is

vastness. He proposes we redirect the focus of our discussions on the spirit (*animus, geist*) to the soul (*anima, seele*), adopting a positioning in a most ancient philosophical debate, privileging the aspects that are beyond rational, intellectual ones. The standpoint of *anima*, of the soul, transcends the sheer formulation of concepts promoted by the rationality of the spirit. It even goes beyond: it creates metaphors.

Imagination is the specific action of the soul, and as we come into contact with its images, we automatically seek profoundness in the experiences lived. For example: opening a window in a dark room goes from a simple act of architectonic iconoclasm to a gesture of opening to the exterior world, as in the film ‘Medianeras – Buenos Aires in Times of Virtual Love’, and this is the metaphorical openness (which occurs in the concreteness of the material world) explored by the film in its argument on the love difficulties that occur in many large cities.

In this sense, reconciliation between the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of landscape may also be made by imagining. The transformation of urban environments into urban landscapes, if we retrieve the definitions of landscape by Assunto and Dardel, occurs in terms of how we interact with this place we inhabit, as well as through affective contact with such a place. Imaginatively inhabiting the space is a task that may be pondered with the contributions of Archetypal Psychology.

We have chosen two situations in the city of São Paulo to imagine making-soul-in-landscape or making-landscape-in-soul. Firstly, we present the image of the University of São Paulo water track and the Pinheiros river. (Figure 1) In the image, to the right, the University de São Paulo (USP) water track, and to the left, the Pinheiros river. Both share many topographic similarities: they are bodies of water paralleled for 2.250 meters (track extension) with similar width, only separated by an expressway of cars and trucks. Despite these similarities, in terms of *chora*, i.e., in

terms of relations promoted by these waters, there is an almost opposite disparity. USP's Olympic track is a place of clean water, sheltering a diversity of animal species, such as capybaras, birds, ducks and turtles, among others. It appeared in the 1970s, when it was still an uninteresting lake, from which sand was taken to build facilities and dormitories for the university campus. Since that time, paddling athletes invested in planting trees around it and using the waters to develop the sport in the city. Daily lessons of paddling and canoeing, as well as social inclusion and physical rehabilitation programmes, even championships every six months, are held in the USP water track.

It is the imagination about the waters of this track and its possibilities that keeps it invested with care and love, bringing leisure, pleasure and landscape to São Paulo. Now, the Pinheiros river has a different story, “another place” in the imagination and life of people living in São Paulo. Along with the Tietê river, the Pinheiros river extends along a large part of the city. In the past, they were rivers used as a stage for human life and creative life ([Figure 2](#) and [Figure 3](#)). Since the 1920s, the most important rivers in São Paulo went through topographic changes that influenced its *chora*. The Pinheiros river was rectified, and its course was changed in order to shed its waters into the sea, no longer in the countryside ([Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#)). The idea was that it should no longer bring the problematic floods to the city, allowing for a better use of its surroundings, and generating electrical energy. Such actions changed its role in the lives of people in São Paulo, and as time went by, and as the river itself stopped being “used”, Pinheiros was turned into a river that took waste outside the city. In the documentary film by the Association of Clear Waters of the Pinheiros River, one may get a glimpse of the current type of relationship with the river: it is no longer reachable, it is isolated from people in the city, it is an outdoor sewage works. ([Figure 6](#))

Bartalini (2018) accurately reports how the city of São Paulo has treated its waters by talking about another river, Tamanduateí, which today is now a creek;

the ‘white city’ helped itself to rivers, but did not love them like the laundresses who knew its waves. Paintings and photographs of the nineteenth century or early twentieth century attest to the banks of Tamanduateí, flocky with clothes and lather, and still in the mid twentieth century, they were seen close to the Bandeiras bridge on the Tietê river. The official city, however, avoided the rivers and its lowlands, turned its back on them, depositing there what all the prestigious places would reject: the garbage and the sewage, and also the house of detention, the retreat of the alienated, the lazaretto, the habitation of those who suffer and do time. Wandering souls. (translation by the authors, Bartalini 2018, 26)

Today, the Pinheiros river has a bicycle lane along its banks. It may be the beginning of a reimagination, bringing life closer to its banks ([Figure 7](#)). Bachelard says water “knows how to bring everything together” (translation by the author, Bachelard 2002, 155), it generates meetings and interactions, as opposed to busy, accelerated streets, so accurately called non-places by Augé (1994). Something the city of São Paulo may do about its waters is to reimagine them, remaking the city paths with its waters, shaping new possibilities with the profoundness of the soul, observing the profoundness that water has, and the relations it may generate beyond the sewage. We must make landscape of our waters through the soul.

The second image we have brought was the image of love in the city of São Paulo. Regarding this, Hillman (2018) says: “Likewise, we may call love the unfathomable profoundness of the image, or at least admit that we cannot reach the soul of the image without love for the image.” (translation by the author, Hillman 2018, 46)

Profoundness, image, love and soul. In this brief excerpt, we can see the author intertwine some words in an extremely synthetic manner that each bring different developments. In a nutshell, how does this statement contribute to thinking of the issue presented here? By calling love this unfathomable profoundness of the image, and positioning it as a *means* through which we can reach the soul (let us remember: profoundness) of the image, we may specify our discussion here for the following issue: how can we establish a love relationship with the space we inhabit?

Firstly, a brief digression: how can we understand love here? Using Hillman's definition as a starting point, we may put it in a dialogue with the conception of love for Feuerbach. According to him, love would be the ultimate form of knowing the truth. The heart, organ of love, "*wants real and sensitive objects and beings*" (translation by the author, Hillman 2018, 81), says the philosopher in "Principles of Philosophy of the Future". In another part, he says: "Truth, reality and sensitivity are identical. Only a sensitive being is a truthful, effective being" (§32). Therefore, we have love as the ultimate, most profound form of knowledge. If I love someone, I mean, then, that I know this person in their innermost intimacy. This idea was very well approached in the "Avatar" movie, where, in the *Na'vi's* language, "I love you" is equivalent to "I see you" (this construction was even supported in a series of anthropological studies, according to the director).

So far, we have the following: the transformation of urban environments into landscape may occur through imagination, through a quest for the soul that goes through places and the experiences rooted in such places. Imagination, in turn, as it seeks profoundness, may be understood as a love relationship – and love, lastly, as a sensitive, profound form of knowledge. From this, we resume: how can we establish a 'trajective' relationship between the subjects inhabiting a certain place and that place? Does the

way we love and the way we inhabit space somehow traverse each other?

Let us observe the case of the city of São Paulo. In 2009, there was an urban art movement idealized by Ygor Marotta, consisting mainly of fixing signs and painting lamp posts or street walls with the emblematic statement: “More love please” ([Figure 8](#) and [Figure 9](#)). In the second largest metropolis in Latin America, always clamouring for more (speed, production, time), we receive an invitation to stop. Let us love more, say the streets. The objective of such interventions is, for the artist, by making an appeal through “such a simple” request, to raise reflections, to generate breaks in the accelerated routine “to think about all aggressiveness, indifference and speed experienced in daily life within such a large city” ([Figure 10](#)). This movement even unfolded into a festival called: “There is no love in SP” ([Figure 11](#)) and in a song written, entitled “Não existe amor em SP” (There is no love in SP), by Criolo ([Figure 12](#)). We notice that in the song, the songwriter builds beautiful metaphors, imagining, indeed, the space we inhabit:

There is no love in SP  
A mystical maze  
Where graffiti screams  
There is no way to describe it  
In a pretty sentence  
On a sweet postcard  
Beware of what is sweet  
São Paulo is a bouquet  
Bouquets are dead flowers  
In a beautiful arrangement  
A beautiful arrangement made for you  
There is no love in SP  
The bars are full of ever-empty souls  
Greed vibrates, vanity excites

Give me back my soul and die  
Drowned in your own sea of bitterness

Here, no one goes to heaven  
You don't need to die to see God  
You don't need to suffer to know what's best for you  
I come across two clouds  
In each debris, around every corner  
Give me a sip of life  
You don't need to die to see God

(translation by the authors, Criolo, 2011)

What can we take away from these artistic manifestations? How can the aesthetic dimension brought here indicate ethical reflections about how we inhabit urban environments? In a concise manner, we may reflect on the images that arise in this accelerated, uprooted urban context: love metaphors, affective requests. If *anima loci* (the soul of the place) asks in its images for more love, we have the fundamental psychological task to take them seriously in their imaginative powers. And, by taking them seriously, we are led to reflecting on how we may turn this urban environment into a more habitable place, into a pleasant and healthy landscape: making more love *fit*, i.e., considering the love experience as a *sine qua non* condition for a rooted dwelling.

From this part, we may raise the following reflection: one of the conditions for the transformation of urban environments into landscapes is the erotic dimension of dwelling. The city, as it is built around efficiency and productivity, accelerates (“Acelera SP” was even the campaign slogan for the former mayor of São Paulo, Mr. João Dória), and such a voracious demand incurs a reduction in the erotic potential of the space we inhabit. Overcrowded public transportation, up to nine people per square meter

(almost twice as much as established by the regulation), increasingly longer distances to be covered (on average, people in São Paulo spend nearly three hours in the daily commute); this excess in large cities compromises the quality of human interactions in such a space. Simmel (1902), in his text *The Metropolis and Mental Life*, talks about the *blasé* behaviour of inhabitants of large cities as a reflection of an overload of stimuli to which they are submitted on a daily basis. We may reread this posture as shutting off from others – which may be an adjustment required for the survival of people who are forced to spend approximately 1/6 of their vigil time almost literally clinging to other people, completely unknown to them.

Love demands time – a time that, considering the accelerated rhythm of major urban centres like São Paulo, is increasingly scarce. Therefore, the transformation of urban environments into landscapes through imagination may occur, involving several factors, by building a place where love relationships may be established – among the subjects inhabiting it there, and among them and the place itself.

# REPRESENTATION AND DESIGNING

# LANDSCAPE AND PROJECT IN THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

VLADIMIR BARTALINI

## Introduction

The present essay reflects on landscape teaching and research at Faculties of Architecture and Urbanism, especially when it comes to teaching landscape design. What are we dealing with when we refer to the landscape in the project activity? This questioning is crucial for students and teachers, involved for several hours a week in a design studio in the elaboration of landscape design proposals that are mostly directed towards urban spaces. It is crucial in the literal sense of putting us at a crossroads from which it is possible to define and, perhaps, legitimize both the object of teaching and research in landscaping, as well as addressing the following questions: can landscape experience occur in the contemporary urban environment? If so, can landscape projects evoke and provoke such an experience? And how? In order to deal with the above questions, it is

important to highlight the main obstacles that, in my opinion, contribute to neglect of the landscape experience in the teaching of landscaping. Are they: 1. abuse of the terms “landscape” and “landscaping”; 2. An avalanche of so-called "objective data" (including "good practices" and "good design").

### **Landscape and landscaping**

If there is a certain consensus in stating that landscaping refers to the landscape, the same is not true in the case of saying what is meant by landscape and landscape experience. The difficulty is probably due to the different meanings of this word, depending on the area of knowledge or performance that uses it. In the field of Architecture and Urbanism, the sense of landscape moved, very quickly from the garden around the buildings to the one, more usual in geography, of a terrestrial environment, that is, everything "that is around man" (Dardel, 1990, 41). The attempt made by Rosario Assunto to define the landscape, distinguishing it conceptually from the notions of territory and environment, as “the 'form' in which the *a priori* synthetic unit of 'matter' (territory) and 'content-or-function' (environment) is expressed” (Assunto, apud Serrão, 2011, 128) does not solve the problem that lies in the excessive generality of the empirical field that the teaching of landscaping seeks to encompass. Such generality allows for the application of the term landscape to any and all sets of objects and on any scale, although the author, in a previous work, had carefully delimited its scope (Assunto 1975). Even recognizing the importance of contributions such as those by John Brinckerhoff Jackson, his understanding of landscape as “a synthetic space, a system of spaces created by man over the surface of the earth (1984, 8), ends up giving landscape an amplitude in which its own disciplinary limits are lost. Let’s make this very clear: it is

not a matter of drawing limits in order to define professional skills. However, in the case of teaching landscaping in schools of Architecture and Urbanism, if the landscape is not themed in its specificities, if the object of study or intervention that is called landscape can be confused with a system of man-made spaces disposed on the surface of the earth or even with the environment (which, correctly, by the way, implies the association of nature and culture), what would be the difference between a discipline of urban-regional planning or even a discipline of urban design and one of landscaping or landscape architecture? Searching for landscape definitions is as attractive as it is uncomfortable and even frustrating. Almost invariably one falls into a somewhat innocuous relativism that, in practice, is equivalent to allowing each one to use the term as he sees fit. One of the most successful approaches, not in the search for a definition, but for compatibility between different views, is perhaps that of the essay by Jean-Marc Besse, entitled “Les cinq portes du paysage” (Besse, 2009). At first glance, Besse seems to adopt a compromise solution between subjectivists and realists, between culturalist and phenomenological approaches, which would lead him to point out the convenience, or the need, to go through all the “doors”. However, it is at the conclusion of his essay that Besse launches, in an innovative and thought-provoking way, a fundamental recommendation for anyone who ventures to reflect on the landscape or make interventions in it: give up the totalizing syntheses and accept the inconclusion. This is also true, obviously, for one of the “doors” considered by Besse – the last one, by the way – and which interests us in a special way: the landscape as a project.

In this essay, Besse more precisely circumscribes the scope of the landscape designer's activity and, therefore, the character of the landscape project, by assigning the landscape designer the role of the bearer (*porteur*), the herald, and the messenger of the site. But the landscape designer being

the bearer, the herald, the messenger of the site does not guarantee that the experience of the landscape is properly considered and that the landscape project will transmit it.

Taking the site into account would not, in itself, prevent the landscape designer from limiting himself to partial analyses, even if exhaustive, without reaching the landscape itself. Several layers of data – from geomorphology, soil, relief, hydrography, climate, flora and fauna to habits and expectations of residents, history and the culture of a place – do not in themselves lead to the experience of landscape. It is necessary to meet the condition that the data analysis is "inventive", as proposed by Bernard Lassus. Commenting on the work process of this landscape designer, Massimo Venturi Ferriolo emphasizes the fundamental importance that Lassus attaches to inventive analysis: it is “the starting point of the procedures. It presupposes a landscape designer to be well informed by a pluridisciplinary physical and demo-ethno-anthropological investigation, with the participation of several specialists to provide reliable data for a territory (Ferriolo, 2006, 21).

The fact that this collection of information requires the “fluctuating attention” of the landscape designer, that is, that he/she takes into account the oscillations of the places, and that he/she makes him/herself “sponge [...] from the ground to the sky, several times, until exhaustion (Idem), that is, that he/she gets drenched in *places*, does not guarantee access to the experience of the landscape; it still continues to be about *places* and not exactly about landscape. It can even be said that the risk lies, precisely, in the “landscape designer being well informed by a pluridisciplinary physical and demo-ethno-anthropological investigation, with the participation of several specialists to provide reliable data of a territory”. The risk is not in the information in itself; it is undoubtedly necessary and fundamental. The risk lies in the fact that extremely easy access to information makes us

believe that we are accessing the landscape, when, on the contrary, it is still very far away. More than being a bearer (*porteur*) of the site, something that is too linked to destinations, intentions, programmes and anthropocentric demands, it would be better for the landscape designer to be a bearer of the inhuman.

### **The inhuman**

Lyotard's approach in *L'inhumain. Causeries sur le temps* (2018), is opportune for what we want to deal with here, not because of its applicability, of course, which, by the way, would be not only impossible but also inappropriate, but for waking us up from the anaesthesia of "good practices" or "good design". Everything, or almost everything, is available these days. Everything becomes immediately accessible information, whether isolated or already synthesized, ready for consumption. Not even the information collected in the so-called "participatory processes", which values the speech of the people or communities involved, can escape this condition. It may be nothing more than mere reflections of prevailing widespread orders, bundled under the label of humanism. Although written in another context, it seems appropriate to quote the words of Gaëlle Bernard in the preface she wrote for *L'inhumain*, to say that landscape design is at risk of "anticipating what will happen and preventing everything that may properly 'happen' (...). The future is thus subjected to the present; nothing should happen without being anticipated or foreseen" (Bernard, 2018, 8). The inhuman, however, is what *escapes*. There are two types of inhuman, according to Lyotard. One corresponds to the inhumanity of the system in the process of consolidation, under the name of development" (Lyotard, 2018, 14). The inhuman of development does not care about man; instead of emancipating him, it is he who emancipates himself from man

(Bernard, 2018, 7). The other is the inhuman of wild “childhood” that received, felt, suffered the touch of things “before” speaking, (from which) we are never free, no matter how much we intend to be autonomous when admitting to ourselves that we are adults (Idem, 9).

And this inhuman is not something foreign to art: “If art resists post-modern inhumanity, it is because it is also inhuman: it testifies an inhuman reality, a reality that surpasses human capacities of apprehension, and can only do so because the artist makes his/her human self bow to the inhuman that heshe has in him/her – Thing, childhood.” (Idem, 11).

What can be done to face the inhuman of development if not to resist it? Lyotard asks. And what remains to resist, he continues, “If not the debt that the **soul** [emphasis added] has assumed with the miserable and admirable indeterminacy from which it was born and does not stop being born? That is, with the other inhuman? (Lyotard, 2018, 18).

Lyotard's text entitled "Scapeland", published for the first time in 1988, and which integrates the essays gathered in the book *L'Inhumain*, leads in a very propitious way to what we seek to deal with here. The title “Scapeland” already anticipates how Lyotard considers the landscape: the inversion of terms (scapeland - landscape) allows for the interpretation of the landscape as an escape, an opening through which it is possible to get rid of the grids of common reason that, today, are confused with the reason of the inhuman development. It is not the case, on this occasion, to spend a lot of time analysing the text, but a few words that Lyotard spelled out in capital letters may give an idea of what is at stake in the inhuman landscape. Here are some of them:

**STRANGENESS** (*dépaysement*): strangeness would be a condition of the landscape (Lyotard, 2018, 173).

**UNABITABLE**: “A palace in which all rooms are known does not deserve to be inhabited” (quoting Lampedusa) (Idem).

INDESTINATED: (landscape) is the opposite of a place (*lieu*), if a place is associated with the destination (...). Sweet violence that the indeterminacy exerts on the determined so that it leaves its QUOD<sup>1</sup> (Idem).

CLANDESTINES: (landscapes) reveal themselves in a flash, like CLANDESTINES. Strictly speaking, we never see them again. (...) It is always the unknown room of the palace (Idem, 175).

MATTER: landscape is a matter of matter. Matter is what (...) is not intended. Forms domesticate (the matter), make it consumable. (...) In a beautiful visual landscape, (...) the aimless walk, the walk, the will of wandering, they only transfer material powers to smells, to the tactile quality of the soil, walls, vegetables (Idem, 176).

FORIS: Landscapes are those confines where the materials are offered raw, before being prepared (...) they were said to be wild because it was always (...) about forests. "FORIS", outside. Outside the fence, the cultivated, of the shaped (Idem).

DESOLATION: landscape desolates our spirit. Instead of blood, it makes a lymph flow, which is the soul (Idem).

EXCESS: (in a place), minerals, vegetables, animals are aligned to knowledge and this is dedicated to those, spontaneously. They are made and selected for each other (...). But it (landscape) always requires an EXCESS (even the excessively little) (...) landscape is too much presence. My know-how is not enough. It is a glimpse of the inhuman (...) (Idem, 177).

DESCRIPTURE (*Décriture*): It would be necessary to describe, to be able to describe. To search for the rhythm of the sentences, to choose

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1 In Latin, "quid" is an interrogative pronoun, it asks about something that is not yet known, while "quod" is a relative pronoun that refers, therefore, to something that has already been stated in the sentence.

the words according to their singular deviation from the phonetic, lexical norm, to rework conventional syntaxes. To approach the singularity, the ephemeral. But perhaps it is impossible to describe with any spiritual or soul accuracy (I do not speak of feeling), without counting how, where and when it happened, without framing it, because it is precisely when it interrupts the narrative that the dissolving force of the landscape is felt (Idem, 177).

Lyotard emphasizes here the difference between narrating and showing. In the narrative, the spirit keeps the power over time: The spirit controls time, while the landscape takes time (Idem). It is in the texture of the writing, in the written signs that one can indicate the breath that snatches the spirit into the abyss when the landscape happens (Idem, 178). Lyotard continues:

In the description, writing tries to face the challenge of being equivalent to its absence at that very moment (when the landscape rises before the spirit). Not only is it always too late (nostalgia), but the words themselves seem outrageously heavy, I mean miserable and arrogant, to designate the fullness of that state of emptiness (...). Poetry is born out of the understanding of this misery, otherwise it would be nothing more than the display and realization of the powers of language. It is the writing of the impossible description, the *DÉCRITURE* (the undone writing) (...). What is at stake in the poetic description is the matter as landscape, and not the ways in which the matter can be inscribed. Poetry tries not to domesticate the forms that form language, not to provide the inscription that retains the event (of the landscape). It tries to transmit the withdrawal (the retreat) (Idem).

Finally, another word that Lyotard spelled in capital letters:

COMPLAINT: it is said that they (landscapes) come from an imaginary space-time. I think they have nothing to do with imagination, in

the usual sense of the word (including in Lacan), with a synthesis, even if free, of forms. Where and when landscapes happen is not marked. (...) A COMPLAINT of the matter (I mean of the soul) against the webs in which the spirit imprisons it (Idem).

