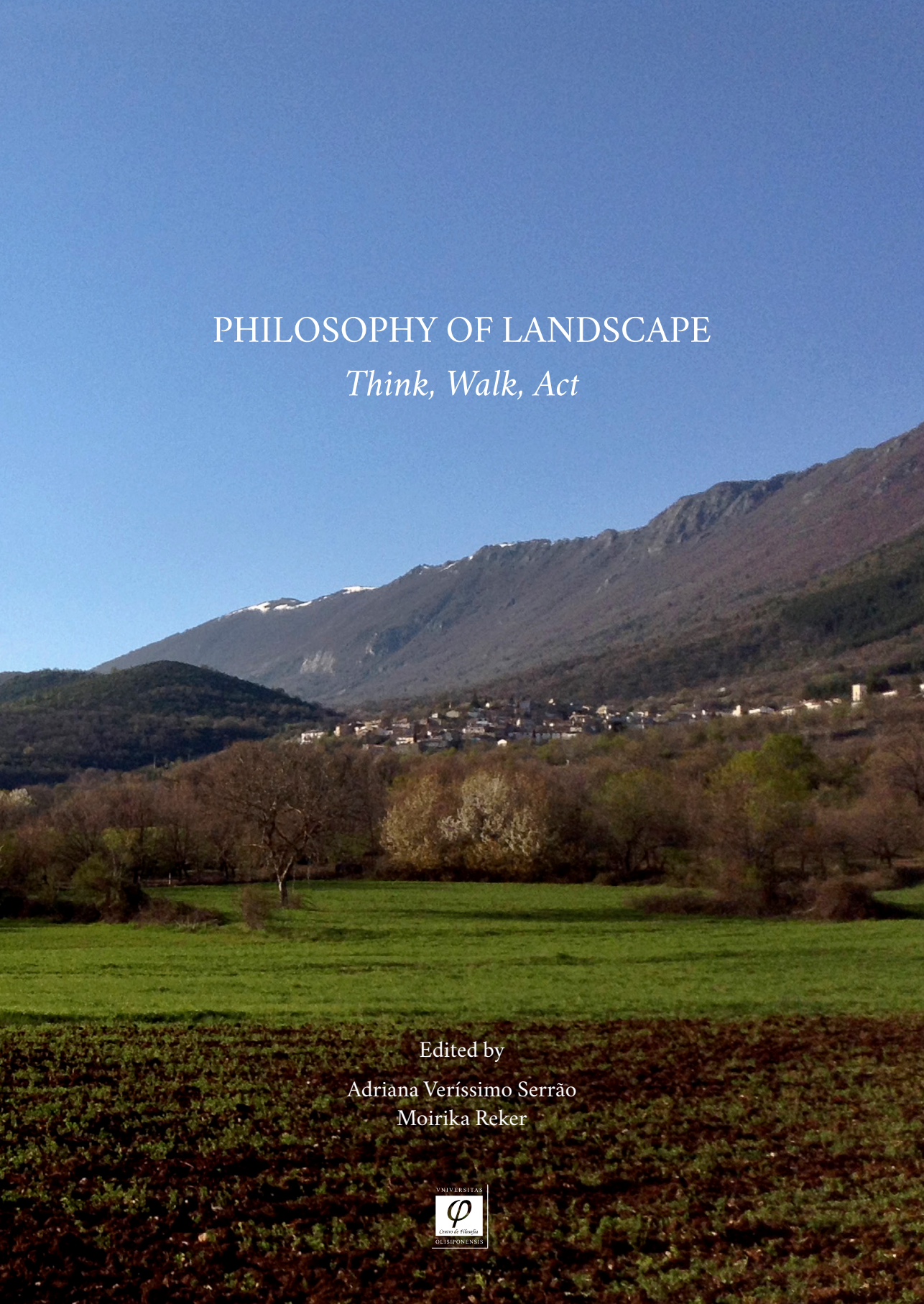
PHILOSOPHY OF LANDSCAPE

Think, Walk, Act



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Centre for Philosophy at the University of Lisbon
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

Arnold Berleant

This landmark collection of essays on landscape offers a much-needed comprehensive exploration of an important dimension of our human environment. Landscape is different from such environmental topics as the forest, the city, and the sea. Unlike other subjects of environmental inquiry, landscape is strangely situated, giving it a compelling significance. For landscape is not a place that can be clearly demarcated. It is not a natural object like a mountain or a river, nor is it a location such as a valley or an island. In fact, landscape is no thing at all. Etymologically speaking, landscape is an expanse of the perceived environment: a scene, a region, surroundings as viewed by an observer. This gives landscape unique standing in environmental experience because landscape cannot be considered alone: it is, in effect, defined by and in relation to human perception. Landscape is a relationship.

We can think here of the Claude glass, so called because it was an optical device, invented by the seventeenth century French landscape painter Claude Lorrain, through which an artist or a traveler in the countryside could look and adjust in order to frame a pleasing aspect of the scenery, arranging the view through the glass to resemble what a painter would depict with brush and paint. This exemplifies how what is designated as a landscape depends on the viewer, a point of exceeding importance. For there is no landscape "out there", so to speak, no independent object or place. Recognizing this has dramatic implications, for it demonstrates how landscape is actually a complex synthesis of viewer and environment. Recognizing this led me to entitle my first extended discussion of environment, "The Viewer in the Landscape", and that same understanding underlies many of the essays in this volume. Moreover, landscape has been used metaphorically in ways that do not always suit a visual meaning, such as 'earthscape' and 'spacescape' and even in referring to memories of one's previous home as an internal landscape.

This does not in the least consign landscape to the 'subjective' (a word I exclude from my vocabulary). Rather it requires that the perceiver be included as part of the configuration we call 'landscape'. Thus there is no landscape without an implied viewer. The great landscape photographer Ansel Adams responded to the complaint, that there are no people in his photographs by noting, "There are always two people: the photographer and the viewer." The perceiver does not constitute landscape but is rather part of it. Nature is there but a participant is required for it to become a landscape, since landscape exists only in relation to an active participant. Further, a viewer who is **in** the landscape cannot be an exclusively visual participant but is necessarily a bodily sensible being.

This critical understanding is reflected in many of the essays that follow, as they range over the rich field of landscape studies. Since, as I am claiming, landscape is constituted by humans, there is no landscape, natural or cognitive, without a participant. Like the rambler in the countryside, the authors here do not stand outside their subject-matter; they use the literary equivalent of a Claude glass to delimit the segment they wish to peruse. And just as each author creates a distinctive approach to the study of landscape, so is the reader invited to engage in a similar process of selecting and forming an understanding of landscape, creating a sort of third-order landscape.

Here is a remarkable collection of original essays by a international assemblage of distinguished scholars that makes a definitive contribution to environmental studies. History, philosophy, psychology, science, literature, and still other disciplines all contribute to this dialogue on landscape. The essays are an invitation to the reader to join their authors in wandering among widely diverse visions of landscape in the process of forming one's own. As Thoreau observed in *Walden* (1854), "Wherever I sat, there might I live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly." In the landscape there are no observers but only participants. With this rich collection before you, I invite you to join.

INTRODUCTION

Adriana Veríssimo Serrão and Moirika Reker

1.

Throughout history there have been grand categories that have conceived an all-encompassing reality through the cohesion of their elements and through their internal structures – *Cosmos*, Nature, *Unum*, *Hen kai Pan*, World, Universe. In the present day, in view of the dispersion that has resulted from the proliferation of fields of study, which are becoming ever more specialized (each delimiting ontic regions as their specific object of study), these categories refer to an abstract metaphysics that is inoperative when faced with the multimodal manifestation of empirical phenomena – the endeavour of identifying a category sufficiently broad to embrace the unity of the world therefore proves to be fruitless.

On the one hand, the impossibility of the contemporary individual to access a comprehensive vision of unity – a pressing situation since the end of the 19th century, with the rise of scientism and positivism –, has relegated philosophy to an uncertain status, stripped of its principal role as fundamental knowledge but also of its ruling function of guiding fragmented investigations. On the other hand, to the loss of a unifying horizon (both from an epistemological and an ontological perspective) amongst a myriad of micro-logics that many authors have diagnosed as 'crises of culture', one must add the profound transformations that have taken place at a civilizational level, and which, in very general terms, are consequences of the industrial revolution. Mechanization and automation prevail in all areas of culture, society and economy, but also of our inner lives, leading to the hegemony of the calculating mind, analytical perception, and a very impoverished sensibility, indifferent to the smallest details.

Furthermore, instead of the promised liberation from dependency on the often unpredictable natural rhythms which dictated the fortunes of

agricultural workers who could only obtain their livelihood from working the land, the *homo urbanus* has not only lost all links to his natural base, and therefore been deprived of that spontaneous vivification, but has also become a *homo mechanicus* in a mechanized world, broken down into multiple tasks and subordinated to other forms of dependency. As such, transformations of great magnitude enabled by technological sophistication have gone hand in hand with a sentiment of disenchantment and malaise.

In regard to scale and connectivity, although modern transport routes and means of communication allow for the crossing of great distances, creating the impression of a world where all spaces are connected, in our everyday lives growing barriers and divides have taken root. Gigantic cities of colossal dimensions surrounded by featureless suburbs contrast with rural areas that are either depopulated or, alternatively, disfigured by the uniformity of urban models: a local and global tension between the mechanical and the vital is joined by a disproportion of the micro and the macro levels.

In this context of complex contradictory realities, the concept of *Landscape* has come to generate growing interest and fulfil an increasingly important function that could not have been suspected only a few years ago. Here we are not referring to those fields, such as the natural sciences (say physical geography), some historical sciences (archaeology, for example), and the humanities (art history or literary studies), which have been widely consolidated through the study of the landscape, but to the recurrent use of the word 'landscape' in multiple discourses that have arisen within civil society, from tourism to advertising, real estate marketing, business management, etc. And yet, beneath this ever imprecise and casuistic usage, empty of meaning and verging on banality, one can glimpse an allusion to other places and environments that support balanced and cohesive ways of life.

This is where philosophy differs from all other sector-specific orientations, including the natural-scientific and the humanistic, which use operative concepts specific to their fields of study. The Philosophy of Landscape is a seminal reflection on a category of human thought where the Platonic *chôra*, Kant's reflective judgment, Georg Simmel's thought on the Third, Rosario Assunto's *a priori* synthesis, Augustin Berque's trajection and Arnold Berleant's ontological reversibility converge. The instauration of the category of landscape and of the Philosophy of Landscape occurred in 1913 with the publication of

the essay of the same name by Georg Simmel: The Philosophy of Landscape and its philosophical concept both have their genesis here, concurrently.

Although from the late 18th century onwards, several authors give descriptions of the geographic variety of the world, the aesthetic qualities of distinct regions of the globe or the relationship between different types of landscapes and temperaments, in Simmel landscape is not only an object of deep reflection, but also rises to the status of a category of thought. Simmel is concerned not with a particular landscape, nor with why a specific landscape is important to a particular people, but rather with the reasons why we came to see a multiplicity of landscapes instead of the unity of Nature, and with the questions of why landscape came to be understood as a cultural way of apprehending nature and why man needed to create a new category of thought to begin with.

Subsequently, with the exception of Joachim Ritter's influential essay of 1963, the problem of landscape's origin, historicity, and historical and epochal significance receded into the background. In fact, throughout the 1960s and 70s, most theories, of a predominantly descriptive character, would focus on the Nature/ Culture debate and their respective ratio in the composition of landscapes' mixed essence. An exception to the prevailing and clearly anthropocentric-culturalist positions was that put forth by Rosario Assunto, whose thought integrates an ecological awareness and its warnings of the risks threatening organic life's capacity for continuous generation and self-regulation (with *Il paesaggio e l'estetica*, 1973, as the main example), or Ronald Hepburn's 1966 text "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty". Although this text does not specifically deal with landscape, it does present a groundbreaking meditation on the importance of the study of nature in philosophical aesthetics and the neglect such study had endured due to the focus of aesthetics solely on art. Both authors only gain widespread recognition later, becoming important references.

If the question that initially drove the Philosophy of Landscape was the understanding of how Modernity could see the world in separated parts and substitute Nature-Cosmos with the apprehension of individualized totalities; in the present day, the challenge is to elaborate an idea of Landscape as a new paradigm, as the element connecting that which has been separated, reuniting human and natural in a broad process of re-naturalization. Or, to

put it differently, as a specific modality of the experience of reality that allows for the rethinking of everyday life, new schemes of town planning and the manifestation of man in the world: Landscape as both a horizontal and vertical dimension, as part of a reflection that integrates not only knowledge from empirical sciences and bordering fields but also from those fields that have a more direct (physical) intervention or impact upon the land.

The Philosophy of Landscape presents itself, thus, as a conciliation between the natural and the human worlds, a possibility of coexistence through the understanding of nature as the foundation of life, but also as a conciliation of distinct and disaggregated knowledge – an encompassing reflection – a heuristic thought that precedes interdisciplinary crossovers, attempting to understand landscape in search of the fundament of the unity and totality of the real.

2.

As the Philosophy of Landscape is a discipline which is still in its infancy, the present book could not intend to be a systematic exposition, nor present itself as comprehensive a compendium. The chapters gathered here do not share a unanimous conception of Landscape, as their theoretical postulates and their understanding of philosophy's object and methodological procedures are distinct.

However, all coincide in the adoption of Landscape as a synthetic category which allows for the interpretation, proposal, and anticipation of intersections between the natural and the human, the physical and the spiritual, the untouched and the built-up, the real and the ideal. Focusing, therefore, on the philosophical category of Landscape, understood as vision of the World, the diverse chapters of this volume offer differentiated contributions and illustrate three constitutive dimensions of human completeness, in its dual status as agent and participant, active and dependent, in the natural, cultural and historical world: the theoretical and reflexive dimension (the human being as subject of contemplation and appreciation); the practical, ethical and political dimension (or the human as a being that acts, makes decisions and must be responsible for the effects of his interventions); and the poietic dimension of a being that, by building and shaping its

living environments, reflects the image it creates of itself and of its position in the world. In this light, we can consider anthropological philosophy as Philosophy of Landscape's basis and main thread.

