

In the Clearings of Dwelling

Carlos Lampreia

(CEAA/FAA.ULL) clampreia@gmail.com

Abstract

The spiritualized view of the natural world is a redundancy, because the spirit is the sum of the various visions that nature, through the human being, has of itself. This vision is multidisciplinary, but that of art, I dare say, is one of the freest and most complete, as it overcomes the limitations of traditional human languages by proposing alternative languages that are apparently unknown, but always intuited, and therefore wonderful, both in light and in darkness.

The set of texts presented here are one of these approximations, they use written discourse as an attempt to describe what organic and human existence represents, as part of nature, which looks, describes and reflects, that is, that of the being that inhabits it.

The texts, drawings and photographs were produced in the context of walking, either solo or in the company of other multidisciplinary and wandering beings who propose to inhabit and think about the humanized landscape. The records are made from the immersive perception in the confrontation with the place; the means of recording are necessarily fast, word and drawing *in a bic* pen on A4 sheet folded and subdivided into A7, to which are added *instagrams* or *low-resolution videograms* with a cell phone camera. The *Glossary of a landscape* is obtained through sentences that adjectivate presences and can be used separately or according to the organization it follows. So are the images. (1)

The accumulated experience is the capital of knowledge that humanity holds at a given moment on all subjects, so the theoretical framework is still present, but as a brief synthesis, referred to a set of notes. It is intended to avoid the noise of all these wonderful contributions made by humanity, without breaking the intensity of the experience that presents itself.

Keywords: spirit, inhabit, man, nature, minimal art, land art, conceptual art

[Glossary for an Inhabited Landscape]

1 Earth

On the stone escarpment the pebbles move

That allow the circumference of balance

Through the forest we flee from the clearing that burns the sun

In the Dark a flower opens on a path

2 Tree

Trees that run to the sky

Bridges that lead to the same place

Rivers that deceive other rivers

Animals getting tired

Trees that talk to each other

Trees that like to be on the other side

Tree that talks to itself

A flower lands on a butterfly

3 House

My house is wet

Temporary shelter that the water resumed

A bush came in and closed the door

The house surrounds me and keeps the sky all to myself

Space tears the earth with violence

Gaining Calm

Path over fine lines

Water enters through shoes

There is urgency in this corner

But it's enough for my moment

A brick floats to dry the feet

House with doors where you can't enter

I killed a tree to make a bed

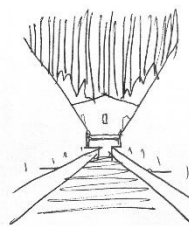
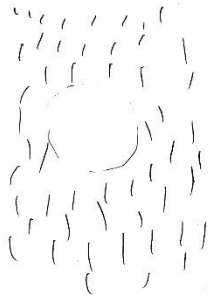
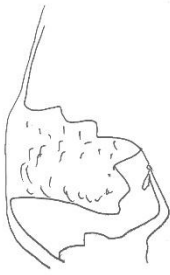
I put it in the water to see the sky reflected

No one comes to my house

The house where there is no floor

The bed floats between the lines

We can't fall into the water





4 Red Tip

A perfect and geometric white line is drawn on one of the many black basalt stones that inhabit the beach of Ponta Ruiva. It looks like a human gesture made of paint, but its depth betrays its natural provenance.

Crushed line of white crystals that, for obscure reasons, intruded into the blackness of the rocks that define the small deserted bay.

I walk over them slowly, trying to avoid the certain and unexpected fall with which the round surfaces provoke my feet. The force they exert on each of them forces all the muscles of the body to rare designs that reflect the undulating shape of the stones inside me.

I notice all these movements and tensions because in the last few days a red pain has taken over my body, in such a way that when the ground becomes more curved and summons those muscles touched by pain, it spreads my legs to the brain.

Perhaps that is why he was so sensitive to the white line on the stone, because it is also conditioned by the black grip that surrounds it. Thus, it is as if my muscles were compressed into a chromatic intermittence of a bright red in those moments and in those points, just as the stone of the white line is compressed among the basaltic blackness.