It is opportune to observe the use by Lyotard of the word soul on several occasions in the quotes listed here, which is worth repeating: "the debt that the soul contracted with the miserable and admirable indeterminacy (...)"; "instead of blood, it (landscape) makes a lymph flow, which is the soul"; "it may be impossible to describe with any spiritual or soul accuracy (...)"; "A COMPLAINT of matter (I mean of the soul)".

This allows us to establish relations between Lyotard's inhuman and the conception of soul, or psyche, defended by James Hillmann in the seminal *Re-visioning Psychologie*, published in 1975. Such relationships with psychology are of interest because, as a disciplinary field, psychology is also an "applied science" and committed to human demands as much as are engineering, architecture, urbanism and landscaping.

### **De-humanize / De-moralize**

Hillman proposes "dehumanizing" as a condition for the cultivation of the soul. By adopting archetypal psychology as a fundamental basis for psychotherapeutic treatment, he clarifies that archetypal psychology is not humanism (Hillman, 2010, 327). He also says that it is necessary to distinguish between psyche and human (Idem, 329): "of these two notions, psyche and human, the psyche is the most comprehensive [...]. The soul enters everything that belongs to man and is in everything that is human" (Idem, 330).

But the reverse does not apply: "the human does not enter everything that belongs to the soul [...]. Thus, the soul is not confined to man, and

there is much of the psyche that extends beyond the nature of man. The soul has non-human corners” (Idem, 330).

From the distinction between psyche and human beings, on the one hand, and from the idea that the soul extends beyond human nature, on the other, Hillman can conclude that our soul does not belong to us. For therapeutic purposes, the different psychic persons who inhabit us belong to the archetypes, and they affect us “not by our will (...), but by factors that are independent of our power. (Idem, 334).

The afflictions and emotions that affect us seem to be centrally ours, however, says Hillman, “they are external to the individual person. (...) they are what we have in common: they transcend history and locality; (...) we feel them in the gestalt of landscapes and natural things (...) (Idem, 335).

Hillman continues: “Emotion is a gift that comes through surprise, it is more a mythical statement than a human property (...). We are not entirely ourselves when we suffer strong affections, and thus not so humanly responsible for what is not our property. (...) when free from human centrality, reverted (...) to mythical standards, emotions have a different quality of experience (Idem, 336).

Hillman also recommends “de-moralizing the psyche of the moralistic fallacy (which) is central to the myth of the man at the centre [...] an ego identified with itself” (Idem, 338).

What does not fit anthropocentric standard “becomes inhuman, psychopathic or bad” (Idem, 339). Instead of looking at myths morally, Hillman proposes, through archetypal psychology, to look at moralities mythically (Idem, 340). In his critique of the psychology of modern humanism, Hillman makes observations about psychology that could be useful for landscaping:

“Psychology as an independent field is only possible if we

keep our focus on the psyche, and not on what we now believe to be human. When we lose this focus on the psyche, psychology becomes medicine or sociology or practical theology, or anything, but not itself. It is remarkable how, in all these fields, the soul is secondary or absent; the psyche is reduced to a factor or a function of something more literal. Psychology collapses within these different structures of humanism when it loses the courage to be itself, which means the courage to jump qualitatively beyond humanistic assumptions, beyond man in the personal sense, beyond the psyche in the humanistic sense. Making a soul means de-humanizing” (Idem, 342).

When referring to the inhumanity of Greek humanism, Hillman observes that the human depends not on personal relationships, but on relationships with archetypal powers in their non-human aspects (Idem, 360). He also draws attention to the fact that the Greeks conceived the soul in resemblance to the gods, who are not human; therefore, the soul is *a priori* intrinsically related to the inhumanity of the gods (Idem, 363). Soon afterwards, Hillman completes his argument saying that, for the Greeks, “The human was unthinkable without its inhuman background. Staying away from the personified archetypal reality meant to be separated from the soul” (Idem).

Therefore, both Hillman, in the mid-1970s, and Lyotard, a decade later, by invoking the soul (the first) and the inhuman (the second), affirm the need to overcome anthropocentrism to liberate philosophy and psychology from the webs of humanism and, thus, be able to resist the inhuman that Lyotard identified with development of the capitalist system.

It is worthwhile for landscape designers to consider the landscape approach proposed by Lyotard, as the soul (*anima*), in landscape experience, rises before the spirit (*animus*) and dominates it, burns it, providing

openings that could have strong repercussions in the project's poetics. Equal attention deserves to be given to Hillman's archetypal psychology, as this author, in addition to invoking the importance of myths – how much wealth the mythical perspective could bring to thinking about landscape! – still offers an original interpretation on the climb to Mount Ventoux supposedly made by Petrarch in April 1336, a feat that would have opened, according to some authors<sup>2</sup>, the modern sensitivity to landscape.

If, normally, the experience of Petrarch is known as “The Ascent to Mount Ventoux”, for Hillman, “the crucial event is the descent, the return downwards, to the valley of the soul” (Hillman, 2010, 372), that is, the introspection that follows the spectacle offered from the top of the mountain. Petrarch realizes, opening at random a page of Augustine's Confessions, that the greatness of the world is tiny when compared to the greatness of the soul. According to Hillman's interpretation, what made an impact on Petrarch was that he realized that the soul, being within man, is incomparably greater than him (Hillman, 2010, 371). This paradox must be accepted: “There are both man and soul, and the two terms are not identical, even if they are internally and inherently related” (Idem).

Hillman further notes that

“Augustine and Petrarch apply three different terms: man,

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2 The origin of sensitivity to the landscape is a controversial topic. Among the authors who admit that it occurred at the beginning of the modern era, can be cited: Jacob Burckhardt, *A cultura do renascimento na Itália: um ensaio*, trad. Sérgio Tellaroli, São Paulo: Companhia de Bolso, 2013; Joachim Ritter, *Paysage. Fonction de l'esthétique dans la société moderne*, Besançon: Les Éditions de L'Imprimeur, 1997. Among those who refute this interpretation are Gianni Carchia, “Per una filosofia del paesaggio”, in Paolo D'Angelo (org.), *Estetica e paesaggio*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009; Giorgio Agamben, *O uso dos corpos* (Homo sacer, IV, 2), São Paulo: Boitempo, 2014, 111-115.

nature and soul. Man can turn outward, towards mountains, plains and seas, or inward, to the corresponding images; however, neither the external objects nor the internal objects are mine, much less human. Renaissance psychology begins with the revelation of the independent reality of the soul – the revelation of psychic reality to Petrarch, on Mount Ventoux. The concrete mountains were not his because he saw them; the internalized image of the mountains was not his because he imagined them. Imaginal facts have the same objective validity as the facts of nature. None of them belong to man, none are human. The soul is not mine, there is an objective, non-human psyche”. (Idem, 371-372).

The mythical perspective is opportune to address the landscape. Such an approach is present, as Gianni Carchia points out, in Plato's *Phaedrus*. In this *dialogue*, Socrates is outside the city walls with his feet in the waters of Ilissos, enjoying the softness of the grass and the shade of a plane tree, listening to the sound of cicadas on the mid-summer day; in other words, he is having an aesthetic enjoyment of the landscape. At the same time, he did not feel comfortable, he felt like an alien, and said: “I am dedicated to learning (but) trees will teach me nothing (Plato, 2012, 15).

Socrates then made a move to return to the city, but as soon as he listened to his *daimon*, he obeyed his words and gave up the idea of turning back. He then started talking to Phaedrus about divine madness, beauty and love, which are matters that escape the domain of reason and, in some way, concerns precisely the landscape, the experience of landscape that he was going through in that landscape on that specific occasion.

The landscape does not deny the city, but poses questions for it. Burning the spirit, a fundamental requirement for landscape experience, does not imply succumbing definitively to the illogical (the spirit never burns

completely, ponders Lyotard), but it is necessary to attend to the inhuman of childhood, to the myths, which are not human. In the introduction of *A atualidade o mito* (*The topicality of the myth*), Gennie Luccioni says that the myth is knowledge in its origin. It expresses the desire to know and it only remains alive as long as it remains open to the desire for knowledge (when it stiffens in scientific theory or in a metaphysical system, it dies) (...). Then the word it bears – which is sacred and secret – becomes the object of ritual transmissions; it is the mythical word (Luccioni, 1977, 7).

“It is necessary to recognize: the myth of our time still exists elsewhere [...]. It exists wherever men meet. From the group comes the story without a father; this because the myth already existed, before history, being at the same time concealment and celebration, oblivion and perpetuation of the beginning” (Idem, 9).

At a conference that took place in March 1988 in Kyoto, Claude Lévi-Strauss, gave a very valuable testimony regarding the relationship between landscape and myth. In 1985, for the first time, Lévi-Strauss had visited the holy places in the Middle East, and the following year, in 1986, he went to visit the places where the founding events of the oldest Japanese mythology were supposed to have happened, on the island of Kyushu. Despite his origins and culture, Lévi-Strauss was more sensitive to what he saw in Japan than to what he saw in Israel:

“Mount Kirishima, where Ninigi-no-mikoto came down from heaven, Ama-no-iwa-to-jinja, in front of the cave where Ohirume, the goddess Amaterasu, was locked, aroused in me deeper emotions than the place where the temple of David was supposedly located, than the Bethlehem cave, than the Holy Sepulchre or the tomb of Lazarus” (Strauss, 2011, 15).

Lévi-Strauss explained this curious inversion in the following way: the West, which also has its myths, strives to distinguish between myths and history (Idem: 16). For Western thinking, myths are not worth considering as they are not “confirmed events”. Therefore, the important thing is to locate precisely the places where such events consigned by tradition took place. But the following question immediately comes to mind: what guarantees that things happened right there? “Even if he does not doubt the truth of the Scriptures, the visitor with an objective spirit does not necessarily question the events reported, but the places shown to him as being exactly those where such events have occurred” (Idem). On the other hand, in Kyushu, either on Mount Kirishima (where Ninigi-no-mikoto descended from heaven<sup>3</sup>), or in the Ama-no-iwa-to-jinja temple (where Amaterasu, the sun goddess, locked herself in the cave with her brother and brought the night down on Earth until the spirit of joy came),

“we bathe in a frankly mythical atmosphere. The question of historicity is not imposed, or, more precisely, is not relevant in this context. Without causing embarrassment, two sites may even dispute the honour of having welcomed the god Ninigi-no-mikoto on his descent from heaven. In Palestine, places without intrinsic quality are required to be enriched by the myth, but only insofar as it does not intend to be a myth: as places where something really happened; nothing, however, certifies that it was truly there. Conversely, in the case of Kyushu, they are sites of unparalleled

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3 Ninigi-no-Mikoto (瓊瓊杵尊) (Also called Ame-nigishi-kuni-nigishi-amatsuhiko-hiko-ho-no-Ninigi-no-Mikoto) is, in Japanese mythology, the grandson of the goddess Amaterasu, who sent him to Earth to teach knowledge about rice planting and rule the world (this is, pacify Japan). To fulfill this task Amaterasu equipped him with three treasures known as the Imperial Reliquary of Japan.

splendour that enrich myths, add an aesthetic dimension to them and make them both present and concrete” (Idem, p. 16-17).

It is worth repeating: landscape experience demands the outbreak of the spirit, an instant of suspension of its cunning, demands and judgments. It demands its deactivation. “If the world is the ineffectiveness of the animal environment, Agamben says, the landscape is the ineffectiveness of ineffectiveness; it is being disabled” (Agamben, 2017, 115). Landscape is fulguration. Without neglecting the technical knowledge and pragmatic demands that it must meet, perhaps the essential thing in teaching landscape projects is to linger in this lightning in order to transmit it, to pass it on, even if only in its pale reflexes. The duration of the landscape experience, in the terms in which we treat it here, may not go beyond an instant, but it is worth betting on the power of poetry and also on the possibilities of landscape poetics to make it last or, at least, to suggest it, to refer to it, to make it emerge through the techniques of landscape design, certainly impregnated by philosophy and mythology. Why couldn't all this happen even in the city?

## LANDSCAPE...LANDSCAPING FROM WILD NATURE TO DOMESTICATED NATURE, OR NOT SO MUCH

PAULO REYES<sup>1</sup>

The idea of landscape as wild nature has been gradually reduced to a sense of tamed nature under the name of landscaping in the architecture and urbanism field. Despite this being a fact, it is not possible to remain solely in this evident dualism. The main assumption here is the necessity to break this dualistic logic between nature and culture and think about landscape as a “form of life”, as Dirk Hennrich, the German philosopher, claimed in “Landscape as a forthcoming paradigm”, recognizing the human intermediate position between nature and culture, rethinking about

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this human in the ethical field, engaged with his/her existent place. This critical attention points to the reduction of the meaning of landscape to landscaping, and the consequences in relation to this is the main motivation for this essay.

The theoretical lens that will guide this line of thought is called the “Philosophy of the Landscape”, and it will cut through diverse lines of theory that Adriana Serrão pointed out: a way that correctly handles this movement’s criticism – from landscape to landscaping. I choose, concerning this matter, to find articulation points that I hope can contribute to the criticism about this reductional thinking about the landscape produced by architecture. We will discuss philosophical texts by Georg Simmel, Joachim Ritter, Rosario Assunto, Eugenio Turri, Arnold Berleant, Augustin Berque and Dirk Hennrich, to reflect on the sense of landscape beyond a cut-out guided by an *aesthetic* sense as a unilateral visual perception, routing to a sense of aesthesis as a multisensory perception through a situated and ethically engaged body.

I believe that this theoretical alignment through philosophy allows me to look at the sliding of the landscape notion, to the notion of landscaping in the main theoretical currents in the architecture and urbanism field throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, highlighting the present time, even though this does not show up explicitly. My thoughts are to think of this sliding from a transposition stand point; a sense of look-towards, present in the perspective given by the look to a body-here, the presence of an ethically engaged body situated in the space. Transiting through the main theoretical paradigms to the reduction of this sense over the landscaping figure, recognizing an attempt of total absence of a body by the superiority of the eye in this process, until reestablishing the presence of the body in an ethically engaged situation as a rescue possibility of another notion of landscape, is the main line of thought for this essay.

## Landscape through the look

The landscape appeared for the first time in paintings at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a way of capturing the world. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more precisely in 1913, Georg Simmel in the text “*Philosophie der Landschaft*” (Philosophy of the Landscape) recognized it as a philosophical line of thought. The look's supremacy is the mark of the pictorial representation, reinforcing a rupture between the subject (the one who looks) and the object (the one that is looked at). The Renaissance perspective that holds the pictorial landscape also evidences a certain supremacy of the subject in relation to the object-world (object-landscape in this case), producing some kind of geometrical and compositional organization of the world. Architecture and urbanism as a disciplinary field will be the faithful squire and messenger for the idea of projecting the landscape, as though it were possible to *paisagear*<sup>2</sup> the world. This is the human pretension: to *paisagear* the world, which means, make it habitable and organized according to beautiful concepts. That is: *paisagear* the world is an attempt to beautify urban environments for the enjoyment of aesthetical pleasure. I will discuss this criticism towards architecture and urbanism, but beforehand I would like to recognize the landscape notions that support this position through philosophy.

Simmel postulates landscape as an observation of nature; he thinks about it as a cut-off unit and nature as continuous. The unit itself is a cut-off of a continuous that is nature, and not a compositive arrangement of isolated elements; distancing from an equal notion of nature is how Simmel describes landscape. In his conception, landscape does not mean

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2 This verb is used as an act of projecting the landscape; from the neologism in the Portuguese language: *paisagear*.

anything by itself, but to itself, that is, it is not about the object's order, but about the subject's; that is why

a boundary, a way of being encompassed by a momentary or permanent field of vision, is really essential. Its material foundation or its individual pieces may simply be regarded as nature. But conceived of as a 'landscape', it demands a status for itself, which may be optical or aesthetic [...] (Simmel 2009, 06).

This status for itself places landscape in an apprehensive spot, and this spot marks a subjective position. Just as Simmel claims, it's a "state of the soul" – a soul that is not seen by looking, but, after all, is sentient. In this sense, the landscape is from a soulish order.

The landscape is the subject's possession: from an uninterested judgment from the subject as well as from an aesthetic look, as Immanuel Kant described it in "Critique of the Power of Judgment". Here, in the philosophy of the landscape, this uninterested sense is what creates the landscape notion according to Joachim Ritter. This German philosopher, in his inaugural text as rector of the University of Münster in 1962, presents his conception of landscape with a cut-out of the look. According to him, the landscape is when the look turns a part of nature aesthetically present to itself. Just as Simmel's thoughts, no isolated part is a landscape by itself; not even trees, nor watercourses, nor any other isolated element, but it is a landscape when, according to Ritter (2011, 105)

man delivers them without a practical end, in a "freedom" for fascinated contemplation, to find himself in nature. With this exit from himself, nature's face changes. What once was utilized, or was considered useless, while bleak land, ignored and unvalued throughout the centuries, become greatness, sublime and beautiful: it turns aesthetically in the landscape.

This conception of landscape as a cut-out of nature by the look influenced the architecture and urbanism field profoundly, as well as the conception of the French gardens drawn from a rational and geometrical logic stand point, favouring the apprehension of the look as a portrait of a restrained and domesticated nature for the urban man's enjoyment. This landscape included in the morphology of cities in the form of gardens, plazas and parks had its biggest model in pictorial representation and on the principles of Renaissance representation expressed in the figure of the perspective given to the look.

When the landscape enters the architecture and urbanism disciplinary field, it rapidly gets out of a situation of something that is distant, to the enjoyment of the look as an extension of the natural territory, to take on a technical position and planning, and a synthesized organization on the idea of design. The architects think they are *paisageando* cities, which means, keeping parts of nature in the space of gardens for human enjoyment as a simulated experience of an always-disjunctive natural. As a design, this manipulated nature is now called landscaping. Therefore, this term landscaping will refer to the representation, organization, design and planning of this portion of nature, while the term landscape will be related, in principle, to two matters: a territorial extension, a natural territory, and a subject who looks, always from a distance, in a broad view and macro scale. Thus, landscape turned into landscaping will not appear *in loco, in nature*, but reproduced in such a way as though it were a natural model performed on a micro scale, favouring the fine-looking aesthetical pleasure.

The French gardens, a small example from nature being the Gardens of Versailles, the biggest representative in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, will serve as a model to follow in two scopes: on the individual level as an experience from nature and in the collective as cities' beautification. Just like the Gardens of Versailles, Paris in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, starting from the Georges-Eugène Haussman, (the Baron Haussman)'s interventions, would beco-

me a model for the urban restructurings in a sense of opening the city to great perspectives while still featuring medieval features. These strategies of morphological reconstruction guided by an aesthetic sense of the beauteousness as a guide for the look to the cities ran throughout the world as the hereafter model.

In Brazil, chiefly from the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, The Plans and Designs of Improvements and Beautification of Cities have expressed these morphological modifying strategies in a logic towards the opening of great perspectives to the look. The successive landfills in many Brazilian cities also join the Plans and Designs following the same strategies in the sense of gaining more habitable territory. Urbs advance over the natural. The most emblematic case in Brazil is the garden project for the Flamengo landfill in the city of Rio de Janeiro by Brazilian landscaper Roberto Burle Marx. Various cities, mostly capitals and urban centres, will be contemplated by this territorial extension. More recently, this redevelopment vision of the landscape as an organization of landscaping is being focused on urban border areas like deactivated wharves as well as coastal regions dedicated to tourism.

We can advance through this understanding of a landscape that treats territory as a whole for the design to idealize, based on the Italian philosopher Rosario Assunto's thoughts expressed in his 1976's text "*Paesaggio, Ambiente, Territorio. Un tentativo di precisazione concettuale*". Assunto perceives territory as a lifeless spatial extension; in this sense, it would have a quantitative and extensive value. From this extensive space, life would make sense from the notion of ambient. Thus, the ambience only exists when life conditions allow the individual to live in society as a collective, establishing a form of existence. In relation to the landscape, the understanding of Assunto's follows the same line of thought Simmer and Ritter proposed: it is a representation expressed in the synthetic form consciousness.

The relationship between these three spheres: territory, environment and landscape, helps us think of another leap that the field of architecture and urbanism made in its domestication movement of nature in favour of an inhabitation ‘in small nature’. Placed as a simulacrum of wild nature in the form of a small nature landscaping, the landscape, in the hands of ‘know-hows’ of architecture and urbanism, took on another shape; entire cities in all their territorial extensions were thought as landscapes to be looked on. One of the biggest examples is Brasília: this Lucio Costa urban design with Oscar Niemeyer’s main architectonic objects, follows the same logic of a landscape: to be contemplated from a distance, following not only the great perspective principals from the Renaissance, but updated by rational conceptions from Le Corbusier’s modernism. Here, the landscaping restricted to the gardens gains another scale and presumption: it is possible to *paisagear* the landscape. It is the total pretension of a domesticated nature taken as an act of *paisagear*.