The present book aims to unveil the specificity of the philosophical approach and its contribution towards the understanding of the landscape, reflecting on the fundamental modes of human dwelling – without leaving aside the affinity between aesthetics and ethics, as well as the political implications of actions affecting natural areas and community life. To conceive of Landscape as a synthetic category, between the naturalness of the world and the concrete life of its inhabitants, is to think of it as being ruled by such values as reception and tolerance in the shared respect of environmental and political values.

It will become clear that what is sought is not a single key but rather an understanding of how the landscape, taken as a category of thought, may constitute an element which connects that which is separate. In considering the Philosophy of Landscape, this work therefore finds it to be a mediating thought, one capable of offering a foretaste of what is to come as it points towards the future, articulating idea and reality, bringing together unity and plurality, coordinating theoretical foundation and actual implementation.

The book's structure proposes four paths:

PART ONE
Think – I. Seeking a New Cosmos

This section discusses the major questions regarding the historical origin and the ascertaining of the essence of Landscape. In this way, its main focus is an examination of the Philosophy of Landscape as a branch of Philosophy.

Adriana Veríssimo Serrão takes as her point of departure the seminal essays of Georg Simmel ("Philosophie der Landschaft", 1913) and Joachim Ritter ("Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft", 1963), in particular the thesis which claims that in modernity landscape has replaced Nature as the all-encompassing (*cosmos*) and principle of life (*physis*, *natura*). This compensatory conception is not, however, unanimously sustained. Serrão proposes that the meditation of Rosario Assunto (*Il paesaggio*

e l'estetica, 1973), grounded in the metaphysical connection between Nature, Infinity and Time, presents solid foundations for considering both complementarity and distinction between Nature and Landscape.

The turn from classical metaphysics towards existential ontology, influenced by the specific Heideggerian interpretation of ontology, determines different modalities of man's insertion as being in-the-world which amplify the oldest concept of landscape. *Dirk Michael Hennrich* sustains that, in line with this conception of philosophy as a fundamental occupation with facticity, the dichotomy between Nature and Culture disappears. After considering a trans-natural and trans-cultural form of Earth awareness, Earth is recognized as foundation for all kinds of life forms. Therefore, Hennrich claims, Philosophy of Landscape can be seen as a real step towards bringing together Geo-Science, Geo-Politics, Geo-Philosophy and Geo-Ethics.

Jorge Croce-Rivera inserts the idea of the dwelling as the essential matrix of human existence into the archaic tradition of *ethos* – indigenous soil involving both its framework and its inhabitants – and analyses the tensions between *ethos* and *eidos* as the founding principle of architecture's essence and function. Although particular, an *ethos* functions as a totality that engages an economy, a linguistic system and an ecological niche. An *ethos* becomes a place – hence the analogy with the landscape – depending on the dispositions of its dwellers, the characterization of being and the modalities of truth.

The accelerated change that has blurred the clear delimitation between *urbs* and *ager* (contemporary cities are increasingly removed from the rural spaces from which they receive their sustenance, but the countryside has, in turn, been disfigured by the occupation of its territory and by buildings similar to those found in urban spaces) has put into question the idealization of landscapes as idyllic places still free from the contamination and sedimentation of successive transformations. The standardization of the surfaces of the world, making the places where one can still perceive the presence of a primordial nature more and more residual and distant – confirming the supplemental function of the landscape argued by Joachim Ritter –, can lead to the most unpredictable and dreadful consequences. *Augustin Berque*'s chapter establishes the genealogy of the myth, which, in both the East and the West, has brought about the idealization of the isolated house, close to

"nature" in terms of landscape. This myth has produced a pervasive kind of settlement – a rural-like form of urbanization spreading over vast swathes of territory – which, being both ecologically unsustainable and morally unjustifiable, Berque defines as "the unsustainable urban realm".

PART TWO
Think – II. The Right to Contemplate

This section is devoted to a set of studies characterised by markedly aesthetic concerns, covering the range of aesthetic perceptions involved in the appreciation of landscape.

Indeed, it is a fact that Aesthetics was the first area of philosophy to contribute to the appreciation of natural phenomena, and the great systems of the Enlightenment and Romanticism – raising sensibility and sentiment to the status of superior faculties – continue to offer a solid framework for current thought. They do, however, face the difficulty of responding fully to the question of providing a clear definition of the 'natural' and 'naturalness', in an epoch in which nature is no longer identified with the order and regularity of events, much less so with an eternal and subsisting foundation. Considering that since the 1960s, due to the spread of environmental ethics or environmentalism, natural beauty or the aesthetic appreciation of nature has become one of the hot topics in the field of Anglo-Saxon aesthetics, *Kiyokazu Nishimura* provides a framework for the trends and guidelines of new theories that seek to promote both the appreciation of nature and the ethical need for its protection. The answers to the question "What kind of experience is appreciating nature 'aesthetically'?" imply critical judgements capable of conciliating subjective expression with the objectivity of scientific knowledge.

To what extend the categories of Environment and Landscape are complementary or alternative is an interesting debate which is yet to be resolved and opposes very distinct philosophical traditions: the Anglo-American and the European schools. *Luís Sá*'s chapter confronts both of these orientations. Examining the most common argumentative traits employed by authors such as Allen Carlson, Arnold Berleant and Yuriko Saito (namely their critique of traditional theories' limitations in the description of aesthetic experience,

the relationship established between man and nature and the building of an ethic upon such aesthetics), Sá counteracts these critiques, which do not cover the whole breadth of classical aesthetics, namely the Kantian, to value the understanding of landscape as a meeting point between man and nature.

Against the primacy, or even exclusivity, of the visual, which has associated landscapes to beautiful views or majestic scenery, according to an artistic taste based on a pictorial or scenic matrix that privileges a single sensorial organ and narrows the apprehension of the sensible whole, *Tiago Mesquita Carvalho* discusses the relevance of sonic aspects in landscapes and architecture as a significant contribution towards the understanding of our experiential relation with both space typologies, showing how sound feasibly supports a different kind of access to and appreciation of landscapes and architecture. He then analyses how some artistic works of sound intervention, reputedly classified as examples of *Land Art*, allow for the reconfiguration of the common notion of visual space.

PART THREE
Walk. Reconnecting Paths

Walking is proposed as a specific mode of experiencing landscapes, a bodily fruition that brings a physical experience of time and rhythm to contemplation.

A characteristic trait of recent readings resides in the consideration of landscapes as close realities, whose aesthetic contemplation and hermeneutic decoding call for direct approaches. In the experience of the walker and the explorer, or in the way in which a dwelling is composed – that basic anthropological condition –, the unique physiognomy of each place is attained through subjective appropriation and sensorial receptivity that can only be locally stimulated, *in situ*.

Taking as a starting point the concepts of landscape, body, and trajection, *Victor Gonçalves* discusses the terms in which three authors, Francesco Petrarca, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Friedrich Nietzsche, have sought to bridge the gap between the concepts of human and nature, not only within the framework of Western scholarship but also in terms of a broader worldview, by constructing the idea of landscapes as territories inhabited by symbols and objects.

Bringing our attention to the fact that what is noticeable to our senses is but a fraction of what sustains our perceptions, *Vladimir Bartalini and Arthur Simões Caetano Cabral* discuss the bonds between the visible and the imperceptible, sustaining a phenomenology of the invisible traces that hide beneath the visuality of surfaces. In a journey through João Guimarães Rosa's tale "The Message from the Hill", Bartalini and Cabral propose walking as a method of unveiling such hidden traces beneath the landscape, particularly in prosaic situations.

Luca Vargiu provides some elements that shed light on the various relationships existing between 'walking' and 'landscape'. In his chapter, Vargiu discusses contrasting points of view, according to which there exists, or there does not exist, a link between Landscape and walking, be it a strong or weak link. The first point of view considers the experience of walking as a constitutive feature of the experience of landscape, where this experience is seen not in terms of an objectifying distancing, but rather as a primary experience of bodily involvement, intimate and affective. The second point of view asserts that walking is a kind of *sui generis* experience, and, for this reason, can even be considered as a kind of non-landscape experience.

Beginning with Leibniz's famous statement, "And as the same town, looked at from various sides, appears quite different and becomes as it were numerous in aspects", *Marcello Tanca* sustains that Leibniz is not just simply stating that the vision of the city from different perspectives enables us to observe different things; but that the city doesn't exist as a 'total' object or as a reassuring and definitive unit. Here, the controversial notion of urban landscape is explored in connection with the works of the philosopher Siegfried Kracauer (*Streets in Berlin & Elsewhere*), the writer Georges Perec (*A Man Asleep*) and urbanist Bernardo Secchi (*First lesson in Urban Studies*).

PART FOUR
Act. For a Fulfiling Living

This part explores gardening and agriculture as builders of landscape, or how the activities of gardening and agriculture act upon the landscape, interconnecting the rural and the urban, and nurturing communities.

The oscillation between the aesthetic appreciation of the untamed wild and the placidity of cultivated areas is analysed by *Paolo D'Angelo*, who explores how our attitude towards nature and the landscape has changed over time. If for a long time the kind of nature that was loved and perceived as agreeable was that which had been developed by man, it was only over the course of the 18th century that wild, inhospitable and hostile nature came to be appreciated. And it is only in more recent times that a reverse movement can be identified: a rediscovery of the cultivated countryside's value, even in terms of landscape, restoring its significance within our perception of natural beauty in general. It took us two millennia to develop a love for the wilderness, but here D'Angelo guides us along the reverse path, a path that we have only been following for the last couple of decades.

Jean-Marc Besse argues that, whether in the countryside or in the city, the question of dwelling is fundamentally that of the definition of neighbourhoods and the constitution of a space of neighbourhoods, which is to say, a question of delimiting areas for co-habitation. Because, to exist as a human, both as an individual and as a group, is to exist within a community – it is always 'to live with.' Walking us through the nuances between occupying/ inhabiting and the necessary adjustment of proximities and distances that allow us to live with one-another and with the world around us, Besse arrives at the question of our relationship with nature. He then considers three different dimensions of human activity: *production*, *maintenance* and the *initiative*, to conclude that cohabitation is the key not only to our human living but also to approaching our relationship with the world.

A specific kind of dwelling, the garden – ideally, an earthly image of Paradise or an enclosure for cultivation – gains new configurations in the urban world by bringing nature into the city, contributing to its re-naturalization. Beginning with a reflection on the garden and the place it occupies in the experience of the city, *Moirika Reker* focuses on a specific kind of urban garden, namely, the urban public orchard. In her chapter, she argues that such a garden establishes a successful bridging element between city and landscape, as it both enhances the urban aesthetic experience and provides clues for the betterment of city life.

Gardens and Landscapes are clearly distinct realities in their genesis; the former imply human thought and work in the prior conception of their design and afterwards in the continuous preservation of their form, while the latter are self-productions and spontaneous manifestations of living nature. However, *Mateusz Salwa* claims that the understanding of landscapes in terms of gardens makes us more sensitive to their aesthetic and ethical dimensions, endorsing gardening as a practice that embodies various values and virtues that could be crucial for our relationship with the world conceived of as our dwelling place.

3.

The making of the present book on a new philosophical discipline is the result of a long process that has involved all its participants both individually and collectively. Research on the Philosophy of Landscape at the Department of Philosophy of the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon began through courses, public lectures, seminars and conferences which took place as part of post-graduate programmes over the course of ten years. Subsequently, "Filosofia e Arquitectura da Paisagem (Philosophy and Landscape Architecture)", a research project supported by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology from 2010 to 2013, and carried out in partnership with the Research Centre for Landscape Architecture Professor Caldeira Cabral (Instituto Superior de Agronomia) conferred an institutional framework to this line of research, formalising it through 15 public lectures given by philosophers, geographers, architects, landscape architects and artists, four post-graduate courses and an international conference *Paisagens em Transição / Transition Landscapes*, held at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon.

The direct outcomes of the project were brought together in four books, all published by the Centre of Philosophy of the University of Lisbon:

— *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologia* (2011; 2013). An anthology comprising the presentation and original translations into Portuguese of some of the most representative theories of Landscape, from 1913 to the present day.

Organized in four sections: "Landscape between nature, countryside and city"; "Landscape between nature and culture"; "Appreciating nature: the statute of natural beauty" and "Between aesthetics and ethics: the future of the landscape", the book adopts as its criteria the (real and conceptual) precedence of Landscape over landscapes, selecting texts from authors that have established the foundations for a theory of landscape.

— *Filosofia e Arquitectura da Paisagem. Um Manual* (2012; 2014). Conceived as a companion and structured in seven sections – "Before Landscape"; "Cultural expressions of Landscape"; "Interpreting Landscape"; "Aesthetics and Ethics of Landscape"; "Landscape Legislation"; "Redesigning Landscape" and "A Concept for the Future" – this book provides a didactic sequence of chapters, deepening the understanding of landscape in its twofold aspects of fundaments (philosophy) and intervention (architecture).

— *Filosofia e Arquitectura da Paisagem. Intervenções* (2013). A collective volume gathering the lectures held by the researchers throughout the project. Notwithstanding the varied fields of the contributors (philosophy, landscape architecture, architecture, social psychology, ecology and visual arts) the theoretical perspectives are organized in clearly defined problematic nuclei: "From Nature to Landscape"; "Heuristics of Landscape"; "Ethics of Nature"; "Inhabitable Cities" and "Beyond Representations".

— *Filosofia da Paisagem. Estudos*, 2013. A compilation of essays by Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, the principal investigator of the project. Organized in four chapters: "Anthropology and Philosophy of Nature"; "Nature and Art: The Composite Categories"; "Landscape and Environment. A theoretical debate" and "Problems of Philosophy of the Landscape", the book reflects on the essence of Landscape as idea and reality, being and manifestation.

This research has enabled the creation of a wide network of contacts with experts from different countries, through colloquiums, conferences and collective publications that, in turn, have fostered a strong spirit of cooperation and the coming together of synergies and affinities, many of which found their way into this present volume.