And I thought, if the brain could be considered a muscle, it would be like having a whole body sometimes of tight ideas and sometimes distended, and I, now, on this beach of Ponta Ruiva could let myself be carried away in an exercise of muscular thoughts that in cadence breathe with me.

Something similar seemed to be happening around it, since the said red tip was also a part of the immense mass of reddish land that curved in a circular bay against the water... that border where the basalt stones that rolled everywhere, sonically pressed by the sea, and which in turn compressed the white line were inserted.

The white line and my muscles were compressed by the black stones, which in turn were compressed by the red earth and the sea... all geological and organic elements committing.

They were clearings of inhabitation.

It was nature becoming aware of itself.

5. NOTES

5.1 - About the words, the drawings and the photographs

The texts, drawings and photographs were produced in the context of a walk, either solo or in the company of other multidisciplinary and wandering beings who propose to inhabit and think about the humanized landscape, more specifically, in the context of the project 'Collective Atlas, inventory of a landscape', a project developed by the Terra Corpo collective with the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Landscape Museum, among others.

5.2 - On spirituality, language and art

Spirituality is an awareness, a transcendence, which is placed before us as a search for our order in the cosmos; what I am and what I do here. To meet this demand, the soul would have to ascend from the world of matter to the world of ideas (Plato).

If in Cartesian rationalism the superiority of the mind is still conceived as a grace separate from the body, with idealism and the *Zeitgeist* (Hegel), the spirit evolves over time, contributing to a collective human self-consciousness. Thus, and since human reason is part of the natural world, we can say that it is a means for nature to be aware of itself. (Schelling)

In Romanticism this relationship between man and nature will be celebrated, the spirit that wants to be visible nature, and man delights in it, whether in the search for the balance of beauty, or in the tensions of the sublime (Burke) felt in the work of Caspar David Friedrich or in Novalis in the search for the blue flower.

However, human singularity is cruel, because the effort that the human being makes in the search for the meaning of things will lead to excesses, as in phenomenology where it is stated that being and consciousness exist, but objects may not (Husserl). With this skepticism in relation to matter, reality was reduced to the way the human being perceives, a slavery of the senses where nature only existed "for us".

Existentialism will add, however, that the human being is also shaped by place, *Dasein*, Heidegger's 'being-in-the-world'. In the text 'build, inhabit, think' establishes a relationship between the word be (*ich bin*) and build (*baum*). He will say that before a bridge exists, there are many positions along the river that can be occupied by something, but it is the bridge that gives rise to a place.

With existentialism, the phenomenological idea of considering man and his perception as the source of all knowledge is completed, in order to admit that place interferes with his perception; that is, man is while he inhabits, occupying and transforming nature, in the double condition of observer and intervening.

With the human being, the cosmos developed the ability to translate matter and to think of itself (Sagan). The universe without man would be like a dense forest at night: things exist, but they are in total darkness. Human consciousness is the 'clearing' where light enters and things finally appear as things, the 'clearing of Being' (Heidegger).

What helps to build individual consciousness and allows collective consciousness is language, an imperfect code of symbols, for all philosophy is 'critique of language' (Wittgenstein). The way we think is unclear, it uses many other languages, it is an intermittent collage of impressions produced by the senses and articulated through codes, which enables moments of awareness, which we could call 'clearings of feeling'.

In the same way that being and acting are part of the human condition, the 'clearings of feeling' only occur in the face of the 'clearings of inhabiting'. Human beings who look at the darkness of nature with an open flashlight from a tiny planet in the universe.

Art as a way of feeling and inhabiting that occurs through a complex system of languages, a metalanguage, has been expanding its field of action in recent years. Art in the expanded field (Krauss) enabled radical experiments that allowed artists to broaden context, and act in the 'clearings of inhabiting', contributing more and more to the understanding of the natural and universal phenomenon.

5.3 About Minimal art

In the early 60s, suspending modernism and abstract expressionism, something begins to change in the art world. Donald Judd proclaims that a painting is not a rectangle with an image, but rather a plane more or less distant from the wall, that is, an object that establishes a relationship with it. He thus invented the concept of 'specific objects', in which artistic objects must be adapted to the gallery, the so-called 'white cube' space, which will make his pieces gain volume on the wall and also occupy the floor.