This know-how architecture and urbanism capacity of turning any scorched earth into something able to receive a design was the subject of criticism from Christian Norberg-Schulz, Aldo Rossi, Gordon Cullen, Kevin Lynch, the Krier brothers and many more. In this period, a more historicist movement becomes more dominant in the sense of rescuing sociocultural values of the territory. Little places substituted the great perspectives of the modern rationalism on the day-to-day scale. Here, the look meets the body. From a look that used to overfly the landscape in the modernist rationalism to a look situated in a proximate body. Despite the strong criticism of the former model, the landscape’s sense presents itself reduced to the look. It is right to assume that it is the look which recognizes historical and cultural values, but nonetheless, the landscape is still a reduction of the express nature in the drawings of plazas and gardens.

This memory and historical salvation of the place present in architec-

tonic and urban reasoning has its representation in the philosophy of the landscape. Eugenio Turri (2011, 178), Italian geographer, thinks about the landscape from what he called iconema, that is, an

elementary unit of perception, as an interior sign of an entire organic group of one, as a synecdoche, as a part that expresses the whole or that expresses it as a primary hierarchical function, either as an element, that, better than the others, incarnates the genius loci of a territory, or either as a visual reference of strong semantical charge of the cultural relationship that a society establishes with its own territory.

The primacy of the phenomenological studies that organized the architectonic and urban thinking and practices around the look as a trigger of knowledge in the area give place to more abstract studies of the structuralist logic. During the 80s, Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson wrote an important book that tried to shift the excessive meaning given to the look. “The social logic of space” presents the bases of a theory that thinks of the space as an arrangement of centralities expressed in the harmony between convex spaces and axis, corresponding to more static and dynamic spaces. In this theory, the look disappears, but, with it, the body also disappears. We fully understand the structuralist logic of the language. The language in the space syntax is not thought of as a semiotic expression but as a structural metaphor. The morphology would function in the same way that the cultural part of the language would work for the grammatical and syntactical one. There is a limited set of structural rules that allow us to express various morphological realities.

In this theory, the sense of landscape does not exist, or at least it is not an issue. There is no differentiation between places in a territory, just intensities of possible co-presences. The problem of the landscape seems to disappear in this moment in favour of spatial readings that reduce infi-

nite visible features of the cities around the world into similar and limited patterns. We are in search of abstract patterns without the look and the body. If in the field of architecture and urbanism there is an emptying of the landscape as a problem to be looked into, in philosophy the studies on the landscape open new ideas; not as a clipping of the look at a distance anymore, but as a particle body of the landscape.

### **Landscape through the body**

It is possible to think in another sense about landscape that exists apart from this look theory. American philosopher Arnold Berleant, in a text from 1993 called “The Aesthetic of Art and Nature”, in the opposite direction than Simmer or Ritter, would change the way on how to think about the landscape: not through the primacy of an aesthetic look, but under a surrounding one. In this way, we would be *looking* at the landscape, but we are *in* it. As Adriana Serrão (2011, 281) puts it:

...refusing the separation between subject and object, Berleant reiterates the thesis that man as a whole dwells within the “natures” that revolve around him, transforms him, and nature is transformed by him as well. It is not possible to defend strictly that he sees nature; once he lives in it, nature becomes part of what he is<sup>1</sup>.

Berleant recognizes that Kant, with the notion of the sublime, allows for us to take away the focus from a control aesthetic and the frame of the look to an aesthetic of magnitude and, from what seems to be overwhelming, resulting in feelings of respect, admiration and dread. It is in this part of the Kantian reading that Berleant (2011, 291) believes that “indeed, the sublimeness is not in nature, but in our mood, and it is only through the idea of reason, the subjective construction of sense, that we can establish the cognitive order of intentionality”. And so the dimension

marked by what is huge not only approaches us, but also assimilates, Berleant (2011, 293) says:

when we perceive the environment from within, not looking at it, but being in it, nature becomes quite different. It transforms itself into a kingdom in which we live while participants, not observers. The consequences are not the deaesthetization, the confusion of aesthetic with the world of purposes and practical effect, exactly as was said in 18<sup>th</sup> century, but as an intense and inevitably aesthetical condition.

In this sense, the body presents itself in the landscape and not outside of it anymore. The landscape is in a vivid environment, says Berleant. This perspective of a body fitted into nature is closer to what we know in parks and English gardens, which, differently from the French ones, are not organized by geometrical logic with rigid compositions. On the contrary, they resemble some kind of wild nature. Berleant's contribution to the philosophy of landscape is important because he allocated the look's question to the situated, set body. But it still seems like a sense which in various sections of the text gets confused with "environment". There is a necessity to think about this body in addition to a physical presence, as an existential one, an existence ethically engaged with the body in which it dwells.

In addition, in this sense, geographer Augustin Berque in a text from 1993, contributes to the theory that the body should be thought of in an ethical manner, a mark of human presence on Earth. He introduces to the studies of landscape the notion of *ecúmena*, designating this notion to the inhabited part of the Earth (occupied by human presence), connecting this term to the *médiance* and the *trajection*, to problematize this relationship between the human and his habitat.

In an opposite direction to a more objective approach arising from

the scientific thinking in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the phenomenal dimension of experience in the world is recovered. *Médiance* is thought of as the relationship between this subjective world and the objective world together, with no separation between either of them; *trajection* is the movement between these worlds in its interaction act. It occupies itself with the Earth's habitableness, thinking of it as an environment.

In another text from 2008, Berque introduces the term “landscaping thought” to designate this thinking about the landscape that not only looks, but above all, respects the relationship with the inhabited environment. This way, the landscape as a cut-out of the look does not exist anymore, as neither does the body, as a measurement of existence but as an ethical position that builds itself around the relationship between the human and the world.

This ethical position in relation to the thought about landscape also reverberates in the text, “Philosophy of landscape: think, walk, act” by Dirk Hennrich. In it, Hennrich radicalizes the thinking of landscape as a relationship between the Earth (the place) and humans (the “object” that dwells in this place), postulating a line of thought about the landscape as an ethical relationship between humans and non-humans in a universal habitat.

Hennrich thinks landscape in a political and aesthetical perspective, recognizing that the landscape as a “life form” loses itself in the ordination and planning processes from diverse territories. He defends the necessity of recognizing landscape in an intermediate position between nature and culture, putting it as a type of container both as human memory and non-human memory. In his words,

landscape carries the timeless traces (lines) of nature (or the traces that humans cannot testify) and time which is saturated with human activity. The disregard of this double

origin of landscape, and the narrow concentration on the rational planning and administration of landscape, eliminates the visible and invisible memory and, above all, the corporeality of landscape (Hennrich, 2019, 61).

Therefore, the landscape can be understood, according to him, as a body that carries its different types of humour and its memory. The aesthetic sense that would privilege the look in its perspective condition, according to Hennrich, gives way to the aesthetics, in the form of recognition and appreciation of the multisensorial sensibility in the relationship between natural and cultural together and beyond them. For Hennrich (2019, 63), “*ethics* is hereafter understood as it derives from the word *ethos*, which means in one of its essential significations *to dwell* and indicates the coexistence of human and non-human lifeforms and the act of dwelling in a universal and not only human way”.

### **To conclude**

Returning to these notions of landscape and landscaping in architecture and urbanism, I propose a reconsideration about this relationship, beginning from the title of this text: “LANDSCAPE... LANDSCAPING from wild nature to domesticated nature, or not so much.”.

The urbanization model that is present at the base of practices that originated in the architecture and urbanism field as a transformation of the natural environment to an artificial one in all its capacities is not only modifying natural landscapes in their more wild and sublime faces, but is also depleting and transforming all the ecosystem, with severe consequences to humankind. This movement, that seems at first like a control and domestication of the natural and wild landscape in favour of life in the city, actually produces a notion of life that is against life itself. That means,

the artificial lives in the cities appear to be contrary to the natural logic of the world. It is a paradoxical perspective of human against human; of one that feels mighty in his/her own inventiveness and constructional capacity of a world while in opposition to the recognition of a logic that has been a norm on the Earth for thousands of years as a natural system.

The control starts, as seen throughout this text, at the pictorial representations; it passes from the reproductions of small areas of nature transformed into parks and 'human' gardens, and it finally arrives at the constructions of total landscapes expressed by new cities. However, the sublime dimension of the compositive look teaches us to respect and recognize the will of nature and the human incapacity to deal with this magnitude. In this sense, the control does not belong to the human but to nature and its frantic transformational power. Man has to recognize that nature does not allow itself to be domesticated.

There is no possibility of finding a place of resilience one with the other; it is only possible to see in these landscapes a place that belongs to the ethic in relation to the human and non-human existence in line with its territory. I conclude by saying in my own words the sentiments of Dirk Hennrich (2019, 64):

Landscape should therefore be considered as a life-form with a specific physiognomy and memory and as an existential part of human sensibility and world-experience. There is no possibility to feel 'Nature' or to feel 'World' or even 'Earth', because they are not experienceable in their totality, but there is the possibility and the necessity to feel landscapes, if we begin to recognize them as the multiple faces of the Earth and as the geographical territories where different life-forms, animate and inanimate entities, have their specific encounter.

# UNEQUAL LANDSCAPES METAPHORS, IMAGES AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

ARTUR ROZESTRATEN<sup>1</sup>

DIOGO A. MONDINI PEREIRA

## Introduction or *ceci n'est pas un paysage*

"The map of the imaginable world is drawn only in dreams. The universe perceived through our senses is an infinitely small one." Charles Nodier. *Rêveries* cited in Bachelard 1964, 17

"Miséria é miséria em qualquer canto, riquezas são diferentes."<sup>2</sup>

Titãs, *Miséria*, 1989, Õ Blésq Blom

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1 Acknowledgement/Funding: BPE grant#2018/10567-1 São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP); Master grant#2018/07124-0 São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP).

2 "Misery is misery wherever it is, wealth is different." (Translation by the authors)

Michel Serres, who died on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, aged 88, said in an interview, "progress is a landscape" and then he added: "Here, a hill grew, there was a landslide, here a crack, there a forest. It is a complex landscape. However, basically, without a doubt: life is better in 2010 than in 1930." (Serres 2019, translation by the authors). The image suggested by Serres is, indirectly, an affirmation of his own understanding of landscape. There is a presence of varied natural elements and the idea that they constitute an integrated and complex whole that would support a figure of speech. Before tacitly agreeing with Serres' opinion, we could keep such categorical statements suspended and – with the freedom of thought so valuable to the author and ourselves – doubt it.

We might think, at first, that a characteristic of common sense – or of naive, pre-scientific thinking, as Bachelard would refer to it – is to promote seductive metaphors that, supposedly, would bring us closer to the knowledge of sensitive phenomena, of the things of the world. However, precisely because they are subjective poetic forms, standing as obstacles for the construction of objective knowledge about things, they tend to keep a distance rather than approach the phenomena. On the other hand, it is necessary to consider the Kantian premise that we know the world from how we represent it.

Studying such images, figures of speech, or more precisely metaphors, as images / facts within the scope of the imaginary, might thus be an indirect path for the construction of critical knowledge about two simultaneously interrelated and autonomous realities: the sensitive reality and the meta-reality of the representations that relate to it.

The term progress may suggest – especially in Serres' optimistic perspective – a collective sharing of a common good, the political, social and cultural share of a relatively homogeneous technical, technological and scientific condition. In contrast, there would be countless facts and images

from the contemporary world that could support an opposing thesis, a critical inversion, a realistic approach for some and pessimistic for others.

For the positivist sense of progress associated with the landscape, we could then propose a more comprehensive, structural and anthropological alternative, in view of the *pólis* diverse nature and the multiple experiences of landscape in urban environments, formulated in one sentence: plurality is various landscapes.

In the same way that the *pólis* is the place where different imaginaries oppose each other and compete for political space in understanding, experiencing, proposing and constructing transformations of concrete and sensitive conditions, landscapes are multiple and can be antagonistic and non-consensual as well.

Following this line of thought, in counterpoint to the first metaphor and in line with this second, a third metaphor is proposed as a provocative, provisional and intentional obstacle to the construction of objective knowledge on the theme: inequality is several unequal landscapes.

It is necessary to anticipate, though, that such inequalities – precisely because they are not just figures of speech, but materialize in concrete sensitive realities, socioeconomic phenomena and ruptures that constitute and deform spaces and lives – can lead to an extreme urbanistic limit in ethical and aesthetical terms, i.e., the negation of the landscape and, consequently, the denial of habitation and the very fundamental condition of human existence, which is the free exercise of the imagination.

Poet João Cabral de Melo Neto used the metaphor of a “dog without feathers” (1994, 53-4) to build the dehumanized landscape of Capibaribe River:

In the river's landscape  
hard is it to know

where the river starts;  
where the mud  
starts from the river;  
where the earth  
starts from the mud;  
where the man,  
where the skin  
starts from the mud;  
where starts the man  
in that man.

Hard is it to know  
whether that man  
is not already  
further behind a man; (Melo Neto 1994)

Assuming such a position, we recognize a certain resonance with the perspective proposed by Michael Jakob in 2013: “Landscape is a phenomenon of Human Sciences, therefore polysemic, open to interpretations, which means that we shouldn’t restrain ourselves at any definitive definition” (Jakob 2016, translated by the authors) and so, we can use the frayed and problematic nature of the landscape to critically reflect on the contemporary world, on the role of images and on urban life. Let’s move then to the images.

### **Images of Inequality**

In 2016, South African photographer Johnny Miller wondered what we could formulate as a common metropolitan contradiction, particularly intense in Cape Town, South Africa, the city where he lives and which he describes as full of barriers, fences, walls, highways and green areas designed to be belts, separators, buffers and intermediate zones, which

interrupt the landscape, shorten horizons and restrict perspectives; such elements “work not only as physical barriers, but as barriers to our imagination”, especially in flat stretches: if the *pólis* is the spatialization of multiplicity, why are such urban landscapes so homogeneous?

With drone support, Miller then started a photographic project entitled “Unequal Scenes” ([unequalscenes.com](http://unequalscenes.com)) that seeks to build aerial images as a snapshot, a visual synthesis of the border zones of inequality in cities from South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, India, Mexico and the USA.

Each “Unequal Scene” is a split image. Two images in one. The contrast between two unequal landscapes constituting the same image in which diversity is not expressed as a merge, but as an immiscible counterpoint. Such split images are not always visible in the everyday experience of a city. We could then formulate the hypothesis – somewhat obvious – that such boundaries between unequal landscapes are usually more evident in cities that are more unequal, and are much more difficult to perceive in places where inequalities are smaller. Less unequal cities tend to hide successfully their internal inequalities, keeping them from the eyes of their most privileged citizens, tourists and the lenses of photographers.

In a certain way, the “Unequal Scenes” project follows the steps of the photo essay “How the other half lives”, published with the subtitle: “Studies among the Tenements of New York” in 1890, produced in New York between 1888 and 1890 by the young Danish photographer and reporter Jacob Riis, recognized as one of the pioneering experiences in anthropological research – photographic landscape of social inequality in large cities.

Projects of this nature have, since then, been part of the photographic effort to “make visible”, that is, to conceive photographic visibility, to constitute a fixed, revealed and enlarged image of what, paradoxically, may be oscillating between absent and visible, between present and invisible, in

the daily life of cities, and which photography helps to present and “keep visible”.

### **The path and the images**

The convergence of this research with the debate proposed by this conference on Philosophy of Landscape offers an opportunity to deepen the comparative view between Lyon and São Paulo under the scope of the photographic representation of metropolitan landscapes in their inequalities.

In methodological terms, this essay will consider a dialectical nature of oppositions, contrasts, polarizations to be visualized, represented in a diagram. The Bachelardian notion of diagram, presented in “The Psychoanalysis of Fire” deserves an experimental approach, recognizing the provocative nature of an image association practice unfolded from the considerations that follow here:

Each poet [city] should then be represented by a diagram which would indicate the meaning and the symmetry of his metaphorical coordinates, exactly as the diagram of a flower fixes the meaning and the symmetries of its floral action. There is no real flower that does not have this geometrical pattern. Similarly, there can be no poetic flowering without a certain synthesis of poetic images. (Bachelard 1964, 109)

The methodological procedure of the floral diagram began being used in botanical literature from the end of the 19th century as a schematic graphic representation of the structure or morphology of a flower, showing the number of floral organs and their spatial arrangement in order to support the improvement of taxonomy and comparative approaches.

But a poetic diagram is not merely a design: it must find a way to integrate the hesitations, the ambiguities which alone can liberate us from reality and permit us to dream; and it is here that the task that we have in mind takes on all its difficulty and all its value. We do not write poetry if we are confined to a single note, for the single note has no poetic property. (Bachelard 1964, 110)

Then, what would comparative poetic diagrams between Lyon and São Paulo look like, based on sets of photographic images that sought to present the spectrum of inequality between unequal landscapes beyond hegemonic images?

For the experimental construction of such diagrams, two types of contemporary photographic images, digital and available on the Internet, will be mainly considered – but not exclusively – by professional photographers in Lyon and São Paulo in the 21st century, as preliminary references: The (re)presentation of landscapes in public spaces; The (re)presentation of landscapes from private spaces;

### **Comparing metropolises**

The Metropolis of Lyon, or Grand Lyon la Métropole ([www.grandlyon.com](http://www.grandlyon.com)), was created in 2015 and brings together 59 municipalities, totalling around 1.3 million inhabitants in 2016. Nowadays, it constitutes the second French metropolitan region, after Paris. With an area of 533.68 km<sup>2</sup>, its population density is, therefore, 2,587.69 inhabitants / km<sup>2</sup>.

According to data from the *Compas - le comparateur des territoires plattform* ([www.comparateurterritoires.fr](http://www.comparateurterritoires.fr)), in 2015 the inequality index for the

city of Lyon was 0.32 (Gini coefficient<sup>3</sup>), above the French average and the Rhône Department average, which was then 0.29. In 2018, the “*Observatoire Métropolitain du Développement Durable*” (Falga 2015) dossier indicated a slight drop in the coefficient to 0.31, considering the metropolis of Lyon as slightly more unequal to the French average of 0.30.

According to the “*Center d’Observation de la société*” in an analysis published by the “*Observatoire des inégalités*”:

88% of French people estimate that poverty and exclusion have increased over the past five years (2013-2018). This number increased in the 2000s, before it was less than 70%. ... The opinion of the French is not directly linked to the real evolution of poverty rates. Whatever the variations, the vast majority estimates that poverty has increased (Observatoire des inégalités 2019, translation by the authors).

In this approach with an emphasis on inequality, it must be said that Lyon is a city with numerous architectural, urban and landscape qualities that are quite evident in the direct experience of its most central urban space<sup>4</sup> and widely reiterated by a vast photographic production that proliferates daily on the Web. Such qualities have been cultivated over a history of more than two thousand years of urban life and are today in large part due to public policies and continuous investment, maintenance and promotion of public spaces on different scales integrated into a metropol-

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3 Index 1 corresponds to a hypothetical situation in which a single person would hold all the income of a place and index 0 to an absolutely equal situation. In short, the higher the index, the greater the income gap between the richest and the poorest and vice versa.

4 Region of Presqu’île, from Perrache to Croix-Rousse, covering Vieux Lyon and Fourvière, the margins of Saône River in this part and also the margins of Rhône River until the Parc de la Tête-D’Or.

itan multimodal transport system that greatly contribute to the levels of inequality, being relatively low and hardly noticeable in a scenario of fierce competition between global cities in the European Union for a welfare landscape.

The investigation of unequal landscapes in Lyon stems from the recognition that, beyond the aforementioned urban areas that are, to a large extent, world heritage sites and that support a restricted set of supposedly consensual and clearly hegemonic photographic images, there is a problematic urban reality, conflicting, heterogeneous, counter-hegemonic and barely visible. These absent images, removed from the official curatorship of the “constellation” of Lyonnais images, are capable of exposing both the internal contradictions surrounding the naive understanding of *pólis* that would justify their alienation – after all, being multiple and consequently conflicting, heterogeneity and dissent would be inseparable from the very nature of all cities – as they also expose the tensions and divergences around the metropolis project today called “*co-intelligence*” ([youtu.be/O4QsCBKFrM](https://youtu.be/O4QsCBKFrM)), started in 2007 and captained by the OnlyLyon association in order to project the city internationally.

The fragility of the notion of “*co-intelligence*” is evidenced by the denial of these divergent images that, from an official perspective, would not collaborate with the intended coordinated and top-to-bottom construction of 21<sup>st</sup> century Lyon.

Nevertheless, how could the development of a truly collaborative project dispense with the critical inclusion of such images in the problematization of a dialectical, comprehensive, active and heterogeneous urban imagery that may constitute the real Lyon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

The Metropolitan Area of São Paulo (RMSP, [www.pdui.sp.gov.br/rmsp](http://www.pdui.sp.gov.br/rmsp)), in comparison, is formed of 39 municipalities that held 21 million inhabitants in 2015, being the sixth largest urban agglomeration in

the world. It has an area of 7,946.96 km<sup>2</sup>, with a population density of 2,642.52 inhabitants / km<sup>2</sup>.

Although the population densities of Lyon and São Paulo are similar - São Paulo has only 54.8 more inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> – the RMSP is almost 15 times greater in area and has a population 8 times greater, which is close to 1/3 of the population of all of France.

According to the Brazilian Institute of Economics of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (Ibre / FGV), in an article published in the Economics & Business section of the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, on February 26, 2019, inequality in Brazil today is the greatest in the last seven years.