A word of appreciation goes to all the contributors to this edition, as well as to all those who participated in the line of research in Philosophy of the Landscape and the FilArqPais project, who enriched its content with chapters, in some cases specifically written for this book and in other cases summarizing extensive and consolidated research.

Thanks are also due to all those whose contribution was essential for this volume to take definitive form – to Robin Driver for his thorough English revision, to Catarina Aguiar for her competent formatting and typesetting of the e-book.

A very special thank you goes to Arnold Berleant, who has been a dear friend from the beginning of our research, promptly offering to participate in this book by providing a preface, and to Soraya Nour Sckell, who has welcomed our research into the editorial plan of her project Cosmopolitanism: Justice, Democracy and Citizenship without Borders (PTDC/FER-FIL/30686/2017).

Lisbon, July 2019

PART ONE

THINK – I

Seeking a New Cosmos

LANDSCAPE AS A WORLD CONCEPTION

Adriana Veríssimo Serrão

1. The philosophy of landscape contains an entire philosophy

Although philosophers have taken interest in landscapes in several moments in history, particularly in the aesthetic context of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, the philosophy of landscape *sensu stricto* started once the concept was clearly subjected to an inquiry about its origin and its categorial function. This double inquiry happened for the first time in 1913 in the essay "Philosophie der Landschaft" by Georg Simmel, which, due to its inaugural status, is still the obligatory reference for those discussing the change in the consideration of landscape (or certain landscapes) as a theme or for establishing landscape as a philosophical problem.

The understanding that "landscape" is a relatively recent spiritual or historical-cultural formation which could only emerge at a time characterized by deep divisions, locates in Modernity the replacement of the feeling of the natural or the feeling of nature (*Naturgefühl*; *Gefühl für Natur*) as totality *of* the world, which was dominant in ancient and medieval times, with the feeling for the landscape (*Gefühl für die Landschaft*), as a fragmentary and plural point of view *on* the world, characteristic of the modern mindset. Correspondingly, the understanding that "a landscape" has no existence in itself prior to the act that observes and at the same time constitutes it *qua talis* confirms that the invention of this category is correlated with the rising importance of subjectivity, which converts each landscape experience into an encounter simultaneously subjective and objective. These two reflective lines intersect in the essay, which is utterly original for proposing, for the first time, the historicity and the intrinsic problematicity of the concept. While relative, and not absolute, it refutes the alleged universality of an anthropological constant, according to which from time immemorial human beings would always have chosen beautiful

places to establish their living communities and to delight in contemplation. While relational, it refutes the regular notion, entrenched in common sense, of the landscape as a static entity: a surface of the territory or a given natural place existent in itself, fully consummated independently of the reference to a present observer.

As landscape is not an originary category but one derived from human consciousness, Philosophy has since Simmel been confronted with a set of questions, among which that of landscape's essence and composition stands out. Maintaining a permanent, indissoluble bond with Nature – the general designation for the unity and totality of reality – landscape is not extracted from it by simple analytical derivation, but involves synthetic processes, integrating natural-objective and cultural-subjective ingredients; although always referring to a founding naturalness, it is not to be confused with pure and untouched naturalness. The relationship between Landscape and Nature, which since Simmel has been a crucial question, is thus all the more complex as Nature is also not monolithic and has suffered deep changes throughout history.

The philosophy *of* landscape contains a worldview, which, precisely for its specificity, is a reflection of a broader picture of the world, including the image that Man makes of himself and of his mundane condition. It requires a multiple reading that combines issues pertaining to the philosophy of nature (and also of culture and history) and to philosophical anthropology. Departing from its own thinking methods and reflective instruments, it reorients them, bringing landscape to the field of the fundamental problems of philosophy. Here speculations of a metaphysical (the one and the multiple), gnoseological (subject and object), ontological (thinking and being), and anthropological (what is man? Which is his field of appreciation and action?) order come together.

The place – peripheral or central – that the concept of landscape occupies in a given doctrine is thus not insignificant, whether it be a sporadic motive of interest or a specific critical horizon that frames both theoretical and practical philosophy. Aspiring to such comprehensiveness, a philosophy of landscape can never be based on a set of secured theses, nor can it propose dogmatic solutions. It requires a mediating thought between the empirical multiplicity (of landscapes) and the thought-out oneness of

the idea (of landscape): when targeting the idea it is concurrently targeting the reality to which it refers, in a constant transition between totality and singularity; a heuristic capacity for judgement that devises the universal from the particular, which Kant designated reflective judgement.

It is also appropriate, henceforth, to stress the demarcation from other proven orientations in the history of artistic and scientific culture, in which this questioning does not arise. Although it is a co-relation between concept and reality, it must not be confused with scenery represented (or idealized) in painting or in literature, which privilege the subjective, oftentimes hyper-subjective or projective side of the artist's interpretations, moods, styles and personalities. And, allying objectivity and subjectivity, it contrasts with the neutrality of the objective description of places on the earthly surface studied by physical geography and other natural sciences.

In this chapter I will start by revisiting the foundational doctrines of Georg Simmel and Joachim Ritter that, despite significant differences in their respective philosophical bases, understand the idea of landscape from the process of its epochal outset as a re-elaboration of Nature's meaning and of our belonging in it. Then, we will discuss more recent standpoints, elaborated from the end of the 20th century onwards, already in the context of the environmental or anthropological crisis, examining to what extent the proposal of a comprehensive category may contribute to a unified vision in a present world so in need of guiding principles of thought and action.[1]

[1] An overview of the main philosophical theories from Simmel to the present-day is available in the following anthologies: *Estetica e Paesaggio*, a cura di Paolo D'Angelo, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009; *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologia*, coord. Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2011. Both are complemented with general introductory studies and those concerning the problematic and historical framework of each selected text, respectively: P. D'Angelo, "Introduzione", pp. 7-37; A. Veríssimo Serrão, "A Paisagem como problema da Filosofia", pp. 15-35 (a version of this text is available in French: "Paysage: Un Problème pour la Philosophie", in *Filosofia & Atualidade: Problemas, Métodos, Linguagens. Jornadas Filosóficas Internacionais de Lisboa*, coord. Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos, Filipa Afonso, Ubirajara Azevedo Marques, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2015, pp. 11-33 http://repositorio.ul.pt/handle/10451/22762).

2. Between Nature's absence and presence or landscape as a way of viewing the world

a) *Georg Simmel: from Nature's scission to the intuition of the flow of Life*

At the start of his essay, Georg Simmel enounces the incongruence in the analytical definition of landscape as a "piece (*Stück*) of nature". Nature being the spatial totality that operates in a continuous temporal flux, to see a landscape demands, in turn, a certain delimitation and a certain stability, which places landscape in a double contradiction: with the spatial indivisibility and with the temporal continuity of all-comprehensive Nature (*All Natur*).

> 'A piece of nature' is, as such, an internal contradiction; nature has no pieces, it is the unity of a whole. The instant anything is removed from this wholeness, it is no longer nature, precisely because it can only be 'nature' within that unlimited unity, as a wave of that global flow.[2]

It is as if the temporal continuity has been interrupted in the apprehension of a cohesive unity, although of imprecise outlines, and the continuous flow of the happening was suspended in an immediate apprehension, although of relative stability. Oscillating between delimitation and absence of limits, between permanence and instability, landscape is neither confused with an object nor with a group of objects disposed over a stretch of the territory. It is certain that the elements exist; they are perceived and identifiable one by one, like rivers, hills, plants, houses, clouds… but viewing them *as a landscape* implies the synoptic forming (*Formung*) of such elements in a homogeneous set that does not exist as such. That is, it implies the activity of a mental form unifying diverse materials, which, precisely by being a form, pertains to the spirit and not to the reality of the exterior things.

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[2] "'Ein Stück Natur' ist eigentlich ein innerer Widerspruch; die Natur hat keine Stücke, sie ist die Einheit eines Ganzen, und in dem Augenblick, wo irgend etwas aus ihr herausgestückt wird, ist es nicht mehr ganz und gar Natur, weil es eben nur innerhalb jener grenzstrichlosen Einheit, nur als Welle jenes Gesamtstromes 'Natur' sein kann." Georg Simmel, "Philosophie der Landschaft" (1913), *in Georg Simmel-Gesamtausgabe* (= GSG), Bd. 12 (Aufsätze und Abhandlungen, 1909-1918. Bd. I., hrsg. Rüdiger Krämme und Angela Rammstedt), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, pp. 471-472. My translation (here and throughout).

Once landscape is identified as a synthetic category of content and form, which binds the in-itself (natural materials) and the for-itself (the psychic form), Simmel embeds his essay with a double movement. One takes this mental operation back to the historical and cultural genesis of its formation: for the creation of a homogeneous set from the multiplicity of elements already seen as distinct, a previous scission of the One in separated parts, isolated from one another, would have been necessary. Because the connection (union) presupposes decomposition (division), the form-landscape could only have emerged in the mentality of an epoch already modelled by the continuous practice of separation and division. Simmel, hermeneutist of Modernity, points out a mentality marked by deep divisions: civilizational divisions, like work separation and the emergence of the city, which subject individuals to perform multiple tasks, putting at risk their personal identity; intellectual divisions, like the calculus and measurement operations demanded by scientific-mathematical method; aspects resulting in general from dualism and individualism, the main typical symptoms of the tragedy of modern culture.[3]

No less relevant is the second movement. The paradoxical thesis that the landscape only exists in and by the act that captures a set of materials and simultaneously constitutes them as *this* landscape identifies a psychic attitude that, necessarily presupposing division, operates an act of reconnection that transcends the mere sum of the parts and spontaneously produces a reunification that breathes life into and provides consonance to that which was shredded. But how could those parts, already separated amongst themselves

[3] *Ibid*., pp. 473-476. In this long excerpt, Simmel reworks the major topics of a theory of Modernity, developed in the footsteps of the metaphysical tragic: the separation of the One in parts; and the cultural tragic: the divergence between subjective culture, which originally proceeds from the soul's energy, and culture, objectivised in forms that become autonomous and reproduce themselves as if endowed with self-dynamism; cf. "Der Begriff und die Tragödie der Kultur" (1911). Demanding attention and discrimination, and associated with traversal in the 'freie Natur' (which already presupposes the distinction between the city and its outskirts), the experience of the landscape is a pause in the dulling of the sensibility to the meaning and value of the differences of things that characterizes the *blasé* temperament of the metropolitan ("Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben" (1903); GSG, Bd. 7 (Aufsätze und Abhandlungen 1901-1908, Bd. I, hrsg. Angela Rammstedt und Otthein Rammstedt), p. 118). Another closely related topic is the important anthropological thesis that expressly describes man as the being that binds and unbinds, that "always has to separate and cannot connect without separating" ("der Mensch das verbindende Wesen ist, das immer trennen muβ und ohne zu trennen nicht verbinden kann"). ("Brücke und Tür" (1909); GSG, Bd. 12, p. 60).

and from the natural One, become a new unity? How can Nature, shredded by mechanical and technical thought recover the self-dynamism that was subtracted from it? How can a divided subject and a divided world unite again? In other terms, how can the sight of a landscape be placed within and beyond the accentuated separation between subject and object that dominates the remaining human activities (cognoscitive, ethical, technical)? Such harmony between the heterogeneous orders of the conscious and of those things without consciousness would not be possible without a foundation in a common ground, underlying both the psychic energy and the naturalness of the elements. That ground is, for Simmel, Life (*Leben*), the eternally becoming producer of organic forms. In lived experience (*Erlebnis*), therefore, it is not simply Man and Nature that merge, but that which in the subjective spirit is Life and that which in nature is also Life. It would thus be erroneous to reduce this conception of landscape to a visual essence and its intuition to an exclusively optical process. It is entirely metaphysical; it is the intuition of the *medium* that passes underneath, in the deep nature and in the deep soul of the observer, a sentiment of communion, the *Stimmung*, that Simmel describes with atmospheric and musical tonalities: *Tonart*, *Farbung*, *unissono*.

> It seems to me that this is the spiritual act with which the human being shapes a set of phenomena in the category of 'landscape': an intuition closed in on itself, felt as a self-sufficient unity, which is nevertheless intermeshed in something that spreads in an infinite expansiveness, infinitely more fluid, grasped in limits that do not exist for the sentiment that dwells underneath, in another layer of the divine One, of the natural Whole.[4]

Neither does the contemplator observe a static object, because the landscape, not being an object, is, ultimately, intangible; nor is that which is contemplated a cause that would trigger a certain emotion in the contemplator. The *Stimmung* is at the same time sentiment in the subject and a general quality offered by the manifestations of the contemplated slice of nature.

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[4] G. Simmel, "Philosophie der Landschaft", p. 472: "Dies scheint mir die geistige Tat zu sein, mit der der Mensch einen Erscheinungskreis in die Kategorie 'Landschaft' heineinform: eine in sich geschlossene Anschauung als selbstgenugsame Einheit empfunden, dennoch verflochten in ein unendlich weiter Erstrecktes, weiter Flutendes, eingefaβt in Grenzen, die für das darunter, ein anderer Sicht wohnende Gefühl des göttlich Einen, des Naturganzen, nicht bestehen."