Art, against the idea of an illusionist flat painting, thus begins to become spatial and contextual, since it should be three-dimensional like everything else. Carl Andre and Dan Flavin, among others, will contribute to developing these principles by activating the entire gallery space, either through a focus on materiality or the manipulation of light. Critics would call this type of space art minimalism, but none of these artists saw themselves in the term.

5.4 About Land art

In the second half of the 1960s, some of these artists, inspired by the spirit of the beat generation and the new ecological ideals, extended their activities to the abstract outer space, and the American deserts became witnesses to experiments that would ridicule minimalist spatial expansion. Sculpture in the expanded field replaced the abstract space of the 'white cube' with huge real spaces. Walter de Maria launched the principles in 1960, through texts such as 'art yard' and 'on the importance of natural disasters', where he proposes a set of spatial actions to be carried out outdoors, such as an artistic performance in which an immense courtyard is excavated by bulldozers, and declares his entropic passion for great natural disasters saying that nature is always grander than art.

He will move away to the desert to make his territorial marks such as 'Mile long drawing', geometric marks that guided us through nature and 'Lightning Field', a total work of art that only nature is able to complete, in which a mesh of spikes placed in the desert awaits some storm. In 1966, Robert Smithson, began his regular work with his earthworks, and after studying the entropic processes of the industrial structures of the New York suburbs, wrote his seminal text 'a sedimentation of the mind, earthprojects'. In it he will say that all art corresponds to a denaturalization, calling the interventions he carries out in the desert as 'in-site', and the displacements of material to the gallery as 'non-site'. He argues that everything is subject to cracking and oxidation, and for this reason he produces works in which leaks of raw material in various places accelerate

entropy. Minimalism and Landart expanded the concept of context, place, and matter from the abstract space of the white cube to the natural space of the desert, but this expansion would soon move into the urban place.

5.5 About Conceptual art

At the end of the 60s, mainly due to the difficulties that Land art posed in terms of exhibition and communication of works, the registration, representation and idea of the object would gain decisive importance. The artists took their concerns with the context to the limit and became aware that the great human transformation was taking place in the urban compact and began to monitor their behavior in society. Following the ideas of Henry Flint, who used the word as an artistic form, and who produced the first approaches to concept art, dividing it into linguistic approximations (concept art) and mathematical approximations (structure art), they began to measure and collect evidence of these behaviors. Lawrence Weiner, also a New York artist, sold linguistic descriptions of actions as art, which he wrote on gallery walls, and the buyer could produce the art himself. I used to say that the artist may not build or have his work built, he just needs to enunciate it. Conceptual art abolished the object, because it was concerned with the things and situations that man produces in society, defending a compromise between making and the passion for conception, something between Sol Lewitt's 'the concept is the machine that makes art' and Huebler's position saying 'I don't want to add one more object to the world'. Thus, if minimal art approaches architecture as a producer of artificial space within the white cube, and Landart approaches urbanism, questioning the way we mark and structure the territory in order to walk and inhabit, conceptual art questions the processes of conception of our ideals and the things we produce, that is, another way in which nature asserts and transforms itself.

5.6 On Ideas, place, and matter

Man always exists and thinks from a certain place, where his actions, with greater or lesser consequences, end up manifesting themselves. These inhabited and manipulated places are the expression of different cultures and their sum is part of what we consider our world, a planet transformed by its own organic, making man part of it and being one of the beings that most affects it with its interaction. When man thinks, he thinks about something, so his interiority is a process of reflection, an awareness of what is external to him and of the self, which is acting, creating a universe of ideals and objectives that characterize him in an autonomous and unique way. The interaction with the surrounding place, people and things, determines the expression of this interiority, a dialectical process of perception and expression, an interaction that will condition the place where it lives. Man is thus constituted as an idea, place and matter that is transformed, and this trilogy as an operative tool develops in three distinct times, that of the self, that of the place, and that of the world, and contributes to the opening of the clearing of understanding of the universe.

5.7 Bibliographic Notes

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