In the historical series begun in 2012, the Gini coefficient decreased to the lowest position of 0.529 in 2014 and, since then, it has grown, reaching at the end of 2018, the highest level of inequality ever recorded: 0.625. An index equivalent to that of South Africa measured in 2011 (Index Mundi), which means a 30-year setback in efforts to reduce inequality and income distribution in the country. This setback considers that the current indexes surpass those of the mid-1990s, which reached the limit of 0.60 in 1996, according to IPEA, based on PNAD data.

In 2017, IBGE showed that 43.3% of the mass of household income per capita in the country was in the 10% of the Brazilian population with the highest income. This inequality is even greater in a state like Bahia, for example, where this concentration reaches 48.9%.

As the Institute itself summarizes in an article published in April 2018: 10% of the Brazilian population concentrates almost half of the country's income (Benedicto and Marli 2018).

According to data from the publication “São Paulo: A Tale of Two Cities” organized by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and by the State System of Data Analysis Foundation (SEADE), in 2010, the Metropolitan Area of São Paulo is more unequal

than the average for the State of São Paulo. Its Gini index was then 0.57 against 0.50 of the state average. This index is probably even higher today, considering the general growth of inequality in the country registered by Ibre / FGV in late 2018 (Chengalat 2019).

Unlike Lyon, the images of inequality in the metropolis of São Paulo are widespread, although not very precise: they are confused with the images of inequality that it shares with as many Brazilian cities and as many clearly unequal metropolitan areas inside and outside Brazil. It is then necessary to revisit them reflexively.

### **Reviewing images**

It was also in an aerial shot, taken from a helicopter flyover in 2004, that photographer Tuca Vieira took the so-called “photo of the Paraisópolis favela” that, from the Global Cities exhibition, organized by Tate Modern in London in 2007, came to represent not only the radicality of the local expression of inequality, but the very global condition of such a phenomenon in a globalized world.

Since then, the image has been recognized worldwide as a synthesis of social inequality in large cities of the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An image that highlights housing conditions so distant and so close. An image of the proximity between unequal.

It must be said that the title of the photo is a half-truth. We see more than the Paraisópolis slum in the photograph. There is a walled border and on the other side of it: the Penthouse vertical condominium, neighbours in the Morumbi quarter. It is a photographic image of a reverse landscape sharing. Each community has as its landscape the other part; what it craves, what it rejects, what it fears, what it cares for, what it sees, what it refuses to see. In short, ambivalences capable of promoting a wide spectrum of reveries (Vieira 2017).

Tuca himself considers that this image has fulfilled its role, being to some extent exhausted and stereotyped. It is an image that was intentionally built to “show” certain landscapes, but that today – precisely because of its overexposure and supposed unquestionable validity – hides other specific realities of inequality in São Paulo that continue to interest the photographer. Precisely to continue investigating the representation of the landscape of São Paulo, Tuca Vieira undertook the “Photographic Atlas” ([www.tucavieira.com.br/Atlas-fotografico](http://www.tucavieira.com.br/Atlas-fotografico)) project between 2014 and 2016: 203 photographs, a summary image for each page of Guia 4 Rodas that maps the São Paulo metropolitan area.

Each of these images is, metaphorically, a survey, an index snapshot, an intentional graphic construction of a chosen framework – which excludes so many others that are also possible –, so it is a cutout, a fragment, a part of an inapprehensible whole that would correspond to the landscape of the RMSP.

In addition to this effort to investigate unequal landscapes in São Paulo, countless other photographic productions, among which it is worth mentioning here the essays “*Spama Frente e Verso - Pirituba*” and “*Comunidade Grillo - Cidade Tiradentes*” by Nego Júnior ([www.negojunior.com.br/spama-frente-e-verso-pirituba](http://www.negojunior.com.br/spama-frente-e-verso-pirituba)) made in 2018 and “*Periferia*” by Lalo de Almeida ([lalodealmeida.com.br/site\\_pt/editorial/periferia](http://lalodealmeida.com.br/site_pt/editorial/periferia)) with images taken between 2010 and 2013.

A collection of images from “Atlas” and the other three essays mentioned here contribute to the construction of a multifaceted, partial and fragmented polygraphy of São Paulo’s landscape.

It has been produced in the São Paulo metropolitan area, in its assorted peripheral peripheries and in its precarious central conditions; landscape experiences reduced by intense construction activity, which, adding almost absolute occupation of the lots and excessive overlapping of

plans and volumes, restrict, interrupt, shorten and atrophy the horizontal amplitude and the depth of space. Inequality can take many forms, one of which is spatial in nature: landscape-prison, landscape-confinement, landscape-enclosure.

That was what the journalist Dafne Sampaio intended to expose poetically at the end of January 2013, with his stencil applied to the walls and sidings of the lots under construction in São Paulo, where the verticalization actions promoted by the private initiative subvert, transform, when they do not extinguish the landscape:

You as Square / I adore  
You as building / It's a bore <sup>5</sup>

In contrast, in January 2017 in Lyon, under a severe winter, a team of SAMU Social ([www.samusocial-75.fr](http://www.samusocial-75.fr)) employees exposed the difficulties of the metropolises in receiving homeless people or those living in precarious conditions without heating.

In this context, photographer Jeff Pachoud produced a series of dissonant photographic images in relation to the hegemonic photographic imagery of the metropolis of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. In addition to this theme, between 2013 and 2017, Pachoud produced several photographic images for news articles by Agence France Press of what we understand as landscapes of the inequality of Lyon, covering the eviction of “Roms / Roma” camps, the expulsion of immigrant families: Albanians, Macedonians, Romanians and Bulgarians, the living conditions of immigrants “*sans abri*” and the precarious living conditions of families living in the peripheral neighbourhoods of Lyon, thus exposing the most difficult and

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5 Free translation by the authors of “Você Praça / Acho Graça / Você Prédio / Acho Tédio” more literally translated to “You as Square / I find it graceful / You as building / I find it boring”

least visible conditions of living in contemporary Lyon (L'Express 2013).

Photographer Maxime Jegat ([www.maximejegat.com](http://www.maximejegat.com)) has also produced counter-hegemonic images in news coverage for the agency Le Progrès in the Lyon metropolitan area since 2007. In his personal portfolio he presents some photo essays entitled “Landscapes”, “L.S.P. (Lyon Street Photo)” and the most interesting among them: “Fakeland”.

In this contemporary context, the photographic image of Jean-Louis Garnell taken in Lyon in 1988, within the scope of the DATAR initiative (*Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale*) with the aim of representing the transformations in French landscapes, and which was part of the exhibition “*Paysages français - Une aventure photographique, 1984-2017*” ([expositions.bnf.fr/paysages-francais](http://expositions.bnf.fr/paysages-francais)) organized by France's National Library, gains new meaning.

His photograph of an uninhabited place, simultaneously stagnant and in transformation, on the construction site of the Miribel Park in Lyon seems to foreshadow the concrete difficulties – and the probable impossibility – of building an egalitarian urban future.

## **Landscape and project**

When landscapes are immobilized and suggest stagnation, when instead of promoting horizons, they impose narrowing, close perspectives, limited openings, when they deny depth, when they move away from evasive mobility and become fixed in monotony and inert presentification, it is not always possible to preserve in the interaction with them the ability to daydream and the vital condition of the evasive imagination, which fundamentally promotes project experiences: when we project “in”, “with” and, mainly, “beyond” the landscape, there is no landscape without gaps to escape.

The designing / existential experience of the landscape depends on

an escape, as a promenade of the imagination, an imagination that activates complementary and dialectical movements: of escape, of distance, of centrifugal dispersion; and return, rapprochement and resignified centripetal re-aggregation.

The reflexive condition of this interactive mobility affects everyone involved: if a landscape is built on this imaginative action, “in it” and “beyond it”, we are ourselves reconstructed. Wouldn't this experience also be a metaphor for the symbolic condition indispensable for overcoming the very limits of the human condition?

The imagination is not, as its etymology suggests, the faculty for forming images of reality. It is the faculty for forming images which go beyond reality, which sing reality. It is a superhuman faculty. A man is a man to the extent that he is a superman. A man should be defined by the sum of those tendencies, which impel him to surpass the human condition (Bachelard 1983, 16).

We recognize, then, in the Bachelardian philosophy, a proposition for the imagination as a non-negotiable existential condition:

If there is no change of images, unexpected union of images, there is no imagination, there is no imaginative action. If a present image does not make us think of an absent image, if an occasional image does not start a lavishness of aberrant images, an explosion of images, there is no imagination. (Bachelard 2001, 1, translation by the authors)

Thus, a poetics of project is affirmed as an open and metamorphosing action that resignifies the landscape in the measure of an active and transforming appropriation:

The past, the real, the dream itself offer us no more than

a closed imagination, as at their disposal they have only a determined collection of images. With open imagination, a kind of myth of hope appears, which is symmetrical to the myth of remembrance. ... The imagination only understands a form if it transforms it, dynamizes its forthcoming, if it captures it as a cut in the flow of formal causality, just as a physicist only understands a phenomenon if he/she captures it as a cut in the flow of efficient causality. (Bachelard, 2013, 116, translation by the authors)

While in Lyon, public spaces integrated with the public transport network promote a certain equalization of landscape experiences, which are unequal in the context of private landscapes; in São Paulo, public spaces are far from meeting the demand, in addition to not being fully integrated into a public transport system that is insufficient and precarious. Inequalities are then perpetuated, of course, also in regard to access to parks, squares, gardens and their equipment.

In São Paulo, the landscapes of inequality are evident under an isolated archipelago condition, isolated from each other. In the interstices of such fragments of inequality, there is the presence of ambiguous objects, which could articulate and interconnect, but essentially break, cut and fragment the space: bridges, viaducts, train and subway lines, streams and channeled rivers. They reiterate themselves as the negation of the landscape and, at the same time, they are residual places where those who are on the margins of the margin seek to survive.

The “vertical escape” to a high, aerial position, so characteristic of the social ascension and the effort to conquer a privileged landscape in the industrial São Paulo of the second half of the 20th century, still continues,

but it offers less and less relief as the densification of towers promotes a continuous closure of the horizon, and the landscape gaps, the gaps between towers, insist on offering monotonous variations on the theme of the growing socio-spatial inequality printed in the urban fabric below.

Wouldn't it be possible to install films on windows as high-resolution screens that produce other landscapes like a screensaver set in perspective? What if, in addition to images in perspective adjusted to the height of the apartment, there was a sound environment?

In the same context that stimulates this delusion, it survives, then, in contemporary São Paulo, as an alternative for a few, a revival of the idyllic "horizontal escape" into the countryside - albeit a scenographic one - which can be interpreted as a "back-trip", a movement of new landowners to return to their former farms, now metamorphosed, miniaturized and artificially free - why not: sanitized? - the landscape of the "work spaces" that still support them.

The symptom is the abandonment of the metropolis, the abandonment of the big city, the abandonment, perhaps, of any and all cities, precisely because the *pólis* is a singular, unique spatialization, of heterogeneities, dissimilarities, differences.

Cultivating inequality or at the other extreme, denying its existence, will there be conditions for a culture of difficult and multifaceted urban coexistence among inhabitants of such different landscapes?

Within the high standard "rural" gated communities, proliferate the efforts of architects to constitute landscape scenography as pseudo-open horizons, as spaces supposedly continuous, uninterrupted, suggesting a spatial extension of arboreal sets, bamboo groves, meadows, lawns, surfaces with water, external and internal floors, in an alleged indistinction between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*.

The reverse side of this landscaped *trompe l'oeil* is purposely antagonistic. If in the interior this is the keynote of the landscape, from the outside, none of this is visible, and the contrast is brutal: the walls of the condos cut, interrupt and fragment the landscapes without metaphors. The unequal landscapes also constitute millionaire business opportunities for a market of commodity-landscapes, of eroticized landscapes, as objects of desire, *cachés*, hidden and overvalued as protected gems inside coffers.

In Fazenda Boa Vista Condominium, between Itu and Sorocaba, for example, the boundaries are explicitly marked on the outside by a concrete block wall over 3.5 m high, topped by a horizontal spiral of barbed wire, without any sidewalk to the public. In rare sections of the boundary of the condo there is an opening that reveals a crack in the internal landscape, as when in a corner of the land the wall meets a fence and exposes a bamboo grove in the background.

### **Final considerations**

Contrary to what our imagination might suggest, when the cage bars at the Kyoto Zoo collapsed as a result of the brutal Hanshin-Awaji earthquake in 1995, there was no mass flight of animals, as Michel Serres tells us:

... used to their slavery and anesthetized with immobility, the animals left no cesspools or cages, even when the barriers were dismantled. They howled without moving, as if they expected the bars to return, blinded both to their presence and to their disappearance. (Serres 1997, 75, translation by the authors)

When the reiteration of the daily experience of boundaries sediments the conviction that the landscape cannot be transformed – as a result of

a hard learning of the impotence of the imagination – perhaps not even the most radical sensitive transformations of the environment are able to revive them. The landscape is not an external reality.

In July 2017, for two weeks, photographer Benoît de Carpentier and writer Fabienne Swiatly organized an artistic intervention residence with 15 inmates in the Lyon-Corbas prison. Over the course of two weeks, under the title “*J’étais loin de m’attendre*” ([www.stimultania.org/creation-d-oeuvres/jetais-loin-de-mattendre](http://www.stimultania.org/creation-d-oeuvres/jetais-loin-de-mattendre)), photographic montages and texts were made to constitute a very specific set of images, without euphemisms and counter-hegemonic about cities, landscapes and inequalities.

In the context of incarceration, the poetic gap promoted by photography and words enabled reveries of building a lyrical dimension of urban experiences, of landscape experiences, as a collective polysemic form, consisting of several voices - not necessarily consonant - and several looks - not necessarily coincident - that move us, reposition us and invite us to reframe the essentially libertarian existential dimension of the landscape experience.

The initial, provocative formulation of the artists is summarized as follows: “I was far from expecting me. As far as I can. Far as a periphery, a space, a look into the distance. Far as the horizon line ...” (Translation by the authors).<sup>6</sup>

Prison is opposed to the experience of the *pólis*. It is, in fact, their deprivation, their alienation, their negative image, their inversion. The prison is thus the reverse of the landscape, if it is not eliminated, erased, totally impossible.

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6 “J’étais loin de m’attendre. Aussi loin que je peux. Loin comme une périphérie, un espace, un regard au loin. Loin comme la ligne d’horizon...”

What landscape experiences would be more unequal than those compared between those who live in freedom and those who live in prison?

It is there, in the path of the interrogation, that the interns and the artists started their daydreams and jointly moved memory and project, generating a collective poem entitled “*Je viens*” fragmented here in some extracts: “I come from the hills and the valleys, I come from the rivers and the undergrowth. I come from there where I want to return. I come from there where I want to die. But I’ve said too much already. I come from the void, the one I am chasing and which will arise during my last breath. I come from the street who taught me to be tough. I come from silence, from which our psyche is built. I come from anger and misunderstanding. I come from here and elsewhere. Prostration is the culmination of tranquility.”<sup>7</sup> (Translation by the authors)

To this poetics of origin, then, is added the dialectic between a poetics of becoming in wide spaces and the restricted prison space: “*Aujourd’hui je voudrais être demain*”.

Fly in the hardness  
Levitate above the gates  
Fly over concrete  
Noisy clouds  
Again, I can't move ... Inert. I feel his presence. He's there.  
Lying down, head empty  
Away from my body.

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7 “Je viens des collines et des vallées, je viens des rivières et des sous bois. Je viens de là où je veux revenir. Je viens de là où je veux mourir. Mais j’en dis déjà trop. Je suis issu du vide, celui que je poursuis et qui se présentera lors de mon dernier souffle. Je viens de la rue qui m’a appris à être solide. Je viens du silence, d’où se construit notre psyché. Je viens de la colère et de l’incompréhension. Je viens d’ici et d’ailleurs. La prosternation est le point culminant de la quiétude.”

My mind escapes in the starry night  
and the silence of the prison.  
Sitting on a rock.  
Dry grass.  
I do not think about anything  
Deprived of heaven. (Translation by the authors)<sup>8</sup>

Hence arises the reinvented *pólis*, the "*villes inventées*":

You know you are not crazy but you do not yet find your  
place in this world.  
You are in prison and you will have to break down barriers  
to meet others.  
This is not an invented city. (Translation by the authors)<sup>9</sup>

What possible cities are we failing to imagine?

Will we face inequalities in their existential and political nature – specific of the *pólis* – or will we continue to hide them with design solutions,

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8 "Vole dans le dur  
Lévite au-dessus des grilles  
Vole au-dessus du béton  
Nuages de bruits  
Encore une fois, je n'arrive pas à bouger... Inerte. Je sens sa présence. Il est là.  
Allongé, tête vide  
Loin de mon corps.  
Mon esprit s'évade dans la nuit étoilée  
et le silence de la prison.  
Assis sur un rocher.  
Herbe sèche."

9 "Tu sais que tu n'es pas fou mais tu ne trouves pas encore ta place dans ce monde.  
Tu es en prison et il te faudra faire tomber les barrières pour rencontrer les autres.  
Ceci n'est pas une ville inventée."

architectural and urban solutions suitable for “naturalization” and preservation of the status quo?

What roles will we assign to technology and techniques in the face of inequality and exclusion? The role of euphemizing unequal landscapes by overlaying them with homogenizing digital information or is it possible to assign a role as counter-hegemonic tectonics? Will we soon install HD audiovisual windows to live comfortably with the widening of inequality or will we give techniques a central and transforming role in processes and direct interventions on the sensitive conditions of living in the metropolises?

Would we be facing the consolidation of a spatial paradigm – as opposed to the ground continuity of the modernist *res publica*, in which architecture, urbanism, landscaping and design support the construction of discontinuous private scenarios that, fundamentally, depend on hiding the growing urban inequalities to build more “*fakelandscapes*” for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Where are the gaps in contesting and reinventing other counter-hegemonic landscapes in Lyon?

Can a common, public, urban landscape still stand in the voids of the architectural delusions of ultra-privatization of urban life in São Paulo?

# SLUMS IN LATIN AMERICA PRACTICES BETWEEN SELF-CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

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## Introduction

This essay is an extract of a broader study conducted between 2018 and 2019, with the aim of examining practices of self-construction and design in slum contexts, in order to identify their positive and negative aspects. As this phenomenon is present in many areas of the world, it was decided to focus on the Latin American case because the urbanization rate that brought about the formation of slums has reduced and stabilized in this region.

Nowadays, the attention on this theme is growing, as shown by the sources examined. Books, architectural magazines and reports were important for collecting data, statistics and projects related to slums. However, these sources are just a portion, as they are compared and integrated with other tools, such as articles, interviews and videos that are able to

present not just the architectural point of view but also the perspective of informal communities. Instruments such as Google Earth and Google Street View were fundamental for seeing the impact of time on some of the projects presented. After collecting all the necessary information, the study was divided into four chapters.

In the first chapter, *The Case of Latin America*, the word *slum* is analysed in order to understand what this term means today and what its characteristics are. Latin American cities are divided into informal and formal parts, represented by the slum in the first case and by the gated community in the second.

The second chapter, *Historical Background*, is a chronological reconstruction of social, economic, political and architectural events that have generated Latin American cities.

In the third chapter, *Self-construction*, the study focuses on the perspective of the informal communities. Some informal cases are shown in order to underline how slum communities are capable of managing their problems without the presence of an architect. This step was important in order to understand which elements can be useful for architectural practice.

In the fourth chapter, *Design*, architectural projects from the last few decades are analysed. Selected because of their positive impact on Latin American cities, these projects are divided into three main themes: housing, indeterminate places and environment. In the first case, the incremental housing of Elemental is analysed and compared with the PREVI project in order to verify successes and failures years after their construction. In the second case, buildings for culture and education, meeting places and connections are examined. Their importance lies in the iconic power given to public spaces, which can become points of reference for entire communities and cities and, consequently, a means of reducing the distance between the formal and informal city. In the third case, the study

focuses on a theme that is frequently underestimated, which is the relationship between human settlements and the environment. Informal settlements are often located in areas liable to natural disasters, proving their fragility compared to projects that consider this an important issue.

## **The Case of Latin America**

### **What Is a Slum?**

The word *slum* was coined during the XIX century to indicate those settlements which arose during the mass migration from the countryside to the industrial cities (Paone, Petrillo and Chiodelli 2017). Its original denigratory meaning, which branded the settlers as a cancer for cities due to their immoral lifestyle, is nowadays abandoned; today it indicates an informal or non-planned settlement, realized through irregular and illegal processes. This means that slums are not built in compliance with minimal standards and that they do not have a legally recognized owner. They lack basic services, drinking water, electricity, transport, infrastructure, etc. In addition, the instability of the buildings, constructed with waste materials, makes informal settlements incompatible with environmental conditions. For these reasons, slums are characterised by social exclusion, poverty and high levels of criminality (De Filippi 2009).

According to the *Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*, entitled *The Challenges of Slums*, in 2001, the number of people living in slums in Latin America was approximately 128 million, equal to 14% of the world population in informal settlements (Paone, Petrillo and Chiodelli 2017). The 2012 UN–Habitat report related that the number of people living in poverty in the LAC region was 180 million (33%) and that 71 million of them (13%) were destitute; however, showing a decrease from 48% in 1990 to 33% in

2009. In the last few decades, access to basic services has grown in Latin America, reaching almost full access to electricity (97–100%), water (97%) and healthcare (86%). Despite the fact that these numbers do not reflect the conditions, cost or quality of these services, Latin American slums have better conditions compared to informal settlements in other developing countries (UN–Habitat 2012).