> But landscape is already a spiritual formation, it can't be touched anywhere nor be entered into as a mere exterior entity. Landscape lives uniquely by the unifying force of the soul, as something intertwined with that which is given by our creative capacity, impossible to express by any mechanic analogy. Possessing its whole objectivity as landscape in the interior of the scope of our creative activity, the *Stimmung*, which is a particular expression or a particular dynamic of this activity, has full objectivity in and through the landscape.[5]

That in a highly mechanized civilization it is still possible to sense the vital ground that emerges to the surface is also clarified by the metaphysics of Life when it addresses one of philosophy's fundamental problems: that of the relations between totality and individuality. Nature, "which ignores individuality", can, albeit briefly and always fragmentally, through the mediation of a human experience reach the "reconciled richness" of a Third (*ein Drittes*): a unique *individuality*, which, in turn, extends, limitless, to other unique individualities, always irreducible to a universal. Landscape is not, therefore, a part of a precedent Whole; it is a new whole surfacing from those "parts", which, notwithstanding, remains connected to the Whole.[6]

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[5] *Ibid*., p. 480. "Aber sie ist já selbst schon ein geistigen Gebildes, man kann sie nirgends im bloβ Äuβeren tasten und betreten, sie lebt nur durch die Vereinheitlichungskraft der Seele, als eine durch kein mechanisches Gleichnis ausdrückbare Verschlingung des Gegebenen mit unserem Schöpfertum. Indem sie so ihre ganze Objektivität als Landschaft innerhalb des Machtgebietes unseres Gestaltens besitzt, hat die Stimmung, ein besonderer Ausdruck oder Dynamik dieses Gestaltens, volle Objektivität an ihr."
This passage, among others, would be enough to set aside any psychologistic and sentimentalist interpretation of the *Stimmung*, which is a fusion of sentiment (interior) and quality (exterior). It is enlightening to confront this essay with "Die Alpen", published earlier, in which several *Stimmungen* are described as fundamental types of the agreement between specific natural formations – the valley, the sea and the mountain – and the corresponding mental states. Each illustrates a peculiar perspective of life: the valley – the serenity of the elements reaching towards the sky; the sea – life as continuity; the mountain – life as a relativity of opposites; and, finally, the peak of the high frozen mountain corresponding to the paradox of conclusive life. "Die Alpen" (1911), GSG, Bd.14 (Hauptprobleme der Philosophie. Philosophische Kultur, hrsg. Rüdiger Krämme und Otthein Rammstedt), Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1996, pp. 296-303.

[6] "Philosophie der Landschaft", p. 473: "while from this result innumerable fights and scissions in the social and the technical, in the spiritual and in the ethical, in the face of nature this same form creates, conversely, the reconciled richness of landscape, that constitutes an individual, which is closed, full of itself, and notwithstanding remains bound without contradiction to the whole of nature and its unity". / "Während sich heraus unzählige Kämpfe und Zerissenheiten im Sozialen und im Technischen, im Geistigen und im Sittlichen ergeben, schafft die gleiche

Here also the subject regains his entirety, he is a total individual that perceives and feels, without having to split into different faculties. Vision and sentiment coincide, just as in love the felt feeling penetrates the observed person and changes the immediacy of the perception; it is seen *in it* as being *it*. Perception and mood do not dissociate, the contemplator is a peculiar individuality, and it is precisely that peculiarity that "establishes the landscape" in the agreement that passes from us to it and simultaneously from it to us, suppressing the conflicts of the existence that is governed by relations of causality in a passing, but intense, state of appeasement.

> Among them there prevails no relationship of cause-and-effect and above all both would be valued as cause and both as effect. This way, the unity that establishes the landscape as such and the *Stimmung* that detaches from her to us and through which we comprehend it are just subsequent decompositions of one and the same psychic act.[7]

b) *Joachim Ritter: landscape, substitute of the cosmos of ancient metaphysics*

Although accepting that landscape is a relative, in contrast to Nature (which is an absolute) that nonetheless always refers to that absolute, it was also possible to interpret the invention of the landscape not as a reconciliation, but as a continuous sentiment of loss and substitution. No other thinker

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Form der Natur gegenüber der versöhnten Reichtum der Landschaft, die ein Individuelles, Geschlossenes, In-sich-Befriedigtes ist, und dabei widerspruchlos dem Ganzen der Natur und seiner Einheit verhaftet bleibt."

[7] *Ibid*., p. 480. "Zwischen ihnen besteht gar nicht das Verhältnis von Ursache und Wirkung und höchstens dürfte beides als Ursache und beides als Wirkung gelten. So sind die Einheit, die die Landschaft als solche zustande bringt, und die Stimmung, die uns aus ihr entgegenschlägt und mit der wir sie umgreifen, nur nachträgliche Zerlegungen eines und desselben seelischen Aktes."

The two movements of this text are thus not contradictory. In them intersect, from the metaphysical point of view, the genesis of a form of the lived and, from the point of view of the philosophy of culture, the birth of a category that materializes historically. But even in this second aspect, it is a cultural form different both from the scientific categories and from those attributes and qualifications that the history of literature and painting apply to sentimental descriptions and plastic representations. Those possess the objectivity of the fixed conceptual forms that frame any received empirical data; they are already frozen forms. These, on the contrary, project over such "pieces of nature" entirely subjective forms of interpretation, dependent on the intentions of the artistic personalities or stylistic trends in which they emerge.

but Joachim Ritter has so vehemently stressed this compensatory function that comes to fill a void left by the incapacity to access the cosmic totality that sustained the pre-modern epochs. Notwithstanding, in the vision of the surrounding nature *as* landscape, the Great Nature would continue to be, even if unconsciously, a deep cause of aspiration. Ritter's interpretation is sustained in the concept of nature as *cosmos*, the invisible order that rules the visible world, and that, as such, can only be accessed by intellectual intuition. In this way Ritter explicitly establishes the innermost articulation between landscape and philosophy, the latter being understood in its original Greek meaning as an intuitive vision (*theoria*) of the universe's unity.

The characteristic moments comprising the three sections of "Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft" delineate a history of landscape that is a "history of nature as landscape" (*als Landschaft*),[8] integrated in an evolution of modern culture. On the one hand, philosophy came to abandon the ancient metaphysical unity of being and knowledge, branching out into new disciplines; on the other hand, the different scientific areas developed as empirical studies, without having to question their foundation. We shall briefly go over the great moments that the Ritterian philosophy of history selects as representative of the concept's emergence and transformation, illustrating the alternation between the hopeful search for the harmony of the visible and the disenchantment of its absence. This alternance will come about in the constant changes of the understanding of landscape and of its historic path as a category of the spirit.

The first of this moments, in the mid-14th century, signals the split between nature and spirit: Petrarch's ascent of Mont Ventoux, planned as a process of spiritual (interior) improvement in nature (natural exterior place), ends up failing. At the end of the excursion, the spirit sees off nature, which he recognizes as inanimate and destitute of mystery, to then retract to his innermost soul. The excursionist Petrarch symbolizes the modern man that sets off from the city to go to a certain location celebrated for the wonders of the world's spectacle that can be observed from it. Petrarch, discouraged by his incapacity to deepen his encounter with the transcendent on the peak

[8] Joachim Ritter, "Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft", first published in *Schriften zur Förderung der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster*, Heft 54, 1963; republished in *Id*., *Subjektivität. Sechs Aufsätze*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974, p. 148.

of the visible mountain, is the medieval man who recognizes the fallibility of things earthen, human and natural. He folds back in on the soul's interiority, the authentic place for the revelation of divine presence.[9]

The second moment, already in the field of epistemological culture, concerns the split established throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, between mechanist science and aesthetic appreciation. Since, for science, nature is reduced to a set of general laws that rule the ceaseless connections between phenomena and that mathematically translate them, thus offering an ever more parcelled knowledge of reality (as science only handles its specialized field), it would be up to aesthetic appreciation to preserve the sense of oneness and of qualitative differentiation in natural attributes that the uniforming causal explanation leaves undefined.

Modernity would develop a special organ for direct contemplation, distinct from understanding, which aims for general knowledge, as well as from the transforming action of the will. *Kontemplation*, disinterested and freed from cognoscitive and utilitarian finality, would be the ancient *theoria*'s substitute. However it was no longer purely noetic, directed towards the world of Ideas and for the intuition of the first principles, as in Greek metaphysics, but was transferred to sensibility and sentiment as a means for direct approximation to the immanence of the surrounding world: "Landscape is nature that is aesthetically present to the sight of a sensible and sentimental observer."[10]

Ritter emphasizes the importance of Baumgarten's foundation of Aesthetics as *scientia cognitionis sensitivae*, whose autonomy is claimed vis-à-vis Logic. However, he only very briefly alludes to Kant, in whose system Nature's double foundation, physical-mechanical and aesthetical-teleological, is fully legitimized.[11] Greater attention is dedicated to the desired

[9] For broader developments of the interpretation of this historical fact raised to the status of a symbolic moment, cf. the chapters by Jorge Croce Rivera and by Victor Gonçalves, in the present book.

[10] "Landschaft ist Natur, die im Anblick für einen fühlenden und empfindenden Betrachter ästhetischer gegenwärtig ist". Ritter, "Landschaft", p. 150.

[11] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* theorizes the conditions of the possibility of natural physical science as a regulation of the understanding of the disordered multiplicity of empirical phenomena. From the point of view of the establishment of the experience, *natura formaliter spectate* is determined by the synthetic function of the category of causality (Kant, KrV,

romantic synthesis of knowledge and aesthetics in Carus and Humboldt.[12]

If Simmel identified in the *Stimmung* the possibility of a unitive and intense relation with the inexhaustible materials offered by living nature, a *coincidentia oppositorum* of neoplatonic origin and of variable duration, Ritter insists on landscape's elusive and thin nature, in everything dependent on the attitude of the observer without whom the manifestation of that appearance would never happen:

> With this oscillating being, which is bonded to the sensitive observer's readiness and dilutes in the absence of aesthetic mediation, landscape remains, on the one hand, heiress of philosophical theory in the exact sense in which it is presence of nature as a whole. We depart to landscape to be in 'free' nature, in nature itself, in nature that is free from use.[13]

Only those areas of "still free" nature are susceptible to aestheticization, areas free from the transforming domain of industry and technique, a fact which considerably reduces this process's scope. Furthermore, because

B125-126). In the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* Nature's aesthetic and teleological appreciation presupposes the regulating use of the principle of nature's purposiveness (*Zweckmässigkeit der Natur*), a non-determining, but reflective use as a heuristic of principles to think nature as a coherent whole (KU, *Einleitung*, IV). The union of mechanism and purposiveness is the object of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft's* final paragraphs, which discuss natural science and philosophy of nature's respective intervention in a unified idea of world.

[12] Carl Gustav Carus and Alexander von Humboldt's romantic endeavour is one last attempt to unify science and art, which, as Ritter comprehensively explains, already presupposes their separation in terms of knowledge, but no effective reality divide.
Carus's landscape painting idea is based on the comprehensive view of nature as a living organism. Painting, as Carus arguess in the spirit of *Naturphilosophie*, is a form of knowledge that integrates animals' "zootomy" as well as landscapes' "physiognomy", both aspects of a global view of the Earth, a "geognosy", which aim to unravel nature's double face, exterior and interior. Hence the proposal to substitute the name "landscape" with "image of life on earth" (*Erdlebenbild*) and the designation of landscape painting as "art of the image of life on earth" (*Erdlebenbildkunst*); Carl Gustav Carus, *Zehn Briefe über die Landschaftsmalerei mit zwölf Beilagen und einem Brief von Goethe als Einleitung (1815-1835)*, hrsg. und mit einem Nachwort von Gertrud Heider, Leipzig und Weimar: G. Kiepenheuer, 1982, p. 68.

[13] "Mit diesem schwebenden, an die Zuwendung des empfindenden Betrachters gebundenen und ohne ästhetische Vermittlung verlöschenden Sein bleibt Landschaft einerseits Abkömmling der philosophischen Theorie in dem genauen Sinne, daβ sie Gegenwart der ganzen Natur ist. Wir gehen so in die Landschaft hinaus, um in der 'freien', aus der Nutzung herausgelöschten Natur als der Natur selbst zu sein." Ritter, "Landschaft", p. 151.

it implies mediation – not the spontaneity to feel that is common to all man – the apprehension of that (still) not dominated state of nature is only realized upon its objectification through art. The conversion or reduction of Aesthetics into philosophy of art finds in Ritter a loyal continuator. It is up to poets and painters to secure in words and images that pure and disinterested celebration, on account of being elaborated and erudite. Such sensibility is denied to peasants, who are caught up in the labour of rural economy, obeying its rhythms, and who, to a great extent, are still natural and immediate beings, unable, therefore, to rise to the distanced view of beauty, a privilege of the free citizen.[14]

The ideal of freedom as self-consciousness mediatized by culture and by human works is the core of the last section of Ritter's essay. It is dedicated to this widespread civilizational phenomenon that was the consolidation of the large city as the ultimate place for the organization of human communities: the landscape will invariably be *extra muros* nature, constantly reworked in line with the advance of urbanization and the increase in commerce, industry and work, that determine the way of life of modern societies. Only in the city, the place for creativity, economic progress and cultural development, can man claim to be free, but in order to be free he has to dominate the exterior nature just as he has to overcome his condition as a natural being.

[14] It is conspicuous how this theory of landscape suffers from the same impoverishment which subordinates natural to artistic beauty, which started with Schelling and Hegel, and would continue without contestation until the second half of the 20th century. In addition, a learned culturalism that even refuses the very notion of natural landscape in favour of cultural or artialized landscapes. As an example, a contemporary of Simmel, Frédéric Paulhan, author of a little book on landscape painting, who accords the common man a certain love for nature, but not the aesthetic sentiment that presupposes disinterested pleasure: *L' Esthétique du Paysage*, Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1913; More recently, philosophers like Alain Roger ("Nature et culture. La double artialisation", in *Court traité du paysage*, Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1997, pp. 11-30) or Nicolas Grimaldi ("L'esthétique de la belle nature. Problèmes d'une esthétique du paysage", in François Dagognet (dir.), *Mort du paysage? Philosophie et esthétique du paysage*, Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1982, pp. 113-131) emphasize to an extreme degree the modelling of the taste for nature by the familiarity of works of art, as well as the valorization of certain natural places as landscapes after their prior instauration by poets and painters. Very detailed and informed analyses of such marginalization can be read in: Paolo D'Angelo, *Estetica della natura. Bellezza naturale, paesaggio, arte ambientale*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2000, pp. 43-57; Luisa Bonesio, *Paesaggio, identità e comunità tra locale e globale*, Reggio Emilia: Diabasis, 2007, pp. 85-120 (chapter: "Un secolo ostile al paesaggio").

Interpreting the message of Schiller's poem "Der Spaziergang" Ritter concludes that it is in the aesthetics of landscape that the rupture of Freedom and History relative to Nature is accomplished.

