

The Torrents of Air

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How do we see the natural sphere? Do we see it as the place of things? Do we see it as an extension of us? Do we see it as a frame that surrounds the happening? Do we see it as a scenario that supports our intervention? Do we see it, finally, as a partner in a common project? Do we see it as a voice? And as a voice that challenges us, can we hear it?

The environment in which we are immersed increasingly takes on a leading role in our lives and is an integral part of the creation processes. The natural sphere, as a partner in a common project, has a voice and, by listening to it, we dialogue, adapt, but we also create from and with it. We transform nature and build culture through our creative action. The knowledge arising from our relationship with things and people is the starting point for human creativity that, based on the known, responds to the most diverse situations or stimuli that are not foreseen or programmed.

The creative imagination, like air currents in which thought flows, projects the intended into new forms and allows the creator to perceive and make visible his subjective apprehensions about the world. By creating solutions to problems, the creative person travels paths, always new, that unveil phenomena, producing theories (science), creating languages (communication and art), services, products, technologies... and in these actions it constitutes different cultures over time. Creative action, therefore, is a way of understanding and signifying life, as it intervenes and modifies the way of being in the world.

When creating, in any field of knowledge, singular marks are left, because creations are extensions of man in the world, and in this context, creativity is configured as a way of existing, as an open and latent potential that will manifest itself whenever the emergence of the new is necessary. It is through the creative imagination that reality is faced. Through different materials and languages that meanings and projections of the transforming and constructive action of the real are established.

Therefore, knowing the inner dimensions of creative processes is a way of bringing to consciousness what is lived, as a diary and a work of the continuous and non-linear time of creation. To investigate the movement of the creative act, the implied ripple between chaos and order, between consciousness and the unconscious, divergence and convergence... it is like "sculpting time" (Tarkovsky, 1998) of the possible trajectories built throughout the processes of creation.

The title of this essay "The Torrents of Air" is an opportune metaphor to relate aspects of nature such as air currents, winds, winds, hurricanes with creative processes.

The creative process

Considering the classification of the creative process proposed by Wallas (1926), composed of four phases: preparation, incubation, *insight* and verification, Torre (2005, p. 113-115) emphasizes that preparation allows "knowing the terrain and being willing to cross its limits", emphasizing that anticipation and commitment are important attitudes. Once the preparation phase has been overcome, in which we bring a lot of information about the theme closer, the incubation or distancing from the problem is necessary to make room for the unconscious to "work", articulate ideas and allow "enlightenment" or insight to emerge. However, the creative process will not yet be complete, as it will be in the last stage, verification, that the idea will be evaluated, elaborated and verified.

In an extension of Wallas' thought, Sanmartin (2017) comments that George Kneller (1978) includes a phase prior to preparation, which the author calls "first apprehension". It is true that a process of generating ideas does not begin without a concern, a question or a problem to be solved. Thus, the author suggests that, in general, from perception there is an issue to be investigated, the difference between the *intuitive flash* in which the creator initiates the creative process and the *insight* in which he generates the idea of a solution. These moments are followed by the lengthy phase of conscious preparation for data collection, followed by the incubation phase, in which intuition acts again, until it reaches *insight*, understood as "a solution that presents a clear and explainable logic with words, numbers, or images" (Sanmartin, 2019, p. 77).

Still, regarding the beginning of the process, Amabile (1999) presents two types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is linked to stimuli from the sociocultural environment such as speech, images and sensations, while intrinsic motivation is related to desires, ideas or personal goals, dreams and intuitions as apparently random captures, but which say a lot about what moves and interests the creator. All these stimuli that cross life are stored in the unconscious, a large collection that holds ideas, images, sensations... building a treasure trove for creative processes.

Kneller, by saying that the first apprehension gives the creator the notion of something to do, seems to indicate that intuition also occurs in the stage prior to data collection and indicates a direction. This understanding is close to the perspective addressed by Abrantes and Sanmartin (2017, p.71) when they state that "intuition presents different ways of manifesting itself (at the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual levels), communicating with us through subtle and individualized messages".

Through these theoretical contributions, the following analysis proposes analogies between the different concepts related to air and some moments of the creative process, especially those specific to divergent thinking and idea generation. As a reference, the first intuitive apprehension, the period of conscious preparation in which processes of daydreaming and creative imagination enrich the creative processes, the classical *Brainstorming or Torbellino technique of ideas* (brainstorming) that is intentionally used in the ideation processes and, finally, *insight* as an idea of creative solution.¹

Air Currents/Wind/Wind/Drilling

We find in Chevallier (2008) different concepts related to air, such as air currents, wind, hurricane, wind, elements that show promise to establish analogies with creativity and, in particular, with the fluidity of divergent thought and imaginative processes.

Perceiving a draft is as subtle as listening to intuition that can emerge as a thought, image, or sensation. This inner listening is essential to capture opportunities or cracks that open up towards discovery and signal the future solution or creation.

Bachelard (2001, p.1) tells us that the difficulty in researching imagination is due, in the first place, to the 'false light of etymology' that indicates imagination as the faculty of forming images (mnemonic imagination). On the other hand, when referring to the creative imagination, he says: "Now, it is rather the faculty of distorting images provided by perception, it is above all the faculty of freeing ourselves from the first images, of changing the images." And so, instead of image, it brings the imaginary word closer to the

¹ For Sadler-Smith (2011), *insight* allows us to "see" new connections and creative intuition allows us to "feel" new connections.

term by its open and evasive nature in the experience of openness and novelty. In his words: "a stable and finished image cuts the wings of the imagination". This one that flies towards the air of reverie or the winds of thought that transport us to the past or to a probable future. In this way, instead of occupying itself only with the constitution of images, it stops at their mobility, its creative imagination whose fecundity allows it to abandon the ordinary course of things.

To feel the imaginative role of language well, it is necessary to enumerate all the desires to abandon what is seen and what is said in favour of what is imagined. Thus, we will have the opportunity to return to the imagination its role of seduction. Perceiving and imagining are as antithetical as presence and absence. To imagine is to be absent, it is to launch oneself into a new life. (Bachelard, 2001, p. 4)

The reverie transports. It leads the creative being to drift in the course of the winds, as well as those who intentionally experience the hurricane in *brainstorming*, which stimulates the generation of numerous ideas, often strange, and apparently distant from the theme worked, expanding the possibilities of the paths to follow. Sometimes, it is these deviations that lead the creator to establish new connections and to the new.

After the wind, other times arrive: those of calm, of diving into the unconscious. A kind of dormancy, an interval of unconscious elaboration that allows the emergence of *insight*, like a gale that indicates the direction of the currents to be followed in the planning and execution of the good idea of solution.

Some considerations

Sisyphus (Camus, 1989) assumes his destiny with happiness, even though he knows that when he reaches the summit of the mountain the stone will roll back to its base. He undertakes the journey certain that by repeating the action, a new experience happens and both the stone, the mountain and Sisyphus himself arrive transformed. Seeing, reviewing, seeing again, through the creative imagination, establish vitality and new airs to the dynamics of life.

Like Sisyphus, assuming creativity as a vital principle, in addition to constituting an attitude towards one's own existence, transforms us and influences the people around us. Developing personal creativity means, therefore, maximizing intrinsically human traits, streamlining them, improving them, and reverberating in the context in which we live our valuable contributions. Living creatively makes it possible to be aware of opportunities, understand one's own thoughts, signify feelings, emotions, intuitions and perceptions about the world to be better people and influence our surroundings leaving unique marks in the places we go.

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