In the current age, the number of people migrating from the countryside and minor centres to cities is growing. According to UN–Habitat, in 2050, the world population will be 9 billion, and 70% of this population (almost 6.5 billion) will be living in major cities, leading to the birth of new megalopolises (>10 million inhabitants) and hypercities (>20 million inhabitants) (Paone, Petrillo and Chiodelli 2017). According to Alejandro Aravena, in order to be able to sustain this increase, a city for a million people should be built every week for the next 15 years, with a budget of \$10,000 per family. In this scenario, “[...] with the right design, slums and favelas may not be the problem but actually the only possible solution” (Aravena 2014).

### **The Scission of Cities. Slums vs Gated Communities**

Nowadays, inequalities and the fear of the other are increasing, although these are not recent phenomena. Cities are the example of how these are reflected in the shape of the city, “powerful machine of distinction and separation, of marginalisation and exclusion of ethnical and religious groups, of activities and professions, of individuals and groups equipped with different identity and status, of rich and poor.” (translated from Secchi 2013, 3) Architects and governments have forgotten that many choices for a single building or parts of a city have consequences on interpersonal relationships, establishing situations of inclusion or exclusion (Secchi 2013).

Latin America is the region of the world with the most visible inequalities, as shown by “the distribution of income, [...] housing conditions, access to goods and services (education, health, finance etc.), by employment opportunities, heritage and access to public space [...]” (UN–Habitat 2012, 44–45). Latin American cities are characterised by strong exclusion, as underlined by the presence of gated communities: a type of neighbourhood surrounded by walls, gates and security systems to protect the richest from the poorest, which live close to them because they often work inside these environments (Secchi 2013). A clarifying example is shown by pictures of the Paraisópolis favela and the luxury neighbourhood of Morumbi in São Paulo, where two distant realities live side by side, separated by a wall (Figure 1). This “architecture of fear” characterizes many countries with large economic inequalities, such as Brazil and Venezuela (Davis 2006). Because of criminality, gated communities have grown, becoming gated cities with their own services and public roads able to connect with other gated communities, as happens in Santiago de Chile, where motorways have been built to connect rich neighbourhoods (UN–Habitat 2016).

In Buenos Aires, there are more than 400 gated communities with 90,000 houses. Among them, the Mayling Country Club, which is equipped with tennis courts, polo fields and golf courses. In its proximity, the Pinazo informal settlement is close to a river that constantly overflows, damaging the fragile houses built with bricks and aluminium (UN–Habitat 2016).

What emerges in these examples is that Latin American cities play a part in which the developing index is equal to a European city and at the same time a part in which this index is similar to a low developed African city (Orofino 2014). In Rio de Janeiro, a short walk in Porto Maravilha demonstrates how a city changes dramatically from a rich to a poor part.

## Cleaning the Image of Cities

On many occasions, informal settlers are expelled from their shelters, especially during the preparation of particular events related to state visits, sports, international festivals, etc. (Davis 2006). In these circumstances, entire cities become showcases where qualities are shown and problems hidden. In Buenos Aires, during the 1978 FIFA World Cup, an entire neighbourhood was walled up and renamed *Ciudad Oculta* (Hidden City) (Pintus and Mistretta 2017). Another example is the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, where money was used to build skyscrapers, huge streets, luxurious buildings, Olympic parks and stadiums. The city became a giant building site where informal communities were forced to leave their houses, just as happened in Vila Autódromo, where 500 families were evicted in order to realize an Olympic park (McGuirk 2014). Currently: Forced evictions are incredibly violent and, of course, unconstitutional. And yet, they happen so often in so many of our cities because the first thing we are taught to forget about poor people is that they are people. We believe that a home is a thing a person absolutely has a right to, unless the person is poor and the home is built a certain way in a certain neighbourhood. But there is no single definition of the word "home." After all, what is a slum besides an organic response to acute housing deficits and income inequality? And what is a shanty if not a person making a home for themselves against all odds? Slums are an imperfect housing solution, but they are also prime examples of the innovation, adaptability and resilience at the foundation - and the heart - of every functional city. (Adegbeye 2017)

Despite this, there are also cases in which communities win their fights in order to stay in their houses. Villa 31 in Buenos Aires was founded in 1932 and it is now crossed by two important infrastructures, which

gives this location an important economic value. During the years, many were the attempts to destroy this settlement, but they always failed. Today, thanks to a requalification project (not realized yet), the city administration has changed its idea towards this slum, becoming not just an observer but an active promoter of this proposal (Pintus and Mistretta 2017).

### **Theme Diffusion**

Today, the behaviour towards informal settlements is changing, making them an object of interest and study by architects, students, international competitions, etc., from Mike Davis's *Planet of Slums* (2006), in which dramatic aspects are reported with a rawness, and Justin McGuirk's *Radical Cities* (2014), in which successes and failures of projects are described, to architectural magazines (*Lotus*, *Architectural Design*, etc.).

Among the media that reaches the public, photography is more immediate: JR representing women's faces in Rio's favela and Leonardo Finotti denouncing the absence of public spaces, are just an example. However, films have a more rapid diffusion: from *Cidade de Deus* (2002), that shows the namesake favela in Rio de Janeiro, to Hollywood action movies (*Fast and Furious 5*), in which views of informal settlements can be seen, right up to recent tv series, such as *Narcos*, which shows the relationship between informality and drug trafficking.

These powerful kinds of media have contributed to making slums more visible, both in good and bad ways. However, it is really important to keep in mind that issues in informal settlements really exist, without transforming this theme into a fashionable one. It is necessary to see these settlements not as a problem to solve but as a source from which positive aspects can be taken and negative ones can be improved.

Hence, it is crucial to know and understand how this phenomenon developed in Latin America.

## Chapter 2: Historical Background

Between the 1940s and the 1950s, Latin American countries abandoned the agroexport model to embrace the industrial one in order to emerge from the Great Depression. Governments assumed a central role in economic planning (*desarrollismo*), generating an economic and cultural expansion. Principles of European and North American Modernism were used as an instrument to solve issues concerning rural migration, city expansion and health. This attitude had consequences on local, rural and indigenous cultures, which were marginalised and considered an obstacle to the economic and cultural development (Santa Cruz Grau 2010).

The diffusion of Modernism in Latin America began during the 1920s in Mexico with architecture characterised by simple volumes representing historical and national elements. In the other countries, this movement developed differently, especially when European educated intellectuals and democratic or authoritarian Latin American governments started building connections, taking advantage of post WWII prosperity. In this scenario, Le Corbusier was able to diffuse his ideas and established a multitude of relationships with Latin American architects (Benevolo [1960] 2014).

These two decades were characterised by the want of governmental presence, which ignored the rapid development of informal settlements, considering them as a transitory phenomenon and believing that the flourishing economy would solve the problem. Superblocks, such as 23 de Enero in Caracas, were used to begin the “modern life” through clearing and demolition practices and the deployment of people to land with very low economic value (Paone, Petrillo and Chiodelli 2017).

During the 1960s, the precedent economic model proved to be a failure because of the vast growth of populations and cities. The consequent spreading of various social issues led to two different politics. The first was revolution, inspired by Guevarism, which failed in almost all

Latin American countries; the second was an authoritarian market policy used by military dictatorships promoted by the USA (Santa Cruz Grau 2010). In these years, Brazilian *favelas* were considered a breeding ground for the development of Peronist and communist ideas. Because of that, Brazil, helped by the USA, decided to produce a series of social housing projects, building almost 40.000 houses and moving the 30% of its population to city borders, which soon became *favelas* too (*National* 2016). Between 1960 and 1975, 175.000 people were affected by slum clearance practices in the biggest eviction in the history of Brazil (McGuirk 2014). Cidade de Deus was one of the neighbourhoods born to host people expelled by Carlo Lacerda's policies (1960–65).

The 1970s were characterised by economic recession, overcrowding in cities and an increase in political conflicts (Santa Cruz Grau 2010). While Modernism disappeared in Europe and the USA, it survived in Latin America through social housing projects, still promoted by military dictatorships (McGuirk 2014). It was a decade of great uncertainties, in which cities grew excessively, highlighting how urban renewal strategies were bringing advantages just to a small part of the population. Governments opted for sites-and-services solutions, creating some basic infrastructures and letting people build their own houses; in other cases, governments surrendered to the occupation of land, as happened in Villa El Salvador in Lima and Campamento Nueva Habana in Chile (Benevolo 2014).

In this situation, the ideas of British architect John Turner started spreading, shaking public opinion for stating that Latin American countries should surrender to informal settlements, as only communities themselves are conscious of their social and economic issues (McGuirk 2014). The PREVI project in Peru is considered to be the greatest social housing experiment in Latin America, based on John Turner's ideas (McGuirk 2011). PREVI started as an international competition in which 13 Peru-

vian and 13 foreign studios were involved in order to solve the housing issue in this country (McGuirk 2014). Architects were asked to abandon the superblock model in order to adopt a human scale settlement with low scale buildings and high density; it was also required to imagine a future expansion of each proposal because Peruvian slum houses expand according to family growth (Kahatt 2011).

These new ideas and projects put into discussion models and procedures developed in the Third World during the last fifty years. Modernism tried to solve discriminations caused by traditional urban planning, though failing and generating a great scission in cities, divided into formal and informal parts. The introduction of European and North American standards proved to be inadequate for local realities, in which the purchase of a shelter was possible for low-income people and not for poor ones, who felt obliged to act through informal practices and, consequently, to be considered as a problem (Benevolo [1960] 2014).

The 1980s were marked by the damage caused in the last decades by military dictatorships, especially by those born during the 1973 oil crisis. They multiplied and showed the same problems: nationalism, state control over economy, substantial public expenditure and increase of foreign debt. International organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, pressured Latin American countries to reduce their public expenditure through heavy austerity measures. The 1980s are called “the lost decade” because all the existent problems became gigantic, proving the failure of the continent’s development. Countries lost control over cities, where the informal grew dramatically and criminality spread through powerful drug cartels, capable of dominating entire cities such as Cali and Medellín (Santa Cruz Grau 2010). In this scenario, Pablo Escobar, the most famous Colombian drug dealer, built an entire neighbourhood in Medellín, where today live almost 15.000 people. This intervention had

such an impact on the population that many of them still venerate Escobar as a modern Robin Hood. In fact, this *barrio* is the perfect example for understanding how government absenteeism is able to create physical and social divisions within cities and generate a lack of confidence towards public institutions (Brown 2017).

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, dictatorships fell and democracies arose. Government control was reduced, bringing small economic advantages, but not enough to reduce economic and social injustices. The construction sector was seen as the key factor for economic growth and cities were left to private companies, who built the first gated communities in Mexico and Argentina. In other cases, minor state control was used by wise mayors to solve city problems, especially those related to vehicular traffic and mobility (Santa Cruz Grau 2010).

In Brazil, the slum-upgrading programme *Favela-Bairro* (1994–2008) changed the perception of favelas, now seen as useful and resourceful parts of cities. Informal settlements were officially recognized and indicated on maps. This program wished to reconnect favelas through the improvement of mobility and the creation of squares and meeting points in order to re-establish a sense of community (McGuirk 2014). The simple gesture of numbering houses and giving streets a name was important to make communities feel recognized as part of the population (Inter-American Development Bank and Prefeitura da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro, n.d.).

In the 2000s, the Argentine Great Depression brought left-wing parties to power in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia and Ecuador. Despite the major focus on social issues, these new governments were able to find a balance with global economy. Social conflicts were reduced, economic and political stability improved and foreign investment increased (Santa Cruz Grau 2010). In Brazil, the programme *Minha Casa Minha Vida* and *Morar Carioca* followed the ideas of *Favela-Bairro*, but without the same

success: the first one provided the promised number of houses but with low quality and at the outskirts of cities (McGuirk 2014), while the second one was used as a political tool to win elections by former mayor Eduardo Paes and was then abandoned (CatComm, n.d.). Despite certain practices still being used today, there are few wise countries, administrations and designers that try to overturn this situation, hoping for a reconnection between the formal and informal city (see chapter 4).

### **Chapter 3: Self-construction**

In Latin America, informal settlements have developed as a consequence of the massive migration from the countryside to the city. Due to this rapid phenomenon, slums are an aggregate of informal constructions that lack all the facilities that formal ones have, and whose price is unsustainable for many people. In these landscapes that suffer from high density and lack of public spaces, the football pitch represents not merely a game field, but an important meeting place for communities, as shown by Leonardo Finotti's photographs in São Paulo (*Lotus International*, "Lo spazio condiviso", 2013).

In this chapter are presented some cases in which informal settlers became planners and architects of their own, showing how communities are able to deal with their own social and economic issues.

#### **3.1 Capitalism Contradictions. Vertical Occupation**

Skyscrapers are a symbol of great economic hope. Nevertheless, when expectations fail, they are abandoned before or after being built, becoming dangerous structures within cities. While in the past, informal settlers occupied land without any economic value, today they do so by squatting in uninhabited vertical buildings. This practise, which is very

common in Brazil, can have two endings: a happy one, when communities are helped to make a building habitable, like in Cortiço Rua Solon in São Paulo; or a dramatic one, when squatters are forced to leave, like in Wilton Paes de Almeida in the aforementioned city.

Among all the possible examples, the Torre David in Caracas is one of the most interesting. Known as Centro Financiero Confinanzas, the Torre David is a 45 storey skyscraper designed by the Venezuelan architect Enrique Gómez and left incomplete during the 1990s, after its constructor's death. Conceived as the symbol of capitalism, squatters entered the building on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, 2007, thereby becoming a symbol of redistribution where 3,000 people used to live. The financier of the tower, David Brillembourg, from whom the building took its name, wanted to realize one of the most luxurious office complexes in Latin America, driven by the excessive optimism towards the economic boom in Venezuela, which was, in reality, preparing to enter a profound economic crisis (McGuirk 2014).

In this tower it is possible to notice how a community is capable of organizing and adapting itself within a perilous place. As a matter of fact, the building exposes its residents to daily risks because of the lack of protective elements such as façades and stair rails. Lifts are absent, and arriving at the top floors can be difficult, especially when transporting goods. That is why the squatters had the idea of using a car and travelling along the parking ramps to deliver goods; however, not every floor has a stop and legs become the only way of transporting them. Surprisingly, the public space here is present with an indoor dimension: corridors become streets in which shops are set, while the entry hall becomes a basketball field ([Figure 2](#)) (McGuirk 2014). Even though the squatters asked the government to be recognized as a community (McGuirk 2014), in 2014 they were expelled with their families and sent to the outskirts of Caracas (*La Repubblica* 2014).

### 3.2 More with Less. Túpac Amaru

The *Organización Barrial Túpac Amaru* operates in the Jujuy region in Northwest Argentina. Born in 2001 and led by the Indian Kolla Milagro Sala, the organization was able to build a small city with 4,690 houses (2012) without any architect's intervention. This settlement has generated 4,500 work places (Palumbo and Buj 2012), as everything is managed by the community itself, which realizes buildings brick by brick and produces the necessary construction materials inside its factories.

Its leader, Milagro Sala, truly believes in giving the maximum to those who have nothing: that is why the settlement is equipped with many facilities, such as swimming pools (Figure 3), theme parks, a school, a library, a hospital, sports fields, etc. For Sala, having a swimming pool is a sort of revenge against rich people, as in her childhood she was forbidden to swim in them because of the colour of her skin (McGuirk 2014).

Everything is built thanks to state subsidies, according to an agreement with the Argentinian government in which the realization of 1,000 houses per year is allowed, receiving 93,000 pesos (23,000\$) for each unit. Usually, five people are employed in the building of each unit, who work freely to obtain their own house. These workers are able to complete a unit four times faster than a private company, which uses 136,000 pesos to make one house (McGuirk 2014).

Túpac Amaru is an example that highlights how it is possible to operate out of the market, where state subsidies are fully used for houses and facilities, without any mediator whose aim is personal profit. It is a kind of gated community, but without gates, barriers or walls: a place where people in need are welcomed (McGuirk 2014).

Despite all good intentions, Milagro Sala was condemned to thirteen years reclusion for criminal association, embezzlement and extortion: a sentence that caused a great political division, with the former President

of Peru Cristina Fernández and the former President of Bolivia Evo Morales declaring the existence of a political persecution against Sala and her organization (Ricchini 2019).

### 3.3 Art for Redefining Landscape

Murals have the power of overturning the aesthetic of informal settlements and, most importantly, of generating social change. Favela Painting is an example of the collaboration between communities and the artists *has&hahn* (Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn), whose message is “Community art for social change” (Favela Painting, “Community Art for Social Change,” n.d.). As a matter of fact, through these artistic projects, it is possible to guarantee greater safety, eliminate prejudice against slum communities and draw attention to forgotten parts of cities (Favela Painting, “Community Art for Social Change,” n.d.). In the Santa Marta favela, people were involved in the change of Praça Cantão (Haas&Hahn 2014), where thirty-four houses that define this public space were painted with a series of rays from the centre of the square, hitting the buildings in a game of bright colours ([Figure 4](#)) (Favela Painting, “Praça Cantão,” n.d.).

Another collective of artists who work in this field is Boa Mistura. The act of painting is considered by these artists as a powerful instrument that, with a simple and immediate effect, is capable of bringing a sense of community and belonging and re-establishing lost relationships. Their aim is also to teach art by encouraging the education of young local artists. Their process always starts with the immersion into communities, by living with them in order to be accepted, knowing the contest and beginning an exchange of ideas. In the next steps, communities are asked to get more involved, but without forcing them, so that they can decide if, when and how to participate, according to their necessities (Boa Mistura,

“Crossroads,” n.d.). *Somos Luz* (We Are Light) is a giant message written on a building façade in Panama City, in a neighbourhood controlled by 14 gangs (Boa Mistura, “Somos Luz,” n.d.). The project also invested in all the common spaces, thanks to the community, whose happiness with this idea is tangible in Doña Yolanda’s words:

The word light, beautiful and meaningful as it sounds in some way, reminds us that there is still life in here. For us, the word “light” can mean a lot of things, despite all the poverty and unkindness surrounding us. [...]. When the sun rises there is light and where there is light, there is life. By writing a sign that says “Light” it means that we are alive and there is still hope inside of us. [...]. And it is very important, because in some way, you gave us joy, when you came along... You guys make us feel like there is still hope. It’s a way of transmitting us energy to encourage us to keep fighting. (Boa Mistura, “Somos Luz,” n.d.)

These works in which communities are involved represent a strong example of how, through the simplicity of colours, writing and symbols, it is possible to create a new sense of belonging and bring peace to territories in which everyday life is difficult.

#### **Chapter 4: Design**

The projects presented in this chapter are “acupuncture” interventions (Lerner 2014), whose aim is to revitalize and change the situation of slums. The role of the “activist architect” emerges, whose purpose is to find solutions through a compromise among communities, politics and economy; a new designer, conscious of the rapid changes of the informal city, for which a flexible and participative planning is necessary (McGuirk 2014). The following examples create a new connection between formal

and informal cities in order to establish the “right to the city” (Lefebvre [1968] 2014); United Nations 2017, 5) where both rich and poor can benefit from the possibilities that cities offer.

#### 4.1 Incremental Housing

Housing is a major problem in Latin America and today Alejandro Aravena and his studio Elemental are trying to solve this problem with alternative solutions. This firm uses the concept of incremental housing, in other words dwellings that expect a future expansion. These are half built, thanks to state subsidies, which, however, are insufficient for the realization of an entire building, while the other half is left to self-construction (Aravena 2011).

Despite Aravena being considered the creator of this concept, the PREVI project in Lima presents a similar idea. For this reason, in this paragraph the two cases are analysed through their transformation over the years in order to identify their successes and failures. The Elemental projects examined are Quinta Monroy (2004), Lo Espejo (2007) and Renca (2009). From this study, five aspects have emerged.

The first is about funding. PREVI was built, thanks to a significant sum of money from the United Nations, while Elemental projects are financed with low amounts, proving how governments today are less available in supporting social housing (McGuirk 2011).

The second aspect examines expansion. Although considered in both proposals, the increment in PREVI ([Figure 5](#) year 1978 on the left, year 2003 on the right) is freer and less controlled compared to Elemental ([Figure 6](#) year 2004, [Figure 7](#) year 2008), where it is always defined by the bearing structure or the shape of each piece of land, which today are almost fully occupied. Here lies the problem of allowing the invasion of the open space, while PREVI imagined a vertical expansion. It is visible

how in PREVI, the additions have generated a great variety, breaking the monotony of which modern and contemporary architecture are often accused of; this can also be attributed to Elemental's projects, where the maximum differentiation seems to be given by the colours of facades.

The third aspect concerns the public space. PREVI shows a great masterplan, in a collage in which every different prototype is connected to a system of roads, alleys and public spaces that, after decades, have proved to be successful. On the other hand, in Elemental's projects the public space is reduced to central courts, which are not as developed as PREVI's, leading to a possible future occupation of these places and, consequently, the typical slum overcrowding.

The fourth aspect pertains to economy. Both examples show an increment of property values and the development of business activities, thanks to the integration with their respective cities. Despite this, communities have not abandoned their neighbourhoods, manifesting an attachment to the place because of emotional, working and positional factors, a success of both proposals.

The last aspect is participation. In PREVI, the designers were asked to study the communities from the *barriadas* of Lima and reinterpret their needs; with Elemental, the inclusion of communities passes through a more complicated and sometimes exhausting process. However, both proposals were able to reinterpret people's needs without creating a pre-established model.