> The aesthetic fruition and commitment to nature presuppose the freedom and the domination of society over nature. [...] Therefore, nature as landscape can only exist under the condition of freedom in the ground of modern society.[15]

It must be highlighted that this constant nostalgic and compensatory movement, which is exemplarily examined with the neutrality of the historian of ideas by Ritter, who does not taint it with any suggestion of negativity or nostalgia, is never one of mere substitution. The contemplation's supplementary function follows for a continuous descending line and will happen in ever more distant and exiguous places. It can switch between the placidity of wonderful places and harsh, wild ones.[16] If the aesthetics of landscape is, at heart, the illusion of recovering lost nature, then landscape, even in confined places and to a weakened degree, still always refers back to an idea of first Nature, an ideal space or a moment of past history, a symbol of happiness and well-being.[17]

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[15] Joachim Ritter, "Landschaft", p. 162. "Der Naturgenuβ und die ästhetische Zuwendung zur Natur setzen so die Freiheit und der gesellschaftliche Herrschaft über die Natur voraus. […] Daher kann es Natur als Landschaft nur unter der Bedingung der Freiheit auf dem Boden der modernen Gesellschaft geben."

[16] In highly documented notes, Ritter describes the changing of those residues of naturalness that occur within industrialized societies. These include the rural fields (neighbouring the city) and the large parks (outside the city) or, in the opposite direction, the garden and the public park (within the city), in which the urbanite searches for the presence, even if fleeting, of a primary blow or remains of an untouched natural that escaped from human domination. The history of landscape correlates with the history of Nature, and both are inextricably linked with the history of the city. The geographically distant exotic or idyllic places desired by the contemporary traveller and tourists who aim to evade from the city only confirm this reading.

[17] Ritter's theory has received a fair amount of criticism, not always for the same motives. For Gianni Carchia the meaning of landscape should not to be linked to the history of reason, but to the myth of Oritia's kidnaping and the irony of Socratic questioning over love (228d-230e). For this author, it is easily verifiable that the Greeks already had the full meaning of landscape as a sacred place ("archetypal scenery of the origins") and as a certain natural place outside the city where philosophical reflection takes place ("Per una filosofia del paesaggio", in *Quaderni di estetica e critica* 4-5 (1999-2000): 13-21). Also Massimo Venturi Ferriolo, a scholar of ancient philosophy, as well as a thinker and a historian of gardens, refuses the

3. The tension between physics and metaphysics or landscape as a form of being

a) *Rosario Assunto: a finite space open to Nature's infinite temporality*

The path followed by Simmel and Ritter, which captures the essence of the landscape from its historical origin, is not shared by more recent theorists, who are even less likely to endorse the theory of substitution. The continuity between Nature and Landscape is upheld by the meditation of Rosario Assunto, who draws between them a relation of filiation and differentiation, but with no kind of alternative or exclusion. The essence of the landscape is captured "in nature itself", not idealized or theoretically or scientifically conceived, but in the nature that we specifically experience, in sited inhabiting and contemplation, an approach summarized by this phrase: "from that nature that while we live in it, it is for us, *landscape*", or by this terse statement: "because landscape does not live in us, it is we who live in it".[18]

Assunto's reflection, in a book covering hundreds of pages, is based on the understanding of landscape as a space where the simultaneous presence of the being of nature and of our human being takes place. It implies our being-in it, the "experience of us living in it", as we are inhabitants of the world, spatial-temporal beings placed in multiple wide spheres of spatial-temporality. Through successive clarifications Rosario Assunto elaborates a deep reflection

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compensatory mechanism as a historical reading error and supports the mythical over the rational anteriority, as landscapes were already celebrated by the Ancients as sacred places of encounter between the human and divine. As evidence for his perspective, he contrasts "nature", which is the world as it is given, with "landscape", the projected and transformable world, hence defending the similitude between landscape and garden (*Etiche del paesaggio. Il progetto del mondo umano*, Roma: Editori Riuniti, 2002, pp. 153-169). Both texts are available in *Estetica e Paesaggio,* a cura di Paolo D'Angelo, respectively pp. 207-209 and pp. 221-237. The relevance of these arguments not only does not seem sufficient to contradict the general expansion of the landscape-category from Modernity onwards but it also reinforces an even more archaic root, that possibly has nothing to say to our present day, which valorizes the sensible aspects of the natural world perceived in the here and now of the life-world. That is the direction of Martin Seel's critique, according to whom, Ritter is caught up in the idea of nature as an abstract whole, associated to a theoretical ideal of aesthetic contemplation (Martin Seel, *Eine Ästhetik der Natur*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997, pp. 225-230).

[18] Rosario Assunto, *Il paesaggio e l'estetica* [1973]; Palermo: Edizioni Novecento, 2005^2, p. 366: "di quella natura che in quanto viviamo in essa, è, per noi, *paesaggio"*; "perché il paesaggio non vive in noi, siamo noi che viviamo in esso", p. 212.

that refuses all classifications and definitions and that becomes successively intertwined with subtle distinctions – because reality is neither unvarying nor homogeneous – and, simultaneously, with junctions, bonds and intersections of the natural and the human, Nature and History, landscape and city, spheres of life in copulative but not exclusive or alternative articulation.

'Open finitude' (*finitezza aperta*) presents landscape as a meta-space that simultaneously brings together three dimensions: *finitude* (in contrast with the idea of a total nature, which is intangible for us), *openness* (unlike closed spaces) and the *exteriority of an exteriority*: without real limits, it opens up to the exterior of itself through its horizontal amplitude and, vertically, it rises uncovered to the sky:

> *Limited* space the landscape, but *open*, because, differently from closed spaces, it has above it the sky, that is, the unlimited space; and it does not *represent the infinite* (symbolically or illusionistically), but it opens up to the infinite, although in the finitude of its limited being: constituting itself as *presence*, and not *representation*, of the infinite in the finite.[19]

It is not a finite meta-space that touches the infinite through its greater or lesser extension or dimension, as those are quantitative and measurable, but by its involvement in and by meta-temporality: an *inclusive* temporality, that is qualitative and integrative; a *circular* temporality, without beginning and without end, that moves its range of elements in unison. In it, time does not flow linearly, inexorably dragging with it aging and death. It renovates and rejuvenates itself at every moment, because modifications, either repetitive and regular, or unexpected and contingent, mark upon it the constant *novelty of the identical* that restores the old as being new and maintains the new as if it were the same.[20]

Assunto describes with outstanding diligence the complementary diversity of the multiple manifestations that nature exhibits in its realms and distinguishing elements, each displaying their own temporality, which

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[19] Spazio *limitato* il paesaggio, ma *aperto*, perché, a differenza degli spazi chiusi, ha sopra di sé il cielo, cioè lo spazio illimitato; e non *rappresenta l'infinito* (simbolicamente o ilusionisticamente), ma si apre all'infinito, pur nella finitezza del suo essere limitato: costituendosi come *presenza*, e non *rappresentazione*, dell'infinito nel finito." *Ibid*., p. 19.

[20] Cf. specially the section "Immagine del tempo di natura", *Ibid*., pp. 81-109.

results in the huge diversity of times of mineral, organic and animal life. Stones: time of the immutable presence, "symbolic image of quiet identity", lasting presence of all past and all future. Running water: absolute movement without interruption, "mysterious unity of present and future". In the river and the ocean, water is displayed in the union of fleeting and persistent temporalities. In the quietness of the glacier, it crystalizes, resembling rock. In the cascade, it shows itself as an unceasing fall. In the lake, the fluid time of water has come to stand without immobilizing itself. In turn, vegetation's cyclicality is infinite temporality unfolding in seasonal rhythm, a true mobile image of eternity that recalls Plato:

> In the landscape, of which vegetation is a fundamental part, this image of infinite time as seasonal circularity, that of the foliage, grass, field crops, periodically repeats the green and the gold, and cyclically renews the flower's perfume, the fruit's flavour; in the landscape, we were saying, life contemplates the very image of infinite temporality.[21]

Landscapes are always presence in finite spaces of the intermingling of past, present and future, but vegetal vitality is as predictable as the action of the animals that sporadically occur in landscapes is unpredictable – the interpenetration of absolute temporality in the transitory temporality that brings with it the sentiment of harmony, but also that of risk. Through this special attention to animals, one can discover another link between man and landscape, because it is from animals that the time of permanence and pacification emanates, as does the caveat of precariousness and mortality that announces to man the finitude of his existential time.

> the presence of the animal kingdom is, in the landscape, the very presence of life: animals are, in the landscape, life present to itself, an image of life as such, in which each life is mirrored and recognizes itself as living. Therefore: form of infinity while it shows itself as finitude and under the appearance of the absolute finite, of the creaturely. Infinitude as unpredictability and inexorability of living life, that allows neither to be projected nor programmed; and it

[21] "Nel paesaggio, di cui è parte fondamentale la vegetazione, questa imagine del tempo infinito come circolarità stagionale, che del fogliame, delle erbe, delle messi, periodicamente ripete il verde e l'oro, e ciclicamente rinnova il profumo dei fiori, il sapore dei frutti; nel paesaggio, diciamo, la vita contempla l'immagine stessa della temporalità infinita", *Ibid.*, p. 101.

> is *absolute novelty* of the biological laws that govern the life of animal species. Domesticated or wild, innocuous or dangerous, of animals we know (or better, we may know, through observation and study) how they will do what they will do, but in no way can we say *what* they will do, and *when*.[22]

Epiphanic spaces, of interrelation of the infinite in the finite, of metaphysical eternity in the most concrete materiality of physical elements and in the diversity of all living beings, landscapes found human existence, sustain those dwelling in the cities that have been established upon them, and, in turn, foster and integrate the history of communities and individuals, absorbing the signs of their presence.

Absolutely ground-breaking, Rosario Assunto's philosophy of landscape also addresses with remarkable foresight the aggravated signs of a "landscape agony"[23] in the 70s. The spatialization of the world, industrialization, expansive growth of the city into Megalopolises, the contamination of the elements' purity by chemicals, or even the industrialization of agriculture, are philosophically understood in light of the rampant expansion of another form of time, which is neither metaphysical nor existential; which is not inclusive like nature-landscape and like the historic city, but entirely mechanical: *temporaneità.* The domination of the technical invades city and landscape, but also man's being, reduced to be temporaneous and con-temporaneous because it is without past or future, simultaneous and dividable, being conditioned by velocity and by the ephemerality of the excluding instant. The

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[22] "la presenza del regno animale è, nel paesaggio, presenza stessa della vita: gli animali sono, nel paesaggio, vita presente a se stessa, una imagine della vita come tale, nella quale ogni vita si specchia e si riconosce come vivente. Diciamo: forma della infinità in quanto si mostra come finitezza e sotto le sembianze dell'assolutamente finito, del creaturale. Infinità come imprevidibilità e inesauribilità della vita vivente, che non si lascia progettare né programmare; ed è *novità assoluta* dele legge biologiche che governano la avita dele specie animali. Domestici selvatici, innocui o pericolosi, degli sapiamo (o meglio, possiamo sapere, attraverso l'osservazione e lo studio) come faranno quello che faranno, ma non possiamo in alcun modo dire *che cosa* faranno, e *quando*." *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

[23] Cf. the chapter "La libertà di Prometeo e l'agonia del paesaggio" (pp. 266-271), where Assunto leads a critical dialogue with Ritter, defending the harmony, instead of the rivalry, of human freedom and the freedom of nature. This same alliance of liberties sustains the ontology of the garden, which is art and nature, albeit conceived by way of an analogy with the landscape "as retracted landscape". About the philosophy of the garden see the chapters by Moirika Reker and Mateusz Salwa in the present book.

loss of nature *as landscape* also leads to the deprivation of essential qualities like the vital sentiment of communion with beauty, which whilst contemplative is nonetheless above all sensitive, symbiotic, or the sentiment of the sublime in view of the verticality of the infinite.

Although departing from aesthetics, Assunto addresses the question of the limit. The loss of nature *as landscape* is, ultimately, a cut in the consciousness of the fundament.

> But when it is said that we *live the landscape* because we live from nature, we must be aware and not think that *to live from nature* is here a simple metaphor. [...] without nature we would die is not, today, an expression pronounceable only in the simple conditional, since the process of total urbanization and industrialization to which the destruction of the landscape is owed, of that safe landscape that is nature while environment in which we live obtaining an aesthetic emotion, [...] is rapidly accelerating the passage of the sentence *without nature we would die* from the simple conditional to the simple future. [...] *Without nature we will die*.[24]

b) *A category for the future, or landscape's function in the renaturalization of the world*

If, with Simmel and Ritter, we have followed the inception of a category that would come to substitute the unitary worldview with a plural and perspective approach, with Rosario Assunto we witness the rehabilitation of both landscape and nature that leads them to the ultimate condition of *fundament*. Understood as a form of being, it definitively overthrows the superficiality of the visual and theatrical forms that associated it to a painting or a scene seen from a distance by an observer, or spectator, unscathed by that which he observes. On the contrary, the precedence of the existence sets up all landscape experience in the *reversibility* between human and natural, reciprocally implicated and interdependent.

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[24] "Ma quando si dice che *viviamo il paesaggio* perché *viviamo della natura*, dobbiamo stare attenti a non credere che vivere della natura sia qui una semplice metafora. […] senza la natura morimemmo non è poi, oggi, una espressione pronunciabile solo al condizionale, giacchè próprio il processo di industrializzazione e urbanizzazione totale al quale si deve la distruzione del paesaggio, di quel paesaggio, sicuro, che è natura in quanto ambiente nel quale viviamo ricavandone una emozione estetica […] sta rapidamente acelerando il passaggio della frase *senza la natura morimemmo* dal modo condizionale al futuro dell'indicativo. […] *Senza la natura moriremo*." *Ibid*., p. 128.