## 4.2 Sewing Up Wounds of City and Society

Colombia is an example of how the relationship between wise administrations and private enterprises generates projects which are able to change a country's image, not only aesthetically but also socially. Former Medellín mayor Sergio Fajardo states that building spaces for culture and

education have the function of reducing social inequalities, while parks and squares become safe public spaces, promoting a reconciliation after years in which the war between drug cartels and governments has led to the weakening of public life in the streets (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004-2007).

Among all the projects that have brought a change, the Biblioteca España (Figure 8) stands out as a totem in the slum landscape of Medellín, as if it wants to denounce the existence of forgotten parts of the city. Thanks to its iconic and monumental shapes given by three black masses that rise from the hills, this building today is a symbol of identity, not just for the neighbourhood, but for the entire city, creating a connection between the formal and informal city (Piccarolo 2017).

In the same city, the Colegio Antonio Derka (Figure 9) takes elements from the surrounding context such as balconies and terraces, becoming another important landmark. Its rooftop, in fact, is a vast terrace with a privileged view of the city and a stratagem for equipping the neighbourhood with more spaces for civic, recreational and sport activities (ObraNegra, n.d.), showing how projects can be fluid in their uses.

These features are also visible in places like El Bosque de la Esperanza (Figure 10). It is basically a roof structure, but its aspect allows this object to be a meeting point for communities, making them feel recognized as part of the city.

All these examples, whether they concern big buildings or simple structures, aim towards the same goal: giving slums a public space, which would otherwise be absent. This space is undefined and fluid, as a library and a roof structure are not only what they appear to be. In actual fact, they generate strategies to create a public space with a strong social impact, as a consequence of their reconversion to other uses.

Even connections end up assuming the same iconic role in the for-

mation of the public space. The great scission between the formal and informal city has led to the creation of physical and social barriers, leaving entire *barrios* to their own destiny, often due to the absence of connections among neighbourhoods. Stairs, bridges, cable cars (Figure 11) and buses try to reduce this inaccessibility, allowing people to discover unexplored places. The power of these projects lies in their ability to stitch together the formal and the informal city, through a process of prejudice elimination against slum populations. These actions, in their simplicity, also allow for the development of useful structures for communities, which contribute to the growing sense of belonging.

### 4.3 Avoiding Natural Disasters

Latin America is a region exposed to natural phenomena such as storms, hurricanes, droughts, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis, which can be catastrophic; these events contribute to worsening the fragile situation of informal settlements and their relationship with the landscape. Climate change is increasing these episodes, which manifest in places where they never appeared before, as happened with hurricane Catarina that hit the southern Brazilian coasts in March 2004. The fear brought by these episodes led cities like Quito to release a plan to replace 1,500 families from zones with high natural disaster risks to safer land between 2011 and 2012 (UN–Habitat 2012).

Furthermore, the retreat of glaciers and the consequent rising of the sea level by 3 mm per year since the 1980s will affect the coastlines of this region, where there are 60 of the 77 most populated cities, such as the more vulnerable Cartagena, Guayaquil and Havana (UN–Habitat 2012).

Fortunately, there are examples of cities that are trying to change their behaviour towards nature, experimenting solutions which can reduce risks both for nature and communities.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2010, the Chilean coastal city of Constitución was 80% destroyed by the impact of a tsunami, caused by an 8.8 magnitude (Richter scale) earthquake (*Lotus International*, “Cosa viene per primo?”, 2013). A hundred people died and all basic services were lost: no water, food, electricity, communication and houses. In this dramatic scenario, a hundred days were given to Elemental studio in order to rebuild the city, but more importantly they were asked to find a solution to protect the city from future disasters. The population also asked to solve the everyday problems such as floods caused by heavy rains, the absence of public spaces and the integration of the river Maule as a symbol of identity (Aravena 2014). The proposal for the reconstruction is focussed on the creation of a forest that does not try to resist the power of nature, but dissipates its impact ([Figure 12](#) the city after the catastrophe, [Figure 13](#) the forest project); a system of gateways to bring people up to the hills in a few minutes; new buildings capable of re-establishing a sense of safety and community, such as a bus terminal for mobility, a school to offer education and food to children, a fire station to intervene rapidly in the case of emergency, a theatre to host public events and a cultural centre to help people begin social relationships (Aravena 2013).

## Conclusions

What is the Latin American lesson and which ideas are useful for designing cities?

The division between slum and gated community underlines the necessity to establish the so called “right to the city”, in which rich and poor can benefit from the same possibilities offered by cities, instead of creating such closely neighbouring yet opposing environments.

The historical examples have proven that it is impossible to impose a standard lifestyle in such a varied world, where architects have the fundamental role of interpreting people's needs.

The examples of self-construction teach us that less is more. Informal inhabitants are able to optimize every resource and minimise waste, while the occidental lifestyle is disastrous when resources are used inappropriately. However, these examples are the result of precarious situations without a real architectural culture and they should be read as a fundamental starting point to understand which strategies can be used for the resolution of such a complicated situation.

The architectural projects show how the figure of the “activist architect” is becoming part of the scenario, whose aim is to produce architecture able to generate fluxes and connections in a constant relationship between communities and politics.

Housing is a starting point in the formation of a city, and informal settlements are the living proof of this. A primary characteristic emerges that distinguishes self-construction from design: slums prove that the lack of planning has generated very dense portions of cities in which the public space is absent. The incremental housing does not reject the practice of self-construction but makes it its own, trying to solve the issues connected to uncontrolled expansion. There is a mixture of the two practices, which seemed to be very distant, but which today appear to be a solution for the rapid city development.

Schools, libraries and undefined places demonstrate the importance for cities to create buildings that avoid the waste of resources and space. The mistake of many cities around the world is that they have generated a landscape dominated by structures that can be used for only one function and for a limited period of time during the day. This contributes to an

excessive expansion of cities that should be reduced, especially keeping in mind the impact that settlements have on the environment.

It is exactly in the relationship between settlements and the environment that the biggest gap between design and self-construction emerges. Design has a mix of fundamental knowledge that the latter does not possess. Landscape is not an embellishment, but an essential element that makes the relationship between human and natural life possible. However, these projects have a vast scale and include complicated components, meticulous studies and implementation phases that require accurate planning; all such characteristics being absent in self-construction.

In conclusion, cities and the world population are growing rapidly, and this will put in danger our principles, as has already happened in Latin America. This region is a breeding ground for developing new ideas, through a design that includes self-construction. We are living in a time of great social and climate changes that are bound to be catastrophic. Our future is uncertain and, consequently, architectural practice has to pay attention to the way it is going to develop. It is necessary to ask ourselves questions about pollution, climate migration and overcrowding that the new generation of architects will face in the next decade. These architects should be able to reduce situations of exclusion generated by cities through flexible and participative planning, becoming not just the interpreter of human beings and their culture but also of the ecosystems that host life.

# THE “BECOMING” OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE GENIUS LOCI AND THE CONCEPT OF PLACE

SUSANA M. LIMA

## **Landscape Architecture *in Becoming***

The notion of landscape has evolved over time, initially with a common idea of landscape that refers to “the sight of beautiful scenes of terrestrial nature”; however, this idea *“does not recognize that the majority of the world's population lives daily in cities, suburbs and clandestine neighbourhoods. The conventional idea of landscape is not only restrictive in its scope; it transforms nature into a visual object from a single point of view”* (BERLEANT, 2014, p. 347).

The complexity arises from the fact that landscapes are never stationary, that is, they do not crystallize; they are constantly evolving and transforming, as the very definition of landscape itself, which evolved from the picturesque (TREIB, 2005, p. 52-73) and bucolic scenarios to the emergence of new concepts and expressions such as “urban landscape”, “material landscape” and “immaterial landscape”.

During the 14th century, landscape was to be, essentially, a pictorial creation sketched after a typical occurrence in the representation of medieval illuminations, for which a work by Ambrogio Lorenzetti is invoked, in reference to the *fresco* of the Communal Palace of Siena, entitled “Allegory of Good Government on City and Country Life”, dated 1338. The paintings are constantly based on representing the contrast between the city and the countryside, which reveal a renewed taste for complex country life, forgotten since Roman times and now replenished with enthusiasm.

This is a constant theme in Art, and it made its apogee especially during the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when romanticism and naturalistic and impressionist schools of painting developed, with personalities such as Giovanni Canaletto, John Constable (see paintings: “Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds” (1823), “Weymouth Bay” (c. 1816)) among other artists). They preferred to compose their paintings with nature itself rather than use only their imagination, recurring to observational studies of landscape in order to become more scientific and realistic.

The concept of landscape should be highlighted, distinguished and characterized concerning landscape architecture; its evolution since when the study was predominantly vegetal, to the present where the science of the transformation of the territory prevails (APRILE, 1998). Although, as Brenda Colving (1970) said,

“Landscape architecture, like architecture itself, is concerned with the design of the human environment. The two forms of design have much in common but differ profoundly in that architecture deals with the man-made, roofed-in structures of static material, while landscape architecture deals with out-door surroundings of human life and with ever-changing materials. They differ, too, in other important ways, particularly in their scale.” (COLVIN, 1970, p. 113).

Through Kant's writings on "*Crítica da Faculdade do Juízo*" (1998), the landscape could be understood from a geographical analysis, whose variants for its comprehension are in the description of the morphological elements and the interrelation of the physiological elements, having as its basic characteristic:

"(...) the individuality of the place that allows us to understand the landscape as something that identifies the place, (...) [with] its own characteristics and differentiated morphological structure, even containing the same natural elements as those of other places. Local individuality would be the condition that differentiates places and this differentiation is also confirmed from the understanding of the term landscape." (Kant, 1998).

Carl O. Sauer (the American geographer of "*The morphology of Landscape*", 1925) proposed the consideration of two types of landscape: natural and cultural, and also integrated an anthropology dimension into the study of landscape. He proposed the study of cultural landscapes through the "analysis of the forms that the culture of a people creates, in the organization of their environment" (SAUER, 1925). Sauer called for the union of the physical and cultural elements of landscape whose content was found in the physical qualities and forms of landscape, natural or cultural.

If landscape is still understood through common sense to be linked to rural images (fields, nature, green, forest), for geography, the landscape is understood as the materiality of space; however, it is not the same as space. Space is the landscape and the society that inhabits it. Landscape is one of the categories of space analysis together with society, social dynamics, territorial configuration and time.

Considering the differentiation of places, landscape is more than the simple appearance, "it is a historical product", a record of human actions

or non-actions in a place. Landscape is not considered to be expressing a geographical point in this way, but rather relationships that give it individuality, and a character.

Landscape ranges from the material landscape to the cultural landscape; it is the result of human action on the territory. If from the theoretical point of view, we seek its foundation in philosophy, we find its field of intervention in architecture, exemplifying the methodologies applied through the case studies presented.

The intention here is to seek another understanding of the essence of landscape, aided by the thoughts of the Italian philosopher Rosario Assunto (2005), who “carried out the task of categorizing the landscape immanently and according to intrinsic categories, coming not from literature or art, but from ontology: landscape as a dimension of reality or of Being” (SERRÃO, 2013, p. 170).

In this sense, we rethink landscape and its conditions, and the landscape as a human artifact, revealing human action on the environment, leaving the exclusive scope of the natural, inviting other senses, endowing and connecting the environment with the human presence, because as Nietzsche says “All landscapes that speak to me durably have in their diversity a linear, simple, geometric scheme. Without such a mathematical substratum, no place becomes an object of artistic pleasure” (NIETZSCHE APUD SERRÃO 2014,P. 112).

### **Architecture and Landscape Architecture**

If the Treaty allows the rigour and quality in architectural works, we must not forget the issue of integration in the landscape, the existing identity as well as that which is intended to be created; its meaning; its expression, in order to seek and guarantee a total, global operation, which can constitute itself as a Work of Art that is able to travel both in space and

time, or even as place and occasion, as mentioned by the Dutch Architect Aldo Van Eyck.

Aldo van Eyck evokes the notion of place and occasion to replace space and time, notions used by modernists like Sigfried Giedion (GIEDION, 1941). This reference by Van Eyck was made when he criticized and commented on Fernando Távora's projects presented in 1959 at the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM) at Otterlo, the Netherlands, such as the Vila da Feira Market and Casa de Ofir, which proclaimed a conciliatory path between Modern Architecture and the place, its circumstances, namely the “Third Way”.

Today, we live in an epoch of accelerated man-made-geological advances, namely the Anthropocene, that signal of the impact of human activity on biological, physical and chemical processes on the Earth's surface. The destruction of natural spaces by industrial and technical progress and globalization emphasizes the need to understand and care about our environment, our landscape and territory.

An architectonic approach can and must offer a bold perspective on a possible future to mitigate and care for the Earth. In the following case studies, a methodology and theoretical approach is presented that teaches and advocates the respect of local circumstances.

The architectural work of Fernando Távora allows us to approach his careful reading of local circumstances, the connection with places and its inscription on the landscape, the construction of a new place, without forgetting the constant updating and construction of an architectural language, where history and landscape appear as operative concepts to be born in mind.

It also emphasizes his concern with the physical environment, the place – the phenomenon of place, in the sense of Norberg-Schulz (1966), who comprehended the phenomenological potential in architecture as the

ability to give meaning to the environment by creating specific places, arriving at the notion of Genius Loci (NORBERG-SCHULZ, 1986), “the spirit of the place”, which allows us to establish a link with the sacred.

Távora was very sensitive to this theme. In 1960, he won a scholarship from Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian to travel between the USA and Japan and visit different cultures, landscapes and Architecture and Urbanism Schools. During his travels, he sought to discover and interpret the work of the architect Frank Lloyd Wright and his organic architecture. When he arrived to visit the house of Wright at Taliesin East (Figure 1), he had an epiphany about this building and place, and wrote in his “*Diário de Bordó*”,

“The landscape, without being great, is big, and the buildings, without being big, fit perfectly in the landscape, without, in any way becoming devalued. Taliesin's idea as a construction fell apart in my mind at that moment; Taliesin is a Landscape, Taliesin is a set, in which it is perhaps difficult to distinguish the work of God from the work of Man (...) And, where does architecture end and landscaping or urban planning begin? Nobody knows” (TÁVORA 2012, p. 231).

For Távora, this work puts into evidence the organic architecture that can create organisms; this is the possibility of symbiosis between construction and place to become landscape architecture. Távora, in this period, would already know the path that architecture wanted to take. Perhaps Wright had been the confirmation of the assumptions, the relationship with the territory and sensitivity to the places, the dignity of the ancient buildings applied to modernist principles. The voyage made clear to Távora the origin of this method – this way of thinking about architecture in relation to the context, the landscape, the interaction of nature and human work in spatial design.



Figure 1: Taliesin USA, Photograph taken by Fernando Távora in 1960. (MESQUITA, 2007)

Appleton also reinforces the characteristics of the place and its circumstances as factors to be taken into account in an intervention that is both global and integrative, stating that,

“The aesthetic potential of a place is influenced (if ‘determined’ is too strong a word), by the shape of the land surface, the character of its vegetation, and even its climate, nor merely because climate influences vegetation, but because the sky is an integral part of landscape and its visual properties are no less subject to the laws of nature than those of the land. (...) Places vary considerably in their susceptibility to particular kinds of meteorological phenomena and, therefore, in the balance of symbolism likely to be encountered there” (APPLETON 1996, p. 242).

## Manifestos of Landscape Architecture, the Unity in the Diversity

“‘Landscape’ in this sense, means what people have made of their environment after nature has handed it over to them” (HOSKINS, 1955 Apud APPLETON 1996, p. 9).

The aim of this research is to investigate and deepen the tensions and dynamics of both theoretical and project-orientated methodologies, beginning with Távora’s essay “*A Propósito da Estrada como Obra de Arte*” (TÁVORA, 2000) [*The road as a Work of Art*] where he explores how the landscape and the environment have been understood as well as the changes being made to them. Távora highlights the possibility of integrated and unified design even if it is to plan a motorway or road,

“The concern with the design of motorways arises in the United States with parkways and their modalities, (...) seen as having to obey four requirements: utility, safety, beauty and economy, asserting themselves, it is said that “beauty is an attribute of roads and requires the harmonious collaboration of engineering, architecture and landscaping” (...) “With regard to the geometric elements of the strokes - curves, slopes, concordances, relation between plants and longitudinal profiles and others - it is true that treaties and regulations guarantee their rigour and technical quality, avoiding many current defects that are avoided; however, when problems of integration in the landscape, identity and character of the solution to be adopted, expression and meaning are posed, that is, when the solution admits and asks for creative power, ceasing to be only technical but trying to be total, it constitutes a work of art, in the sense of a painting in movement or of a travelled sculpture, when and where time and space are associated.” (TÁVORA, 2000).

Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos evokes Kant, referring to the fact that the paradigm about the appreciation of landscape and nature has changed, saying that at the beginning “Art has to look like nature, although one is aware that it is art. (...) Nature is no longer appreciated as it appears as art, but insofar as it is really art (though superhuman)” (RIBEIRO DOS SANTOS 2014, p. 73). There is a return to nature as an aesthetic paradigm.

From my point of view, Portuguese architecture, while making its contemporary renewal of the Modern Movement, was responsible for a major contribution from the end of the fifties of the twentieth century, within the scope of the relationship between Architecture and Landscape. It has provided revealing examples, which have opened new paths of conceptual exploration for the younger generations of architects, often followed internationally.

In the landscape architecture field, architectural products represented the reinforcement of aesthetic proposals in architecture, merging the pre-existing place complexity with the desire to create new and pleasant places. This was made according to a determined and intentional aesthetic proposal that aspired to a genuine understanding of the context that has been offered as an opportunity for intervention.

In fact, in modern projects, the fusion between the architectural object and the natural space started approximately three hundred years ago, first in philosophy and aesthetics and soon after in art and in architecture, being especially important in the architecture of gardens, which at the beginning, always had the intention of building complete landscapes. Fernando Távora described this feeling, which he seeks in the humble relationship of the rural landscape of the northern countryside of Portugal, to refer in the form of classic and simple architecture, in an erudite way that only he knew how to build in the first moments of that period.

When we analyze Távora's work, namely the landscape architecture designs, as a transformation agent, it allows us as observers to experience the flow of time and the perception of this same passage, distinguishing the project-orientated and methodological attitude used, taking up ethical (HARRIES, 2000) and aesthetic values: updating landscape, incorporating new arguments into existing fragments, maintaining it. On the other hand, we identify the creation and innovation of new places through the project, thus creating the spirit of this place, as is the case of House at Ofir, “a house among the trees”. These works emerge in the architectural debate as manifestations of a new project-orientated approach, that is, a method that seeks a new language, reflecting the becoming of time.

Contemporary Portuguese architecture carries in its genetic code the incorporation of art and landscape in balance, a value that cannot be codified from the Renaissance academic tradition. Architectural authors are allowed to exercise artistic exploration of sensibilities and of other possibilities and codes, which will recombine with the construction of a place that, as architecture, becomes landscape. Architecture itself is now represented by the place, and the place is dissolved into a Landscape Architecture.

In order to identify and explore these project-orientated strategies, we compare four projects where Távora coins and explores his concept of “Landscape Architecture”, exploring them in the following lines.

### **Summer House at Ofir (1957-1958)**

“Dream of a house on the dunes.” (MENDES, 2008)

The Summer House at Ofir (1957-1958) was designed in the late 1950s as a second home for summer holidays. Ofir is the result of a quick

and decisive creative gesture, making a real compound of many factors (the family for whom the house is intended and its specific members, the architect, the land in terms of form and its vegetation, its specific organization, the wind, the traditional construction, among others) –, resulting in an insistent process of evolution and improvement of the idea mentioned in the first sketch. The site blends the pine grove with houses. In the beginning, the land was covered with several pine trees, and was formed by a light undulation, providing charming views of the river.

The house is a small building that summarizes the connection between man and nature by the shaping of the landscape itself, in this case the creation of a dune that protects the house from the sea winds, creating a space and spirit of that place itself, its *genius loci*. It includes themes such as the topography; the metaphor of corporeality and ethnology are also present in the project, which represent a whole "compound" (TOUSSAINT, 1992). In the plan, this house is rationalist and pragmatic (Figure 2), although it creates a versatile programme, which seeks to adapt to topography and landscape to enjoy the best views. As Ana Tostões (1994) summarizes, the house has an organic simplicity and harmony. The plan configures a "T" shape and is divided into three distinct areas (tripartite house): the living room, the service area (kitchen) and bedroom blocks. This type of organization illustrates the acceptance of the "living room", and the free plan and organic space of modern life, examples given by Frank Lloyd Wright's work. In the exterior, the dune and the garden fountain. (TRIGUEIROS 1993). The "T" shape of the house provides a multiplicity of situations, with interior/inside and exterior/outside spaces interlinked, and interpenetrating the surrounding environment and the house, and also the garden and closed areas. The main body is inflected towards the exterior, thus forming the patio with pine trees; a well-cut lawn, the fountain, which pours out water. The patio is open towards the

southeast and is protected from the wind by the house. Cozy passages and pathways in the private ground of the house are sheltered and are organic in terms of the relation of the house with the outside environment. The house reshapes the space, and is moulded to meet the landscape; redrawing everything; garden and pine trees approximate the architecture. The building belongs to the land, and, therefore, makes the site a new place; the house respects the wind, the sun and the landscape. It comes naturally from reality; it does not intend to suggest any reality other than that in which it arises.

That is, the house is not only a house, it is also the empty space that helps to create and define it. In fact, if we think about it a little, the fact that space and emptiness are the protagonists of architecture, it is, in the end, natural, because architecture is not only art nor just an image of historical life or of life lived by us and by others; it is also, and above all, the environment, the scene where we live our life. (ZEVI, 2002, p. 28).

Ofir is the creation of a new landscape, a landscape architecture that combines nature and construction; it is a symbiosis and a synthesis. This is a house that claims a more human architecture, placing greater attention on local cultures and people's lives, and considers the project as a moment in History.

### **Quinta da Conceição Municipal Park (1953-59)**

Quinta da Conceição is a public park located in Leça da Palmeira, owned by the council of Matosinhos, district of Porto, in Portugal, and is the result of the union of two farms – Quinta da Conceição and Quinta de Santiago, parallel to the Leça River and the Port of Leixões.

Originally, the site was the premises of the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Conceição of the Order of São Francisco, which arrived there in

1481. A few decades later, the harsh climate caused the Convent to abandon the locality. For more than three centuries the place was abandoned and sold at auction only in 1834.

“The Park was a convent of friars who settled there in the 15th century and, later, a private property. There was the avenue, the chapel, the cloister, and the tanks and, therefore, there were already elements that guaranteed a structure to maintain. Its realization lasted for years. The municipality paid me at the end of each year according to the work done. I worked there with the prior priest of the convent. I walked with stonemasons and gardeners, showing them what to do (...) all of this was happening in a very familiar, almost domestic manner”. (TÁVORA, 2002)

The architect Fernando Távora carried out the requalification intervention in the years 1956-93. This urban intervention incorporates geometrized paths, alternated with “paths with a romantic flavour”, as Fernandez (1988, p. 131) declares, that were designed in a natural way among the vegetation in order to enhance the framing of existing sculptural elements or purposely built on perspective axes.

Távora described that the conception of the work had a very familiar and spontaneous nature. During the project-design and construction, he was wandering through the park, while making decisions and giving orders to the builders and gardeners who took care of the work.

The park design seeks to incorporate the landscape tradition, where formal geometrical gardens (more formal and symmetrical gardens, such as the French gardens of Versailles by André Le Nôtre for Louis XIV) contrast with seemingly random paths (from the English Landscape gardens or English landscape park tradition, which emerged in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century), which organize the entire space and its paths. It is an experimen-

tal project: it reuses pre-existences, and continues/develops fragments and ruins; for example, the cloister was planned to combine the ruins with boxwood (*buxus*, of the family *Buxaceae*) that complete the space and evoke the old convent. Távora confronts traces of the ruin that do not impart anything about the totality of the body that constituted the work before the state of ruin. The vegetation helps to shape and organize the space; that is, the bushes were trimmed into green walls, evoking the walls that have collapsed over time, using the ornamental gardening technique – topiary. To the south, the Manuelino Portal of the convent is maintained. Thereby, the fragments evoke the memory of what was once that space.

The red walls formed two different patios; one of them shapes a square enclosure at the top of the park as the secondary entrance to the park. Their colours contrast with the green of the foliage of the several species: cedars, pines, acacias, eucalyptus, oaks, chestnuts and linden. There was inspiration in the minimalist architecture in the gardens and the use of colour of Luis Barragan (House-Studio Barragan, Chapel of Capuchinas), onto the spatial sequence of the colour of the walls. There were also Japanese influences, very common in the vanguards of Europe. Távora articulates them with the popular Portuguese architecture, always present in their projects.

There is also an alleyway (*allée* in french) that leads us to a small chapel. On the left side, there is the Tennis Pavilion and the courts, a *folie* created to punctuate the land. The pavilion supports the tennis courts, and stands at the top of the terrain, through a granite support wall – a local material used in popular architecture. The building dominates the entire area, free of vegetation parallel to the new axis of circulation. The console design of the second floor (*piano nobile*) as a viewpoint and the suspended roof emphasizes the finishing position of the building, alluding to the

cornice, at the same time symbolizing the playful function of the park. On another terrace, there is a water basin composed of three-square basins, on the axis of the main entrance. At an upper terrace, there is the old water tank and the trellis (*latada*) made of granite blocks to support the vines.

On the right side are the *boulevards*, one painted in red (Red Boulevard) and the other in yellow (Yellow boulevard), linked by organic paths among the vegetation. A staircase articulates the two boulevards: the intersection point reflects a moment of great tension: the interception of two different orthogonal systems, with contrasting colours. There is also the dramatic contrast between the pre-existing tree and the wall that is interrupted by the tree, revealing the confrontation between nature and human work. The pool was designed by Álvaro Siza, a few years later, and punctuates the landscape in the north.

The Quinta da Conceição Municipal Park ([Figure 3](#)) is primarily an exercise that integrates aesthetic and ethical values into the same project, and is able to shape the landscape and transform the landscape as a whole, not only to be admired for its picturesque aspects and aesthetics, but also as something ethical, as this intervention is an integral and conditioning part of the human habitat. In this intervention, the architect designs and combines forms, volumes and plans, relating them in order to create an organized and harmonious space.

The triumph of this project lies in the union of architecture and landscape in the way that it reorganizes the land with the pre-existing plant elements, creating a meaningful space in the same spirit as the organic master Frank Lloyd Wright. Treib refers to 'Fallingwater' (Kaufmann's Residence) to address the balance achieved in the intervention, creating a new place without trying to mimic nature, assuming its imperfections. (TREIB, 2005).

## **Gardens at Santa Marinha Costa Convent (1972-85)**

“It all started with the construction in the 9th century of a small Basilica on the slope of Penha Mountain, already historically sacred. In the 10th century, a Galician Countess [Mumadona Dias] ordered the building of a monastery, later enlarged by a Queen of Portugal. In the 16th century, a Duke of Bragança would create a University of Theology there ... And it kept growing until reaching its great splendour in the 18th century ... In 1834, with the Liberal Revolution, religious life ended abruptly and the building was transformed into private housing ... Moving towards degradation, it was then acquired by the State for the construction of a Pousada” (TÁVORA Apud TRIGUEIROS, 1993).

The Gardens at Santa Marinha Costa Monastery (1972-85) (Távora 1986), are located in an ancient Augustinian Monastery from the 12<sup>th</sup> century in the city of Guimarães. They are located on the Penha slope with a panoramic view of the historic city centre and the valley of Vale-do-Ave. They were conditioned by the pre-existence of a monastery and its evolution and expansion over time.

This case exemplifies the flow of history. The garden, with its 9 hectares, is composed of gentle walks on the botanic trail, and they appear as an aesthetic element that invite you to walk through, and inspire introspection. Nowadays, the building is a well-preserved Monument Hotel.

## **Casa dos 24 (1995-2003)**

The Casa dos 24 (1995-2003), is a building located in the historic center of Porto, a heritage area classified by UNESCO and which composes part of the urban landscape. The project is part of Porto Capital of Cultu-

re 2001, to become a Porto city Memorial, where several spaces have been refurbished and transformed to receive the cultural programme. First, this landscape is strongly influenced by topography and high-density urban structure, and one is reminded of an acropolis. It is therefore a building without a programme, which the architect uses to give it a high symbolic character where he expresses his deep knowledge of the context, reflecting the theory that he himself defended in the organization of space:

“...Therefore, designing, planning and drawing should not translate to the architect in the creation of empty forms of meaning, imposed by fashion whim or by whim of any other nature. The forms he/she will create must result, rather, from a wise balance between his/her personal vision and the circumstance that surrounds him/her and for that, he/she must know it intensely, so intensely that knowing and being are confused” (TÁVORA, 2006).

The urban, architectural and historical characteristics linked to the place, and the *genius loci*, offer several tools to an architect of great culture, as Távora, who is always interested in the context and circumstances and, in this case, extremely linked to the Cathedral and the surroundings, which he could not waste.

In addition to the intrinsic link with the site, Távora undertakes research that provides some data that are added to those already known. That is, the historical archives give the building's implantation and height, not in metric system but in hand-span or *palmo* (*lat. Palmus*) in order to harmonize the space with the measurements of Man. Távora inscribed a span in bas-relief on the stone, which can be seen from inside the building, through the large glass window, underlying the importance of Man and the human scale, and linking Man with his territory, his cultural heritage and landscape.

This building focuses on how an old and fragmented space can be renewed and updated. For that purpose, Távora alluded to local and historic memory, and at the same time the symbolic value of the building itself is covered; an ancient Council Building known as “Casa dos 24” (because the tower refers to the twenty-four offices that governed the city in medieval times), in a strong confrontation with clerical power – this is because only six metres separate the tower and the Cathedral of Porto – setting all the tension in a single place before opening onto a square, and the building itself opens to the city in a gesture of contemplation. Távora focuses on the awareness of the unitary city, on the historical evolution of the site and on the critical reinterpretation of its context, without any intention of reconstructing the old Town Halls.

He opts for a new building, unequivocally built at the present time, but which is guided by history and evokes the missing building. It even makes visible the signs of the juxtaposition of a new moment on the remains of the stone masonry of the existing retaining wall. The architect reinvents the Morro da Sé once again and, by freely approaching its original matrix, overcomes the neoclassical aspiration, so often evoked over time, and opposes the tendency of “museification” of heritage. “With this work (...), the relationship of scale and positioning in space is redone. And with only one element! This is difficult! It is not with a context, returning to what it was, but only with a construction that it is possible to redo the spirit of the relationship between volumes on that Sé hill (...).” (SIZA 2005 Apud RODRIGUES 2013, p. 359).

### **Landscape Architecture and Permanent Modernity**

The presented case studies demonstrate the plurality of solutions that seek to adapt to the new requirements without the mimicry of the past,

and always consistent in the search for the updating and organization of a territory in the sense of continuous becoming. Sometimes the project/methodology has been to recover the old structures present in a particular place as a motif to be integrated; in others, the project aims to create a new site, building a new landscape. Távora's methodology and his concerns extend to the territory.

Because landscape architecture, like architecture itself, is concerned with the design of the human environment, Távora has defended Architecture and Urbanism, and we can include landscape architecture in this sense, as something integrated and in continuous dialogue, because when intervening in the territory, being an act of construction is also in itself a transforming act of the landscape.

Lúcio Costa, the Brazilian architect and urban planner of Brasília (the pilot plan was designed in 1957), says, "Architecture is, above all, construction, but construction conceived with the primary purpose of ordering and organizing space for a given purpose and aiming at a certain intention" (COSTA, 1940).

The proposed notion of landscape architecture is not limited to landscaping arrangements of green areas or gardens, nor the consolidated landscape heritage. Rather, it seeks to highlight the character of building new landscapes and places through the action of the designer, to achieve a permanent modernity in our environment. Thus, it creates places of self-recognition by the community, through the act of rebuilding, and fixing without ever contradicting the place. The implantation is intended as an imprint on the territory, which aims to organize and fix the hierarchy of spaces. The result is the creation of new places and its *genius loci*, a multifaceted landscape, because landscapes are for people to use and enjoy, and the only concerns should be with space as organized space rather than styles or patterns or merely the occupation of places.

Truly, if there is a permanent condition in the work of Fernando Távora, it is the importance given to the place, not only as a support for architecture that relates to Nature, but as an integrating element that must become part of the architecture itself and, therefore, is likely to be built simultaneously with the building.

This will still be one of the lessons that certainly assimilated all later generations of Portuguese architects – “the current architectural culture of the country has profoundly assimilated a set of concerns and themes related to the issue of the area (of the site, as they say in Porto)”, starting with Álvaro Siza, for whom this attitude towards the site will be as, or more evident than in Távora himself.

Proud and accomplished, Fernando Távora revealed that many years later his works would be better because nature will then have “welcomed” them (TRIGUEIROS, 1993).

## DESIGNING LANDSCAPES: PARQUE DA FONTE IN MORRO DO QUEROSENE

VICTOR MAITINO

“What I try to translate is more mysterious, it’s involved in the very roots of being, in the impalpable source of sensations”.

(Translation by the author, Paul Cézanne apud Merleau-Ponty, 2015, p. 15)

Urban life, founded in functionality and quantitative criteria, although inscribed in nature as the “endless chain of things” (Simmel, 2013), subdues the natural elements and puts them in a secondary position, reducing them to mere objects that fulfil a role. Thus, rare are the opportunities in which, immersed in this life, we come across spaces where nature develops in an autonomous way, with its particular dynamic; places Gilles Clément calls “third landscape”. There, nature arises, bringing its silence, its unintentionality and its mystery. Our interest in this kind of place is twofold:

on the one hand, the aesthetical impact generated by the contact with these intruder spaces in the city, that make possible, amidst the functional city's finitude, an opening to nature's infinitude; on the other hand, the desire to understand them in their peculiar order; issues that, according to Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos's reading of Kant's Critique of Judgement, are complementary, one instigating the other.

Against nature, in its aesthetical presence under the form of the third landscape, our attention is directed "*to the world of life*" (Translation by the author, Pierron, 2012, p.14). We are put "*in the limits of the aesthetic and the poetic*" (Translation by the author, Pierron, 2012, p. 15), where feeling what is visible in front of us, and imagining what is invisible, we reposition ourselves in our relation to earth, we go back to comprehending it as the soil, the base and the medium of life. In Éric Dardel's expression, we "geographize" ourselves.

Thus, glimpsed poetically, nature is neither a simple object of description nor reality that induces obligations, not even the subject of a contemplation or an admiration. Poetically, it is the knot of a dwelling. 'The poet doesn't describe; he well knows that his task is bigger'. (Translation by the author, Bachelard apud Pierron, 2012, p.15)

It is by this poetic repositioning of the human being in relation to Earth that not only Jean-Phillipe Pierron, through Bachelard's phenomenology, but also Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos, through Kant's aesthetic, believe that there might be an alteration in our society's conduct towards what is called "environment".

[...] it is time that environmental politics and ethics found their poetics. At least if it is considered that, besides an immediate caution of repairing the damage caused to the environment, it becomes necessary to think freshly our way

of being in the world; it becomes urgent to rethink the relations of man with nature.

(Translation by the author, Pierron, 2012, p.11)

Pierron explains that environmental ethics and science are insufficient in contemporary discussion about human's relation with earth. If science is accurate in describing what we do with the planet and its cataclysmic consequences, it does so in an objective way, assuming man and the environment as natural phenomena, and presupposing a link between one and another by solidarity. However, says the author, this solidarity's origin is not explained, and the link between us and earth becomes fragile. Likewise, environmental ethics and politics are not capable of creating this feeling, working as prescriptive, "*making of nature a new object of duty and responsibility*" (Translation by the author, Pierron, 2012, p. 13). Thus, ethics and science are extremely important in the effectivity of the environment's preservation. If they are useful for telling us what to do and how to do it, they presuppose our sentimental relation with earth, without which, they become only data and meaningless discourse.

It would be precisely an environmental poetics that would create in us, at last, this connection, this "*vital responsibility*" (Translation by the author, Pierron, 2012, p.13) towards earth. Thus, Pierron finds, for example, Bachelard's explanation of the world by the four elements more convenient for making that connection than the scientific one. It is the images that man produces of the world that connects him with it, and not its abstract descriptions.

If Bachelard analyses prioritarily images that are created in poetry, the landscape understood as a perceptive phenomenon also has, in its essence, this poetical power. Georg Simmel explains its artistic (or poetic) character from the concept of "*Stimmung*": a poorly translatable word, but that means something between "atmosphere" and "state of soul". The

“*Stimmung*” is, at the same time, a psychic state of someone who perceives a landscape, but also founded in the objectivity of what is apprehended by the senses. In this duplicity, it gives unity to that which, in another context, would be a set of juxtaposed elements of nature. In the same way, explains Simmel, the objectively present words in a lyrical poem only provoke sentiments in us when, interiorly, we receive them as a poem. In this sense, according to Octavio Paz in his introduction to “The Bow and the Lyre”, landscape is “poetry without being a poem”, or, according to Simmel, “a work of art *in statu nascendi*”.

In another way, Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos, in his reading of Kant, mobilizes the same concepts; of a poetics (that he uses replacing Kant’s word “technique”) of nature and its relationship with art and of the necessity of a more constitutive connection of the human being and nature, in the context of the environmental contemporary debates. However, if in Bachelard’s analysis it is poetics in itself that, from our imagination of nature, establishes this connection, to Kant, it is the beautiful and the sublime that “*predispose us to love something, even nature, even though we may have no interest in this; the sublime predisposes us to highly cherish it, even against our (sensible) interest*”. (Translation by the author, Kant apud Dos Santos, 2007, p.9).

Therefore, when we perceive a landscape, we create, even if not in a totally conscious way, images of nature. There lies the importance of this kind of experience in the city, giving us the opportunity of poetizing ourselves in relation to it. In the urban environment, it happens, in general, in a really tenuous and implicit way; it occurs between the lines of space: the sibling waters of underground streams that emerge in certain places, the birth of ruderal plants between the concrete cracks, the singing of a bird in an improbable place, but also the bushes and herbs that grow in big pieces of land that are left empty for a long time; all this composes what Gilles Clément calls “the third landscape”. The object of this landscaper’s

theory and practice, this expression is defined by the spaces in which, in some way, nature develops itself in a spontaneous way, without human intervention or manipulation, what he calls “undecided” spaces (*indécidés*). The expression refers to the main actor of the French Revolution, the third State, which, in the Ancient Regime, was neither part of the clergy nor of the nobility. In this case, as in the Third State’s, those spaces neither make decisions nor are directly subject to them. In the city, its materialization is commonly present in what Clément calls “neglected” (*délaissés*). That means that they are leftovers of the processes (usually economical) of space organization: abandoned pieces of land, that, for the most varied reasons (unproductivity, specific morphology, land issues, etc) do not have a defined use and, therefore, become habitats for the development of species uncontrolled by human beings. Thus, those that are discarded by cities as unproductive or useless spaces, become, for having not been submitted to human care and intentions, “*refuges for diversity*” (Clément, 2007).

The neglected (*délaissés*), in ecological terms, are normally in early and, therefore, more dynamic stages of the arrival of pioneer plants and the establishment of secondaries. A forgotten piece of land in a neighbourhood of a big city becomes a refuge for the birth and growth of bushes and grasses, that do not need too specific conditions to establish themselves. From there, there is already a biological variety that is impossible in typical urban lands, which are impermeable or are always being cut and pruned. From the arrival of this vegetation (the so-called “pioneer plants”), the conditions are created for other living beings, like small animals and insects, besides secondary plants, to also become established in these areas. And so a dynamic process begins of annihilation of some species by others, in which the really fast and self-destructive life cycles of the pioneers are replaced by others that are stronger and more stable, until it reaches the climax.

However, on the one hand fragmentary – in the sense that they are commonly isolated from each other – and the other volatile – they can, by political or economic decisions, cease to exist – the reality of the *délaisés* normally does not allow that all this ecological succession process takes place. But, even so, they maintain themselves as these big “diversity refuges”, in opposition to spaces generated by human intention, which have truly little biological variety. Simultaneously, besides having an importance in themselves, these fragments can also work by their ecological characteristics as connection points between other more complex environments, or as protection for their boundaries, greatly strengthening their regeneration capacities.

That is the case of *Parque da Fonte*, in *Vila Pirajussara* neighbourhood (or *Morro do Querosene*) in the *Butantã* district of Sao Paulo, the object of our case study and design essay. For decades, this land has been abandoned, even with its proximity to two big axes of circulation in the West zone of Sao Paulo: *Corifeu de Azevedo Marques* Avenue and *Raposo Tavares* Highway. For all this time, in this land there has been a typical case of what Clément calls a *délaisé*, that is, a place in which fauna and flora of considerable dimensions and variety have developed, only with the absence of human care and direct contact with evolution of the urban space.



Figure 1: view of Parque da Fonte, produced by the author, 2019

In the probable case of a transformation of this land, whose enclosure may be the main reason of its existing the way it does today, into a park, it will be open to the city, to the people; it will be the object of an architectural and landscape design; it will have a janitor, that is, it will stop being a *délaissé* to become a public park. Thus, if we desire to maintain this mystery, this beauty and this variety of species typical of the third landscape and, at the same time, transform it into an inhabited public place, we fall into an apparent paradox. If the third landscape consists of spaces that do not suffer from any anthropic act or intention, would they not be designed and charged with intentionality, or even with human habitation, which always implies enacting actions? Our intention here is to get as close as possible to answers to this obstacle.

### **Design in the third landscape**

The geographer Jean-Marc Besse, in his writing “The five doors of landscape”, approximates the landscape design to the critical act of walking. If walking is “*questioning the state of the world, evaluate it in what it can offer to the men that find themselves in it*” – as proposed by Baudelaire’s *flâneries*, or the situationist *derives*,– landscape designing is also “*imagining the actual*” or “*creating something that was already there*” (Translation by the author, Besse, 2016, p.47). Having as the object the site, that is, an open portion of the world, even if probably artificially delimited, the landscape design is composed of a simultaneous act of “description” and “invention” of the actual. These words keep in themselves the same ambiguity present in the action of designing: if the act of describing requires a minute comprehension of something, it is only concrete in its representation, be it in oral, written or pictorial form or even by the geometric “description”. In inventing, on the other hand, if it implies a creation, there does not occur

*ex nihilo*. By returning to the Latin root of the word (*inventio*, and *heuresis* in Greek), one notices that, instead, it takes place in the intentional formalization of some subjacent matter.