As a member and a participant, man is more that a being in the world; he is a being *of* the world and, all the more so, *of* nature. Only through the senses is he permeable to being and only through participation in the landscape he rediscovers his naturalness. Neither admitting substantial scissions nor a hierarchy of faculties, sensibility is a unique mode and the only that restores to mankind its intra-human or extra-human relational capacity. Much broader than a *sensorium commune*, or a source of knowledge, sensibility must be ontologically rehabilitated, by the synthetic capacity to connect what feels and what is felt, activity and receptivity, body and spirit, the self and the others.[25]

The prejudice, so often repeated by culturalist schools of thought, that man is the shaper or even the creator of landscapes, must be harshly criticized for its one-sidedness and manifest anthropocentrism. The philosophy of landscape, while anchored in onto-anthropology, refuses this position of dominance, inverting the hierarchy of terms with assumed awareness of the asymmetry between the human and the natural, introducing the situation (and the sentiment) of dependency as the basic precept for ethical action.

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[25] If, as I claim, the philosophy of landscape supports a unitary anthropology that grounds human integrality in its sentiment, it is only fair to remember Ludwig Feuerbach, the first thinker to conceive sensation in a non-representational way: not as a phenomenon of the object, but as the very object in the plenitude of its sensible being, and as such endowed with the quality of a "subject": "To be is something not only I but also others, and especially also the very *object* itself, are *implicated in. To be* means to be *subject*, it means to be *for-itself*" ("Sein ist etwas, wobei nicht ich allein, sondern auch die andern, vor allem auch der *Gegenstand* selbst *beteiligt* ist. Sein heiβt *Subjekt* sein, heiβt *für sich* sein."). *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft* (1843), §25; *Gesammelte Werke,* hrsg. Werner Schuffenhauer, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1967ss, Bd. 9, p. 304; The further development of the ontology of *Sinnlichkeit* into a philosophy of nature, and, at the same time, of the *Weltmensch* in *Naturmensch* (GW 6, 109) has as corollary an ethic that conciliates Naturalism and Humanism: "because it is in nature that we live, labour and exist; it is what encompasses man; if nature is to be withdrawn from him, it is also his own existence that is supressed; it is only thanks to nature that man endures, it is only upon nature that he depends in all his activity, in all his steps" ("denn in der Natur leben, weben und sind wir; sie ist das den Menschen Umfassende; sie ist es, durch deren Hinwegnahme auch seine eigene Existenz aufgehoben wird; sie ist es, durch die er besteht, von der er in allem seinen Tun und Treiben, bei allen seinen Tritten und Schnitten abhängt"). *Vorlesungen über das Wesen der Religion* (1851), GW Bd. 6, p. 91.
The onto-anthropologic foundation would subsequently attract remarkable followers, including M. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Eric Dardel's phenomenological geography, or, in the context of environmental philosophy, the principles of ontological continuity and multi-sensoriality that sustain Arnold Berleant's aesthetic and ethical *engagement*.

Aesthetics, traditionally the discipline that most highly valued natural qualities, loses its connotations to futile aestheticism and variable expressions of taste, to resolvedly unite with ethics in the recognition of the fundament's intrinsic value. Disinterested attitudes like admiration and reverence are, as Kant already remarked, methods for the awakening of morality or, still following Assunto, it is in the symbiotic sentiment that the tension and conjugation of the finite and infinity takes place.

The so-called ecological crisis – that has warned against the decrease or even extinction of natural resources – has come to change many mindsets, making us seriously ponder the consequences of our individual and collective actions, imposing limits on the exercise of human action, but it has not always aroused similar concern for the protection of landscapes. Because as a set of broader conditions for life on the planet – physical, chemical and biological –, the environment with all its scientifically analysable components, is global and transversal, ignoring borders and affecting several geographically distant zones indiscriminately. In contrast, every landscape is always local and nearby.[26]

The present challenge is not so much to discuss, on a categorial level, why landscape would have separated itself from nature, but more to understand that it is only through vivifying naturalness that landscapes may persist. The unbreakable relationship that landscapes maintain with nature – the producer of landscapes – is no longer one with the *cosmos*, which also allows for the substantiation in *one* Unity, inapprehensible to the experience, but with *physis, natura naturans*, that becomes present in those natural spaces of innate characteristics, which even if subject to change, keep the intimate life-producing and enduring mechanisms. Mutable and persistent, they are material, propitiating all sensations, from the luminosity of the days to the silence of the nights, whilst remaining intangible. Delimited by the skyline, wide and in open air, they exhibit a complex ontology: the surface that is

[26] This is why some thinkers favour the landscape-place synonymy to stress the diversity and singularity that is irreducible to the neutrality of ecology's scientific currents. The aesthetical identity of places" ("identità estetica dei luoghi") supported by Paolo D'Angelo places the aesthetic element as constitutive of the specific individuation of a portion of the territory: *Estetica della natura. Bellezza naturale, paesaggio, arte ambientale*, pp. XII-XIII, 159-160; also Luisa Bonesio, founder of the geophilosophy movement, uses the concept of landscape as a natural *and* cultural place, inseparable from the interactions that connect communities to their homelands across generations: *Geofilosofia del paesaggio*, 2nd ed., Milano: Mimesis, 2001; *Oltre il paesaggio. I luoghi tra estetica e geofilosofia,* Casalecchio: Arianna Editrice, 2002.

sustained in the depth rises in height. It is the temporality that unifies the diversity of the space: a time of coexistence of the elements' ages, including the human; a long time, connecting past, present and future; a time that does not exist except by man, although it is bigger than man.

A sheltering category that fulfils the function of mediating the Third, already understood by Simmel – but not that of the Other, or of the remainder as in Ritter – it allows successive transformations to settle in the first naturalness. As it departs from synthesis, it avoids falling into endless debates about a pristine nature, which either incur a utopic naturalism, or justify the argument that, due to its general transformation, there is no nature anymore. This division, ultimately theoretically undecidable, hinders the discourse and obscures the action's justness. To divide the world between ultra-artificialized built spaces and the still-natural would be to consolidate the already rigid borders that legitimize the proliferation of cities without landscape and landscapes turned into museums or sanctuaries.[27]

As theory and practice of landscape, to the classical disciplines – aesthetics, metaphysics and ontology – philosophy will have to add politics as public ethic that safeguards both landscape's rights and our right to the landscape.[28]

Translated by Moirika Reker

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[27] Here I make an exception to strictly philosophical theories to mention the holistic landscape concepts proposed by the Portuguese school of landscape architecture in its practice of requalification of deep biological processes, not of superficial embellishment, with special mention going to this school's founder Francisco Caldeira Cabral's concept of '*continuum naturale*', elaborated through conferences and lessons since the 1940s and brought together in *Fundamentos da Arquitectura Paisagista*, Lisboa: Instituto de Conservação da Natureza, 1993. Subsequently, Gonçalo Ribeiro Telles proposed the implementation of a 'global landscape', through the approximation between the compact city and rural landscape by way of green corridors, connecting urban, peri-urban and natural areas ("Paisagem Global. Um Conceito para o Futuro", in *Iniciativa para o desenvolvimento, a energia e o ambiente*, Lisboa, n.º especial [Abril 1994], 28-33). On this topic see: Manuela Raposo Magalhães, *A Arquitectura Paisagista. Morfologia e* Complexidade, Lisboa: Estampa, 2001; "Paisagem – Perspectiva da Arquitectura Paisagista", *Philosophica* 29 (2007): 103-113.

[28] For a more in-depth development on this subject, I refer to my essay "A new Awareness of Landscape. Converting Landscape into unitary vision of the world", in *Images of Europe. Past, Present, Future*. Proceedings of the XIV ISSEI Conference, ed. Yolanda Espiña, Porto, 2014, pp. 968-975. http://www.uceditora.ucp.pt/resources/Documentos/UCEditora/PDF%20Livros/Porto/Images%20of%20Europe.pdf

LANDSCAPE AS A FORTHCOMING PARADIGM

Dirk Michael Hennrich

1. Thinking Landscape. A holistic approach to Earth-awareness

Philosophy of Landscape arises along with a fundamental shift in Western Philosophy which took place in the last century, not least because of the increasing destruction of our *world*, interpreting the concept *world* not in a metaphysical way – as one of the three transcendental ideas *soul*, *world* and *god*[1] – but as what humans call the planet *Earth* and therefore the *ground* of all earthly *life* and experience of life in general. Taking into consideration the last work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari *What is Philosophy?*, the chapter entitled *Geophilosophy* starts with a definition of Philosophy as a kind of thinking which always happens in relation to a *territory*, to the *Earth*.[2] This definition of Philosophy, as the thinking of the earth, isn't really new in the tradition of Occidental philosophy. However, up until the modern period it was frequently a cosmological explanation of the world, a *worldview* of a world created and maintained by divine forces, a supernatural reason or entity. In turn, *Geophilosophy* is on the one hand an aggregation and a result of the different *earth-studies* – as they have appeared in many facets of the natural sciences since the second half of the 18th century – and, on the other hand, a general *spatialization* of thought which cumulates in the second half of the 20th century, in so-called post-structuralism, influenced significantly by Friedrich Nietzsche's widely known critique of *Historicism* as well by his praise of *life*, *body* and *immanence*. Thinking of the Earth not only as a

[1] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, (B392/A 335), p. 406.

[2] Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, New York: Colombia University Press, 1994, p. 85. "Thinking is neither a line drawn between subject and object nor a revolving of one around the other. Rather thinking takes place in the relationship of territory and the Earth."

measurable territory for the habitation of humankind or as the object of study of the different scientific areas with the prefix *geo-*, such as *geo-graphy*, *geo-logy*, *geo-physics*, *geo-chemistry*, *geo-statistics*, as well as *geo-ecology*, leads directly to a fundamental reorientation away from the prevalence of *time*, *history*, *eternity,* and *transcendence*, towards the prevalence of *space*, *presence*, *finitude* and *immanence*. This orientation towards a renewed thinking of the *Earth* is an important theme in Nietzsche's *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, where the protagonist is nothing less than a sensitive and reflecting body strolling through landscapes of ignorance and wisdom. Beginning his walk high in the mountains and descending to where the humans live, Zarathustra brings his speech about the Overman as the *sense of the Earth,* about the necessity to be faithful to Earth and against the exclusion or even oppression of the body and life widely instructed in Western civilisation by Christianity.[3] For Zarathustra, the alter ego of Nietzsche himself, the anthropocentric culture, where humans suppose themselves to be the one and only divinity, is a culture of *living death* which permanently ignores that the body is the main reason and the real wisdom beyond all thoughts and feelings:

> Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, stands a powerful commander, an unknown wise man – he is called self. He lives in your body, he is your body.

[3] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra. A book of all and none*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 5-7. "The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman shall be the meaning of the earth! I beseech you, my brothers, remain faithful to the earth and do not believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes! They are mixers of poisons whether they know it or not. [...] I love those who do not first seek behind the stars for a reason to go under and be a sacrifice, who instead sacrifice themselves for the earth, so that the earth may one day become the overman's." "[...] I love the one who works and invents in order to build a house for the overman and to prepare earth, animals and plants for him: for thus he wants his going under."/ "Der Übermensch ist der Sinn der Erde. Euer Wille sage: der Übermensch sei der Sinn der Erde! Ich beschwöre euch, meine Brüder, bleibt der Erde treu und glaubt denen nicht, welche euch von überirdischen Hoffnungen reden! Gitfmischer sind es, ob sie es wissen oder nicht. [...] Ich liebe Die, welche nicht erst hinter den Sternen einen Grund suchen, unterzugehen und Opfer zu sein: sondern die sich der Erde opfern, dass die Erde einst des Übermenschen werde." "[...] Ich liebe Den, welcher arbeitet und erfindet, dass er dem Übermenschen das Haus baue und zu ihm Erde, Thier und Pflanze vorbereite, den so will er seinen Untergang." (*Also sprach Zarathustra*, KSA 4, Giorgio Colli e Mazzino Montinari [Org.], München/NewYork: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag/Walter de Gruyter, 1999, pp. 14-15/ p. 17).

> There is more reason in your body than in your best wisdom. And who knows then to what end your body requires precisely your best wisdom?[4]

Nietzsche's approach to a new *sense of Earth*, his *praise of body* and *pulsing life*, was not merely an abstract and rational position against Christian doctrine, but was born out of his specific way of thinking, the thinking of Earth as *Human and all too Human* by strolling through landscapes. That's why Nietzsche's thought includes an ecological response against the hate of nature and the hate of Earth maintained by the eschatological expectation of Christian religion. It includes the notion of *earthly life* as an act of fulfiled *living* and not as an act of mere *survival*, and in the course of this Nietzsche deeply influenced the philosophy of life up to the present day, where, after nearly one and a half centuries, the destruction of natural environments and the exclusion of the pulsing body as the sensitive centre and the real foundation of all reason (and unreason) have reached their apex. The current "ideology of death"[5] spread by Western civilisation over the entire planet and sustained by the modern sciences, treats nearly everything as *dead matter*, as objects without life, ready to turn them straight into garbage. Concerning the foundation of the *Philosophy of Landscape*, we should note that the designation of this new orientation in Philosophy appears before *Geophilosophy* and even before the consolidation of *Environmentalism*, if the important contributions of Aldo Leopold (*Sand county almanac*, 1949) and Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*, 1962) are assumed as founding texts. The designation *Philosophy of Landscape*, which we have inherited from the text of the same name written by Georg Simmel and published in 1913, also makes an appearance in the same year in the speech *Man and Earth* made by Ludwig Klages, who also focussed on the importance of the proper perception and preservation of natural landscapes, discussing the catastrophic elimination of animals and whole species through human industrial and technical

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[4] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, p. 23./ "Hinter deinen Gedanken und Gefühlen, mein Bruder steht ein mächtiger Gebieter, ein unbekannter Weiser – der heisst Selbst. In deinem Leibe wohnt er, dein Leib ist er. Es ist mehr Vernunft in deinem Leibe, als in deiner besten Weisheit. Und wer weiss denn wozu dein Leib gerade deine beste Weisheit nöthig hat." (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, p. 40).

5 Andreas Weber, *Enlivenment. Towards a fundamental shift in the concepts of nature, culture and politics*, Berlin: Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2013, p. 13.

activities and calling to mind, in this context, the *beauty of landscape*, the *sound and scent of landscape*, the *soul of landscape*, the *primordial song of landscape* and the *image of landscape*.[6] The unbridled exploitation and waste of natural material isn't primarily an effect of capitalism in the age of mass consumption but, above all, the reflection of humankind's relationship with natural materials, understanding the word *material* and the word *matter* in their etymological sense, deriving both from the latin word *mater* [mother]. Treating and consuming natural phenomena – minerals, plants and animals – as *dead matter*, reveals a peculiar notion of nature and Earth as an ecosystem, as a patient mother without a life of her own, only respected as a source of nutrients and manipulable materials. Consequently, since the beginning of the last century, the notion that it is necessary to implement changes in humans' relationship with the Earth has become increasingly prevalent, a shift visible in discourses about the concept of *Gaia*. The 'coming out' of *Gaia* is one of the most recent and most discussed themes in *ecological* and *eco-political* thinking, and entails the reconsideration of the *state of the Earth* in the *Anthropocene*, not only as a planet among planets, as an object of consumption, of human survival and procreation, but as a complex identity with unpredictable activities or actions, as an actor[7] and as a specific sort of *life-form*.[8] The Earth viewed as *Gaia* obviously alludes to the mythological aspect of *Mother Earth* as the *ground* and *reason* of all birth and creation, of natural and cultural formation, but the current conception of this identity does not intend to reaffirm this theological component. *Gaia* was always present, but in our time, designated as the *Anthropocene*, she is "the one who intrudes, the one whose patience can no longer be taken for granted".[9]

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[6] Ludwig Klages, *Mensch und Erde*, Berlin: Matthes & Seitz, 2013.

[7] Bruno Latour, "How to make sure Gaia is not a God? with special attention to Toby Tyrrell's book *On Gaia*", p. 2, Internacional Congress "Os Mil Nomes de Gaia: do Antropoceno à Idade da Terra", PUC/UFRJ 2014, accessed 24/02/2019, https://osmilnomesdegaia.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/bruno-latour.pdf

[8] James Lovelock, *Gaia. A new look at life on earth*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

[9] Isabelle Stengers, "Gaia, the Urgency to Think (and Feel)", p. 5, Internacional Congress "Os Mil Nomes de Gaia: do Antropoceno à Idade da Terra", accessed 24/02/2019, https://osmilnomesdegaia.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/isabelle-stengers.pdf

2. Examples for the plurality of Landscape thinking today

Landscape as a concept and category which contains a wide and multi-secular signification, especially in arts and literature, has become a keyword for the most varied thinkers. In history of art, aesthetics, geography, architecture, philosophy, metaphysics, sociology, media studies, cultural history, ethnology, anthropology and politics the thinking of Landscape is an increasingly important issue for today's thinking about the future of human habitation on Earth, but it hasn't yet been realised as a forthcoming paradigm or as part of an upcoming discipline called *Philosophy of Landscape*. Reaffirming that since the last decade of the 20th century publications on the concept of landscape have become extraordinarily diverse, the present chapter presents three thinkers of landscape as specific examples of the wide range of landscape thinking and the continued relevance of the *Philosophy of Landscape* today.

a) *Lucius Burckhard: from the critique of urbanism to the science of walking*

Starting a few years after the end of Second World War and continuing until the beginning of the new millennium, the work of the Swiss sociologist and economist Lucius Burckhard (1925-2003) is an especially relevant example of the increasing importance of landscape thinking in the second half of the 20th century. The widespread destruction of urban and industrial regions in Northern Europe, especially in Germany, and the mass motorisation of the population laid the ground for a fundamental change in urbanity and landscape perception. While traditional European cities and villages were more or less organic and multi-secular formations, the bombed cities of central Europe turned into the perfect playground for urban planning, a tabula rasa, which came to be characterised by the extreme utilitarianism and pragmatism of its reconstruction. This situation was, however, a common tendency of urban planning influenced by a very technocratic notion of space, also appearing in the Swiss city of Basel, where Burckhard began to publish articles about urbanism, architecture and design, increasingly questioning the relation between *politics*, *humans* and the *environment*. For him *humans* and the *environment* aren't directly related because there is always a third instance present between them, which Burckhard designates as the 'decision makers', who are often far away from the fundamental necessity of society because

they depend on particular and not on public interests. The question of who is planning the planning, coupled with a critique of often unilateral decisions disconnected from a holistic point of view, and a focus on the necessity of a democratic process of building and dwelling, leads Burckhard to the notion that proper urban planning happens without a previously established plan and by virtue of the practical awareness of cultural and natural environments. To understand the cultural perception of nature and the natural condition of culture, to perceive the limits and thresholds of natural and cultural phenomena, Burckhard therefore dissolves the frontiers between *arts* and *politics* with a new performative science called *Strollology*. The question *Why is Landscape Beautiful*?, the title of one of his important essays on landscape,[10] is no longer a pure aesthetic question, nor a question that could be answered with an isolated theoretical philosophical thinking. The notion of landscape, which is a sediment of individual and historical knowledge, is different from epoch to epoch, because the "question as to what landscape is, and which guidelines one might best follow in order to keep a landscape 'intact' is historically determined".[11] To perceive a landscape is not a mere visualisation of what is out there in front of us but a creative construction of a certain unity by "excluding and filtering certain elements and, equally, by rhyming together or integrating all we see in a single image, and in a manner influenced largely by our educational background."[12] This is the point where *Strollology*, the science of walking, enters as a practice and a performance which is able to deconstruct and reconstruct our notion of landscape, to rethink our notion of the natural environment and our notion of urbanity. Like other thinkers of landscape before him, Burckhard highlights the fact that landscape is an invention of the disinterested urban citizen and that without the concept of landscape there wouldn't be any notion of natural and cultural environment at all.

[10] Lucius Burckhard, *Why is Landscape Beautiful: The Science of Strollology*, Basel: Birkhäuser, 2015.

[11] Lucius Burckhard, *Lucius Burckhardt Writings. Rethinking Man-made Environments, Politics, Landscape & Design*, edited by Jesko Fezer and Martin Schmitz, Wien: Springer Verlag, 2012, p. 215.

[12] *Ibid*., p. 133.

> Nature as such is invisible; it is perceived only when served up in some way – in the form of an arbitrary representation as landscape, in the form of artificial representations as a garden. In this respect too, our generation is the first to find itself in a novel situation. Our perception of landscape rests traditionally on the opposition of town and countryside. The landscape, as we have noted, denotes the picture that the urban dweller – he who will never soil his fingers with soil – has concocted of the agricultural realm beyond the city walls. Today, this distinction no longer holds true. We live in the metropolis. The metropolis is, on the one hand, the geographical dispersion in space of an endless succession of fragments of both the city and the countryside; and on the other, an inextricable tangle of urban and rural functions.[13]

Strollology is therefore an instrument for making visible the parts of the environment which were hidden, as well as an instrument to criticise the conventional perception of landscape. In the epoch of total mobilisation and total manipulation of natural environments, it is a way to bring back and integrate the sensitive bodily experience into the process of landscape awareness and, in this way, into the process of Earth awareness. As nature is invisible (to the isolated visual sense of our eyes and, more than that, to our rational and conceptual instruments) and only apprehensible by us when we stroll with the body through landscapes, Burckhard demonstrates that design and therefore culture are also invisible. In the same way that the dispersed natural elements disappear when we see the landscape, the essence of culture only appears when the designers and the users of the culturally designed objects and instruments become aware of their invisible components.[14]

[13] *Ibid*., p. 221 / "Natur als solche ist unsichtbar; wahrgenommen wird sie nur in ihren Darbietungen als Landschaft, in Form künstlicher Darbietungen als Garten. Hier wiederum auch ist es unsere Generation, die erstmals vor einer neuen Situation steht. Unsere Betrachtung von Landschaft beruht traditionell auf dem Gegensatz von Stadt und Land. Landschaft, wie wir berichten, ist das Bild, das sich der Städter – als derjenige. Der sich seine Finger am Boden nicht schmutzig macht – von der landschaftlichen Welt ausserhalb der Mauern gemacht hat. Heute gint es diese Trennung nicht mehr: Wir leben in der Metropole. Die Metropole ist einerseits eine geographische Durchsetzung von Fragmenten der Stadt und des Landes auf der Fläche in unendlicher Folge. Andererseits ist sie auch eine unentwirrbare Durchdringung städtischer und ländlicher Funktionen." (Lucius Burckhard, *Warum ist Landschaft schön? Die Spaziergangswissenschaft*, Berlin: Martin Schmitz Verlag, 2006, pp. 77-78.)

[14] Lucius Burckhard, "Design is invisible", in *Lucius Burckhardt Writings. Rethinking Man-made Environments, Politics, Landscape & Design*, pp. 153-165.

b) *Tim Ingold: landscape as taskscape and weather-world*

Situated in different fields of interest, the sociocultural interpretation of landscape in Burckhard and the anthropological interpretation of landscape in the work of Tim Ingold complete rather than contradict each other. The science of walking, as it was projected and put into practice in order to analyse and criticise urban planning and the notion of landscape or even 'nature' gains further depth in today's society thanks to the elucidation offered by Ingolds anthropological works on landscape. Widely present throughout his publications, the theme of landscape appears explicitly in the essays *The temporality of the landscape* and *Landscape or Weather-World,*[15] where several components of his work – from his meticulous ethnological descriptions of the experience of landscape and the sense of landscape in different cultures, from the Pintubi people of Western Australia to the Koyukon people of Alaska,[16] up to his anthropological studies on walking and the perception of world through the feet[17] – are brought together. The definition of landscape which Ingold develops right at the beginning of his essay on the temporality of landscape is based above all on the exclusion of the definition of landscape as *land*, *nature* or *space*. Landscape is not *land* because it is not any measurable piece of the terrestrial surface, it has no weight and it has no borders. But in comparison to the land, the shape of the landscape is visible, while the land is invisible, or as Ingold puts it "where land is thus quantitative and homogeneous, the landscape is qualitative and heterogeneous."[18] Landscape, as already partially explained above, is neither *nature,* separate from us, nor the totality of all physical phenomena which are subject to physical laws.

> The landscape is not a picture in the imagination, surveyed by the mind's eye; nor however is it an alien and formless substrate awaiting the imposition of

[15] Tim Ingold, "The temporality of the landscape", in *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 189-208; Tim Ingold, "Landscape or Weather World?", in *Being Alive. Essays on movement, knowledge and description*, London: Routledge, 2011, pp. 126-135.

[16] Tim Ingold, "Hunting and gathering as ways of perceiving the environment", in *The Perception of the Environment*, pp. 40-60.

[17] Tim Ingold, "Culture on the ground. The world perceived through the feet", in *Being Alive*, pp. 33-50.

[18] Tim Ingold, "The temporality of the landscape", p. 190.

> human order. […] Thus, neither is the landscape identical to nature, nor is it on the side of humanity against nature. As the familiar domain of our dwelling, it is with us, not against us, but it is no less real for that. And through living in it, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it. […] In short, whereas the order of nature is explicate, the order of the landscape is implicate.[19]

Furthermore, landscape is not comparable to what is designated as *space,* because space is an abstract category without a direct relation to any lived experience.[20] It is a concept for the surveyor or cartographer, who have their specific methods and instruments to measure or map the Earth's surface by view it from a distance and segmenting territory to produce an omnipresent picture, often from the aerial viewpoint of a floating omniscient observer. Landscape, as Ingold describes it in his essay, is *temporality* but not *history* or *chronology*, because it is characterised through the passage of time, formed and transformed by the traces and paths of human and non-human activities and occurrences. It is charged with memory but this memory does not consist in any linear or teleological narrative, nor in the regular succession of empty time. Therefore it is not a *description* or *text* but rather an *inscription* and *texture*, a meshwork, full of scars and covered by the most diversely coloured lines. Landscape is a *taskscape*, which means that it is essentially formed and filled with the multiple practical activities (tasks) of the different agents which inhabit it, and which are embodied in it. This is one reason why Ingold compares landscape and body on the same level, as forms and not as functions giving special attention to the idea of 'muscular consciousness'[21] mentioned by Gaston Bachelard, which happens when the body embodies the landscape, only becoming a body by completing tasks in and strolling through the landscape. "Like organism and environment, body and landscape are complementary terms: each implies the other, alternately as figure and ground."[22]

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[19] *Ibid*. p. 191.

[20] Tim Ingold, "Against space", in *Being Alive*, pp. 145-155.

[21] Tim Ingold, The *Perception of the Environment*, p. 203.

[22] *Ibid*., p. 193.

Thinking the landscape includes the thinking of the body and every landscape is a condensation or crystallisation of embodied activity and experience, in the same way that the body is formed and shaped by artefacts and by its specific surroundings, which may only be denominated as landscape and, in this sense, beyond the dichotomic contrast between *nature* and *culture*. Broadly occupied with landscape as a terrestrial ground where human and non-human life, as well as all kinds of artefacts, entangle in a complex meshwork, Ingold later expands his notion of landscape as weather-world – the place between Earth and sky, formed by the tasks and the passage of human and non-human lifeforms but also, in large part, by wind and weather, by the atmospheric occurrences of planet Earth. Landscape is not only terrestrial because the concept also includes seascapes and skyscapes, the water and the air, where the transformative forces of wind and rain are much more perceivable by our sensibility then on the land. The weather, which is atmospheric, is therefore, as Ingold ventures in his essay on landscape or weather-world, the occurrence whereby light, sound and feeling – the dispositions [*Stimmungen*], as Georg Simmel had already named them – embody the landscape:

> Light, sound and feeling tear at our moorings, just like the wind tears at the limbs of trees rooted to the earth. […] Thus, as it is immersed in the fluxes of the medium, the body is enlightened, ensounded and enraptured. Conversely, a body confined to a place in the landscape, and that did not equally inhabit the sky, would be blind, deaf and unfeeling.[23]

c) *Jean-Marc Besse: from the history of cartography to landscape thinking*

Over the past two decades, the philosopher, cultural historian and geographer Jean-Marc Besse, has, with his publications on the history of geography and cartography since the Renaissance[24] and on the aesthetical, social and political aspects of landscape, made an important contribution to landscape thinking and therefore to the Philosophy of Landscape as a forthcoming discipline. Beginning with a diversified study on landscape and geography, including essays about Petrarch's ascent of Mont Ventoux, Pieter Breughel's

[23] Tim Ingold, *Being Alive*, pp. 134-135.