This same ambiguity, shows Besse, is present in the already quoted formulation “*design is imagining the actual*”. In this way, “*designing (projeter) the landscape would be at the same time putting it into image, or representing it (projection), and imagining what it could be or become (projection)*.” (Translation by the author, Besse, 2016, p.47)

Therefore, if we comprehend, as described earlier, landscape in its poetical character, its simple perception and its design does not differ that much in essence. The inventive impulse, evident in a design, is intrinsic to the perceptive act, to the creation of the atmosphere (*Stimmung*) of the perceived landscape. Therefore, if we desire to keep, in the act of designing, the essence of landscape experience, that is, the formation of this atmosphere, that allows the poetical glimpse of nature, and further, to make this poetic, which with perception is *in statu nascendi*, something concrete, that physically exists, it is indispensable that we pay attention to these two senses of landscape imagination: that of turning it into image, and to imagine what it can be.

In *Parque da Fonte*, as will be described later, it is easy to notice this imaginative duplicity, this poetic power, activated almost instantaneously in the disinterested walker that comes across that place. The design challenge is in how to effectuate it by using the technical tools of architecture, urbanism and landscape design. Thus, what we propose here is an essay, as a form of reflecting on a way of doing what might approximate to the completion of this task.

However, given landscape’s mainly sensible essence, it is difficult to imagine what this kind of theoretical intention in landscape designing could mean in practical or concrete terms, of realized landscape projects. For

that, we have recurrence to works that we believe possess this character of “creating something that was already there”, of union between the actual and the imagined, between the visible and the occult, starting from or ending in the third landscape, even though in different situations than Parque da Fonte’s.

The first of them is the renaturation of River Aire in Geneva, designed by the Superpositions group, which was led by the Swiss landscape designer Georges Descombes, and is now in its fourth phase of implementation, and which has been happening since 2002. The aim of the project was the recovery of the natural riverbed of a canal in a rural area. The most obvious, maybe, in terms of drawing, would be tracing a riverbed in an arbitrary way or from a calculation that would privilege the natural flux of the water, building it artificially from an imposed drawing. However, in the same way that occurs in natural riverbeds, they opted to let the water erode its own path. As this would be impossible, or extremely slow and unpredictable (as it is in nature), without human aid, a diamond-shape lattice was excavated, allowing that the water could take various paths. Years later, the river has eroded and is still eroding its own path, human action having only been a catalyst of this process.

In this project, we are interested in two different poetics: one of the perception of the built river, and one of the design conception of building a river that is continuously building itself. It is visible, through representations (photographical and cinematographic), how the power the river today has of provoking a certain restlessness in the observer, the possibility of creating a peculiar atmosphere and landscape, with its visible and occult elements. On the other hand, the architectural design, which in this particular project has its technical, rational and geometric dimension enhanced, keeps in itself specific poetics, in which human artifice, instead of creating a physiognomy to a landscape, assumes as its purpose the

particular dynamics of nature, in a way whereby it creates its own physiognomy by itself.

The second one is a design made by Gilles Clément himself, the Matisse Park, in Lille. This park, open to the public, within an urban area, cloisters an area, elevating it 10 meters from the soil and removing all access to it. It thereby creates a big space of a third landscape, in which nature organizes itself free from human direct action. Simultaneously, the French landscaper, at the part of open access, recovers, as he does in some of his other works, the English garden tradition, but elevating it to another position of power. If the English gardener were to draw, as someone could have drawn a riverbed to river Ayre, a composition of trees and plants that imitated one of a forest, or of a non-anthropized space, Clément, with his broad technical knowledge, understands which plants develop better and which make a bigger variety of species possible in each space, giving them more freedom, even though they might be subject, for example, to the periodic pruning that allows for people to circulate in the park.

Hence, in *Parc Matisse*, these two poetics are also present, and with the same nuance that interests us in design reasoning of a shortening of the distance between the forces that act in the built site and those that act in nature. In *Parque da Fonte's* case, this nature is present and instigates its neighbours with its mysteries and beauties. In this sense, there are already some truly vehement images of that place being created: narrated stories, glimpses of a nature that is constantly hiding itself, desires to decipher it; fantasies of what that could be, if it were open and public. Therefore, a design there should comprehend these images, put back others, and make somewhat more visible that which is already there, even if occult, but always recovered by imagination.

## A first glimpse of the site

A resident of *Morro do Querosene*, or a curious walker, who, coming from *Corifeu de Azevedo Marques* avenue and entering *Padre Justino Street*, soon notices some grasses in the background, more varied and intense than the street's arborization. Besides this, small outcrops of ruderals in the cracks in the asphalt and concrete, giving hints that there maybe passes a stream, even if it might be invisible. In Fonte's traverse, these plants are confused with other ones which have been introduced and cared for by the neighbours. There lies *Parque da Fonte's* main entrance. Behind the wall, one can glimpse, divided by another wall, two pieces of land. On one side, one with a rural and temporary aspect, with animal husbandry, small constructions and mainly some weeds and small trees. On the other side, high grass and a dense lush vegetation, probably in a secondary state of ecological succession. This path, maybe the most frequently taken by the people who come from the immediate neighbourhoods – including the mosses and ruderals that delate the presence of underground water, the far-away view of an imponent vegetation, the pasture in the middle of a high-speed metropolitan avenue – already configure a part of the actual *Parque da Fonte*, that spreads out of its perhaps not so intransigent walls.



Figure 2: The two main environments of the park, photographed by the author, 2019

## Perception, imagination, and design

“[El tiempo] Ha soñado la enumeración que los tratadistas llaman caótica y que, de hecho, es cósmica, ya que todas las cosas están unidas por vínculos secretos.” (Borges, 1989, p. 471)

Designing a landscape is an act that, as we have already described, keeps within itself a double poetic; on the one hand, it is a human artistic creation, on the other, when the design is built, it becomes a perceived landscape, and can passably be poetized by whomsoever perceives it. These two poetics feedback each to the other: when we perceive a site as a landscape, even if not in a conscious way, we imagine it in its possible existences; we mix exterior images of the senses with our interior images, creating something new, an atmosphere, *Stimmung*. This originates the design; a reverie that merges the real and the imagined, but that, by its commitment with the physical execution of what is imagined, demands a conscience and a complete rational control of the processes involved in this realization.

It is this ambiguity, this coming and going between dream and reality, between the fluidity of imagination and the precision of execution that we try to comprehend, maintain and take as a main principle through a *Parque da Fonte* design. There, as we describe, it does not lack matter for reveries of an observer or a designer. Thus, as methodology, we opt for recovering the fundamental substances of these different possible atmospheres of the park through analogies with images that, despite being under other forms, possess the same substance of those which instigate us in the place. From there, we define approximations to different places, in which we identify a bigger force of one or other of these substances. These places,

even though as landscapes might be open to the infinite, are capable of an enclosure that turns into possible single atmospheres, different from one another in time and space, by physical matter and the subject that apprehends it. Despite this unity, one landscape resounds in another. In one respect, this opening to the infinite allows plants, sounds, animals or other elements to present themselves in more than one landscape in such a way that their borders are much more diffuse and unstable. In the other, the subject itself, an essential double of the matter in the creation of an atmosphere, when he/she moves from one place to another, takes with he/she all the impressions and mood changes that the first place might have caused in a way that the subject becomes impregnated of it when he/she perceives the others.

Therefore, we opt for maintaining these places as autonomous design unities, but which invade each other, whose transitions, undefined, are implicit in the totality of their enumeration, as they are implicit today, in that which we see, the hidden spaces. These unities are the traverse, the wall, the backs and the house over the water.

### **The design essay. The traverse, waterside**

“A puddle contains a universe. A dream’s instant contains a whole soul”. (Translation by the author, Bachelard, 2018, p.53)

At the traverse, the park’s fountain is brought to the street, and, offered to the asphalt, or to the urban space, this water, that has just out-cropped at the soil, returns to hiding itself under it, where, in a cement riverbed, it courses its way to its mouth.

With the walls removed, this water is more spread out, creating a big swamp area, over which we can walk on raised stilts. This swamp, when

it gets to the traverse, has its water captured, and condenses in a small pond with aquatic plants. The pond retains the swamp's water and, with a bottom with black stones, reflects almost all light on its surface, confusing itself in the look with the plants and the sky. It then gives back this same water to the underground, through a small canal that, sheltered from the street by a garden, courses all the traverse in a slight inclination and, already at the corner of Padre Justino street, offers itself to a culvert. Thus, the sequence swamp-fountain-gutter-culvert is maintained as the transition between the natural and the artificial world.

Between two walls, under the shadow of swamp trees and at the edge of the aquatic plants from the ponds, the swamp and the humid garden that protect the canal, the entrance square of the park extends itself. From it, a stilt is raised in a steel and concrete structure, which, being stable, ignores the water level changes, and with a light slope, connects the square to a non-floodable point of the park.

In the background, the flooded grass of the *Typhas* and *Cyperus giganteus*, gradually gives place to bushes and then to bigger trees, that follow the small and more delimited water courses, in an already very different environment, whose shadow and density hide the interior.



Figure 3: the traverse nowadays, produced by the author, 2019

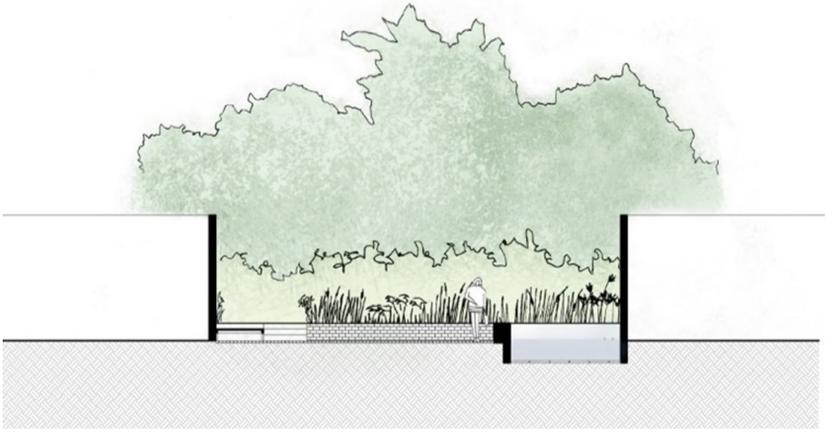


Figure 4: Frontal view of the proposed park's main entrance, produced by the author, 2019

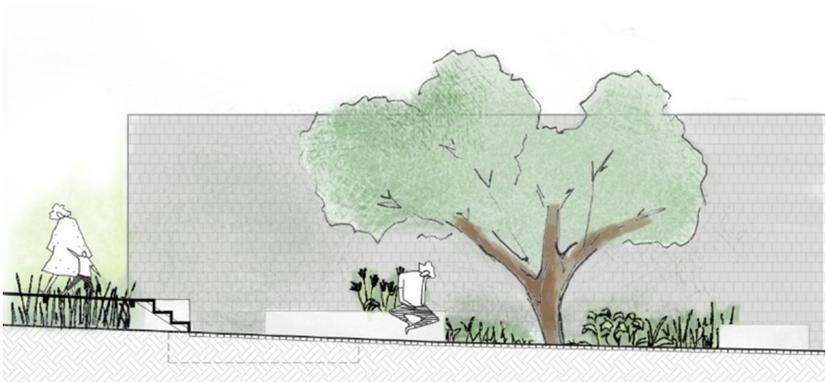


Figure 5: Longitudinal section of Travessa da Fonte, produced by the author, 2019

## The wall

The Park space is divided into two big environments, quite different from each other. One is a more luminous area, without water courses, with a drier aspect and lower vegetation, with characteristics close to *cerrado* (Brazilian savanna) biome, in which some specifically allocated trees create some shadow areas. At the other side, the denser woods, in which the river springs' humidity and the pre-existence of large trees help in the creation of a more enclosed environment, alongside the *mata atlântica* (tropical forest) biome.

In contiguous physical ambiances, this radical split in the characteristics of one and another impresses. The existence of a physical wall, though, is not necessary for that to occur. Without this wall, the division is given in a more subtle way, which maintains the distinction between the environment and removes the violence of the concrete bricks. That would happen only by the difference of caring and gardening in one and another area – for example, the absence of pruning of bushes in the humid zone, the introduction of different species here and there – and by the existence of just a few points of transition, where one can pass from one space to another, or in other words, few doors left open in this invisible wall.

Regarding these walls, one of them is precisely in the only area in which there is a transition environment between the two spaces: the swamp. Over the stilt, one can go to either one of the environments, but one is in neither of them. The other, located more or less in the centre of the terrain, materializes itself more as a door, in a more literal sense, through which one can pass from one environment to the other by taking just a few steps.

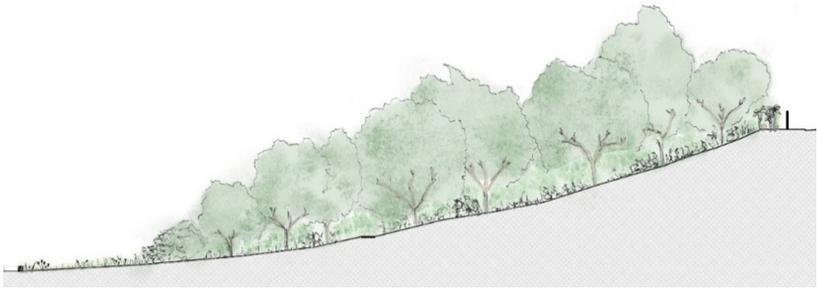


Figure 6: Longitudinal section of the park with the wall taken down, produced by the author, 2019

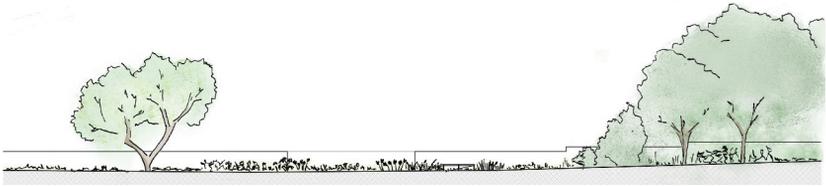


Figure 7: The swamp as a transition between the two other environments, produced by the author, 2019

## The back

A good part of the park is delimited by the backs of the houses which are built in the block's perimeter. From this emerges an uncommon frontier between the urban lot and the woods, separated by a land line, that normally materializes itself as a wall.

The hill's allotment, with big gaps between the streets, generate houses that, in general, have two floors, both with access from the ground. The ground level is therefore invaded in the backyards by the park's woods, which surpass the wall with the view of the treetops, its smells, hu-

midity, freshness. From the other level, even if there is no backyard, there is, through the windows, a singular impression of that environment: Nature's form is framed in a way that it participates in the house's own interior.

From inside the park, thus, one hears sounds, smells and odours, and one breathes air that is domestic from these houses and not the “*rapid and uninterrupted change of interior and exterior impressions of the big city*” (Translated by the author, Simmel, 2005, p.577), which one would feel if these woods made a border directly with the street. This contributes to the creation of a retreating atmosphere, so characteristic of this environment of the woods. However, the walls of these houses, which are very expressive delimitations, interfere in this atmosphere. Therefore, a certain transition zone is made necessary, at least visually, between the concrete walls and the natural environment of the park, through a dense foliage vegetation in this delimiting strip, which allows neither the view nor the physical approximation to these walls.

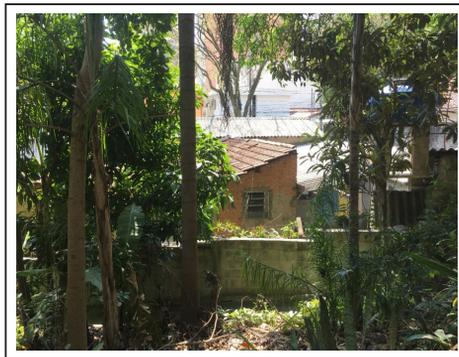


Figure 8: The backs of Homero Silva square, in Sao Paulo, in a similar situation to Parque da Fonte's, produced by the author, 2019

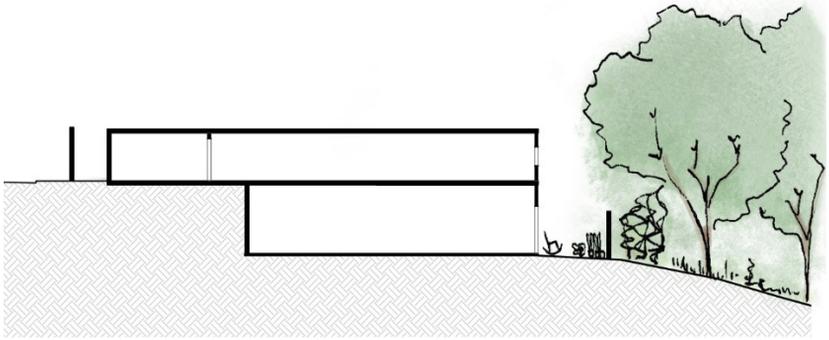


Figure 9: Section of the back of the park, produced by the author, 2019

### The house over the water, the basement

“(The basement) is in first place the obscure being of the house, the being that participates in the underground powers. Dreaming with it, we agree with the irrationality of the deep”. (Translation by the author, Bachelard, 1978, p.209)

In the interior of the park there is the Fountain. In a humid spot, under the shadow of a big fig tree that trails its vines, a construction with a curious aspect is raised, made of stones with arcs on the façade, over which another construction, in well seated ceramic brick, sits, completely independent. From the soil, water is continually springing and accumulating, flooding onto the floor of the construction before funnelling and coursing to the *Fonte's* traverse, where only the presence of this water flux delates this place's existence to those who enter the park.

Over this water, a pier is constructed, where one can wander in this strange place; a mix of ruin, dwelling and nature. Today, inaccessible because of its enclosure, it is extremely enticing: a superposition of distinct times, both of human buildings, as of ecological successions; it is perfect matter for reverie. Hence the option for maintaining it as it is (imagined), only adapting it in a certain way for the urban visitor, through accessible paths and walkways.

As in many other areas of the park, the main designer here is time itself. Thus, one starts to comprehend what is meant in Gilles Clément's terms, to "design" the third landscape. The French, with a gardener and agronomist's precision, know exactly which kind of plant grows better in a specific soil or a specific insolation. Even so, he/she shows us that "designing the scrub" means, besides knowing it scientifically, giving space to nature's chance that, normally undesired by designers, is protagonist of his/her landscapes. Georges Descombes is also incisive in relation to that, given that not only does he give space to nature's establishment – the water, the vegetation, the fauna –, but also helps it, without, however, removing from it its own dynamic. Thus, "designing the scrub", becomes designing chance, that is to say, giving it the opportunity over time to organize the space.

Thus, leaving this place as it is, does not mean paralyzing it in time, as photography of what it has been until now shows us, but leaving it to be taken over even more by nature's and human dwelling's changes, preserving the inevitable and desirable gaps in the perception of this improbable place. It is precisely in these absences, in the unexplainable dimensions of a place as this that rests the poetics of its perception. It is them that allows that whomsoever perceives the landscape can also complete it, imagine it, and, therefore, appropriate it and be appropriated by it.

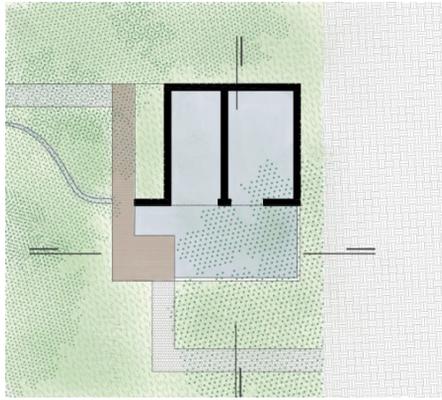


Figure 10: Plan of the lower flooded ground level, produced by the author, 2019

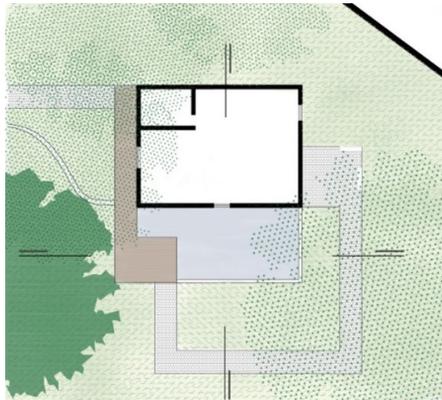


Figure 11: Plan of the upper ground level, produced by the author, 2019



Figure 12: Section of the site and frontal façade of the building, produced by the author, 2019



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Thinking Landscape in the frame of Philosophy of Landscape understands landscape not only as a modern representation of the intersection between Nature and Culture, but in a much wider and less abstract manner: the intersection of vertical and horizontal needs and demands, as the indiscernible interaction between transcendence and immanence, in which neither immanence means only the earthly, physical or material, nor transcendental stands solely for the atmospheric, metaphysical and immaterial. Landscape is not simply the environment because it has always surpassed any environment and because in it one can find the most diverse environments. Neither it is just a political or ethnical territory, but the versatile surface of the Earth, the sensual space of all forms of life, the multiple face of nature, subject to its own changes and dispositions, and a shelter for the multiplicity of organic and inorganic phenomena, which all have the right to be preserved.