[24] Jean Marc Besse, *Les grandeurs de la terre. Aspects du savoir gégraphique à la Rennaissance*, Lyon: ENS edition, 2003.

landscape paintings, Goethe's journey through the Italian landscape, the theme of landscape in Alexander von Humboldt and Paul Vidal de la Blache, or the phenomenology of landscape in the work of Éric Dardel,[25] Besse structures landscape thinking into five different points of departure or, as he puts it, five doors[26] – five paradigms or five orientations which elucidate the variety of landscape thinking as it appeared throughout the 20th century, and were developed in parallel before finally being recognised as complementary aspects of one holistic and unifying movement. The first 'door' is the view of landscape as a cultural representation developed by history, a cultural approach to the landscape as an object of images and thoughts, related to religious, political and scientific values and, above all, to entire world conceptions. Here, these appear as readings of the world, which figure as objects for the creation of national identities, revealing themselves to be matters of ideas and ideologies, rather than a means of gaining access to reality. The second orientation is expressed in the notion of landscape as inhabited and fabricated territory, representing the main theme of human geography dealing with the practice of production and the cultural use which structures and organises landscape comprehended as territories populated by different human groups and societies. The third orientation contains the notion of landscape as an object of the Earth-sciences. Landscape is hereby understood as a system and as a material reality of a morphodynamic nature, formed by geological and climatic activities, as well as by human and social activities. This is therefore not a strict cultural point of view but a hybrid of natural and cultural sciences, which is currently present in discourses concerning that which is defined as the Anthropocene, the idea of the fundamental long-lasting change of the geological formation of Earth through human intervention. The fourth orientation emphasises the idea of the landscape as a sensitive or bodily experience described by a phenomenological view of the landscape and the situation of human lifeforms in the landscape. Here, human existence is essentially being-in-the-world or being-in-the-landscape and is, in this way, the principle topic of existential philosophy. Finally, the fifth orientation conceives of landscape as a device for projects, for projective intentions and future human intervention on

[25] Jean-Marc Besse, *Voir la terre*, Actes Sud, 2000.

[26] Jean-Marc Besse, *Le goût du monde: exercices de paysage*, Actes Sud, 2009.

the various regions and territories of the Earth. It is, therefore, first and foremost, the domain of architecture and landscape design, but is also more widely related to politics in general, similarly to the central theme of the thinking of Lucius Burckhard mentioned above. Ultimately, the landscape thinking of Besse recognises landscape as a composition of these five orientations, and gives special attention to the landscape as a public space, as a matter of future political and projective intervention in combination with phenomenological and sensitive aspects of landscape experience:[27]

> Tout paysage peut être considéré de manière complexe. Le mot complexité, je pense qu'il fout le prendre dans tout as rigueur, a la fois comme une réalité matérielle traversée par des valeurs et des représentations culturelles, comme un milieu de vie, comme le support d'une expérience de la sensibilité, et comme un site qui appelle des transformations. [28]

3. Philosophy of Landscape as a forthcoming transdisciplinary propaedeutics

a) *The renewed situation of landscape and landscape thinking*

Modern landscape awareness begins with a political and aesthetical view of the territory which surrounds the city in circles, which lies behind the walls and between 'bare Culture', the space of the *domesticated*, and 'bare Nature', the space of *wilderness*. These landscapes, maintained and spared through the centuries, become, in the *Anthropocene*, an arranged and administrated territory, increasingly turning into an object of planning. Through this process, the natural condition of landscape, the landscape as a *lifeform*, is lost. Understanding landscape as lifeform means recognising its intermediate position between nature and culture – if this difference really exists – by reconsidering the landscape as a depository of human and non-human memory. Landscape carries the timeless traces (lines) of nature (or the traces that humans cannot testify)

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[27] Jean-Marc Besse, "Le paysage, espace sensible, espace public", *Meta: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology and Practical Philosophy*, Vol. II, No. 2 / 2010: 259-286, www.metajournal.org.

[28] Jean-Marc Besse, Conférence "Paysage et Projet", Mercredi 03 avril 2013, Terres em Villes, Grenoble. http://terresenvilles.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/TEV_CH2.2_ActesBesse_2013.pdf , accessed 24/02/2019, p. 9.

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 landscapes, eliminates the visible and invisible memory and, above all, the corporeality of landscape. The human body, which walks through landscapes, walks with its own memory through the body and the memory of the landscape, achieving a real communion between two or more life-forms. This acceptance of landscape as a body which carries its specific memory and its specific moods is not some kind of animistic or totemic interpretation, but the acknowledgment of the reverberation or resonance of landscapes and their general communicability.

It is therefore worth highlighting that the thought of the concept 'landscape' as the main term for a new *propaedeutics* of *Earth-awareness* entitled the *Philosophy of Landscape* is no longer strictly in debt to its historical background and even less so to a specific interpretation of landscape, for example the 'romantic landscape' or the history of landscape painting since the Renaissance. The profound transformation of the concept of landscape in the 19th and 20th centuries; their transdisciplinary application; their foundation in *Aesthetics* and in *Geosciences*; their parallel development into the ecological and environmental movements and finally their valorisation through the awareness of the increasing rearrangement of the planet via human interventions, has brought the concept of landscape into the spotlight. Today landscape is a central term for the modern *life-world* and *world-view* in the face of the irreversible changes currently taking place in the one and only world which is the *ground* and the *reason* for all life-forms on Earth. The *Philosophy of Landscape* arises from a fragmented world, which means out of a world which is no longer comprehensive, which does not conceal, and from a worldview without cosmologies, in a world that has announced the end of all cosmologies. The end of cosmologies also implies the end of *Metaphysics* but it does not necessarily mean the end of the *metaphysical*, of all that is *beside*, *behind* or *above* the physical, nor the end of that which is beyond the measurable, which appears for example in the dispositions, the moods of landscapes, as pointed out by Simmel when he mentioned the *moods* [*Stimmungen*] as the unifying element for landscape awareness. The end of cosmologies does not mean the end of the metaphysical, but the metaphysical is no longer the eternal, the whole, the

reason of all being. It is that which is between, the 'third' presence which is between the viewing and the viewed, the *atmospheric*, the *enigmatic*, the *unspeakable*, and the *mystic ground of knowledge*. The metaphysical, after the so-called death of God, after the doubt of all truths, cannot be understood as a normal continuity of the history of Metaphysics because the metaphysical as it is understood today is not the metaphysical of the past, rather it is what represents the needs or the *desideratum* which still exist for all human beings besides the needs of the physical. And landscapes are the third presences between earth and sky, places which open up the horizon of the unspeakable, awakening our attention to everything that transcends the physical appearance of the world. *Earth*, currently treated as a physical object and as a raw material resource, dead matter to be used for human survival and industrial and technical exploitation, should be reconsidered as the inscrutable ground and reason for life, as the fount of the unknown and not as the repository of the predictable. We are therefore confronted with the necessity to return to the *Earth* and to the *ground* without the pretensions of returning to some kind of pure nature, understood as a pre-cultural and harmonic totality, and to overcome the mere will to survive, which includes the permanent preoccupation with surviving others, instead of living alongside the multiplicity of the other lifeforms.

a) *Thinking landscape in the Anthropocene*

With this concept of landscape the dichotomy between *Nature* and *Culture* disappears and a *trans-natural* and *trans-cultural* form of *Earth awareness* arises, recognising *Earth* as *base* and *ground* for all kind of life-forms. What appears with the notion of a new epoch designated as the *Anthropocene* is the terrifying knowledge, full of responsibility and exempt from any divine grace, that humankind is effectively the future creator of earth. Through *Anthropocene* humanity, as Bruno Latour[29] explains, a post-natural and post-cultural era appears, which here is characterised as a *trans-natural* and

[29] Bruno Latour, "Waiting for Gaia. Composing the common world through arts and politics", pp. 11, *124 Londres – on Gaia*, accessed 24/02/2017, http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/124-GAIA-LONDON-SPEAP_0.pdf :"After all, this is just what is meant by the anthropocene concept: everything what was symbolic is now to be taken literally. Cultures used to 'shape the Earth' symbolically; now they do it for good. Furthermore, the very notion of culture went away along with that of nature. Post natural, yes but also post cultural."

trans-cultural behaviour. Evoking and sustaining this renewed Earth awareness does not mean eliminating the inner sense of *Nature* and *Culture* and does not presume that it would be possible to overcome natural laws (and here especially the second law of thermodynamics as the reason for the existential finitude of life). To act *trans-naturally* and *trans-culturally* means accessing the freedom located between necessity (*nature*) and possibility (*culture*), which, much like landscape, is the 'third' way. It means overcoming concepts of difference and the exclusion of this 'third' and, in a world of increasing distortion and destruction, in order to affirm the full responsibility of human action. There is no possibility of complete control and re-creation of Earth because nature still exists and will exist as an unrevealed force, as the one which intrudes (*Gaia*), but we should strive for creation and preservation conducted in the context of a sympathetic and symbiotic dialogue. As Félix Guatarri explains in his manifesto *The Three Ecologies*, it will be necessary to overcome the separation between 'Nature' and 'Culture', and to think "transversally" because natural "equilibriums will be increasingly reliant upon human intervention".[30]

In this sense, *Philosophy of Landscape* may provide the tools for *trans-natural* and *trans-cultural* living in the *Anthropocene* because it offers a solid, manifold and transversal knowledge, being that the *Philosophy of Landscape* embraces four fundamental areas: *Theory*, *Aesthetics*, *Ethics* and *Metaphysics*. Here, *Theory* is understood as Joachim Ritter defines it in his essay "Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft", as the contemplation of nature as a whole, not in theological and transcendental way, ruled and maintained by divine forces, but in precisely the opposite way, as pure immanence and under the plain responsibility of humanity. For its part, *Aesthetics* relates to its origin *aísthēsis* and may therefore be understood as the doctrine of perception and as the multi-sensory sensibility to all physical apparitions in general and to the integrity and harmony of natural and cultural phenomena. *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. Finally, *Metaphysics*, as

[30] Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton, London: The Athlone Press, 2000, p. 66.

mentioned above, is no longer the pinnacle of all knowledge but is comparable to *Aesthetics*, which is the doctrine of visible phenomena, in that it is the doctrine of invisible phenomena: the *atmospheric*, the *enigmatic*, the *unspeakable*, and the *mystic ground of knowledge*. These areas do not only build on one another historically – first *the contemplation of landscape*, then *the shaping of landscape*, then *the question of the proper way of living in the landscape and of maintaining the landscape* and then *the consideration of the metaphysical desideratum of landscape awareness* – they are also linked together horizontally, interacting at the same time and at the same place while the sensitive body strolls through the landscape.

Finally, what the *Philosophy of Landscape* offers – and this is one of the main aspects of the so-called *Anthropocene* – is the realisation that *Art* and *Politics*, as the main forces of social action and activity in the present and for future society,[31] have been intimately associated with the history of *landscape-experience* for centuries. The *Philosophy of Landscape* is not a discipline for the recuperation of *Nature*, nor is it a discipline for the preservation of *Culture*. It embraces the *theoretical*, *aesthetical*, *ethical* and the *metaphysical* dimensions of *Earth-awareness* always, attentive to the 'third', to the landscape as the region apt for the most diversified encounter, and for the cohabitation of nature and culture. Landscape is not *environment*, it is not *territory* and it is not some denomination for the global ecosystem. When we talk about landscape, we assume the multiplicity of landscapes on Earth and the reconsideration of the individuality of landscapes which claim their individual rights and requirements. Furthermore, we do not understand landscapes as a measurable piece of land, because landscapes are faces of *Nature* and faces of *Culture* situated between sky and Earth, always open to the horizon.[32] 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

[31] Bruno Latour, "Waiting for Gaia. Composing the common world through arts and politics". Accessed 24/02/2019, http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/124-GAIA-LONDON-SPEAP_0.pdf

[32] Michel Corajoud, "Le paysage, c'est l'endroit où le ciel et la terre se touchent", in François Dagognet (ed.), *Mort du paysage? Philosophie et esthétique du paysage*, Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1982, pp. 36-51.

'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 recognise 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. *Philosophy of Landscape* must be regarded as a propaedeutic discipline, where different methods, and approaches cross each other, all of them having a direct connection to the *Earth* at all times. It is the place of theory and the place of different methods, but always with a close relation to dwelling, to *Ethics* and to the equilibrium between *possibility* and *necessity* in future life on *Earth*.

FIGURES OF TOTALITY AND THE ETHOS OF ARCHITECTURE

Jorge Croce Rivera

1.

What kind of entities do Architects produce? Is there an essence of architectural entities? These questions were probably in the mind of Álvaro Siza Vieira, the distinguished Portuguese architect, when he briefly stated the difficulty of building a house.[1] It is not really the architect who builds it, but the workers – bricklayers, joiners, plasterers, plumbers. Ultimately, the builders are the house's own dwellers: they have to struggle against natural conditions – sunlight, rain, humidity –, defend it from the infestations that invade it – fungi, ants, rats, birds –, and repair the damage that comes about as a result of everyday routines or unexpected domestic disasters. A house is never finished; it requires perpetual maintenance and repairs as part of a never ending, never perfect attempt to control a number of processes of transformation. But then, suddenly, one day, in the Autumn twilight, the scent of the waxed wood mingles with the fragrance of the flowers in the garden, and "irresponsibly inattentive visitors to moments of happiness, we feel happy, forgetting the troubles of nomadic barbarians".[2] As sunlight pours into the interior, a silent serenity emerges and gives meaning to all the heroic efforts of the committed builders.

We may expand on Siza Vieira's reflection in order to integrate the complex and undetermined elements that make the singularity of *that* particular dwelling: those elements which are added and subtracted, modified or destroyed, the changes of walls and doors, the arrangement of rooms and

[1] The brief text by Álvaro Siza Vieira, "Viver uma Casa" [Living a house], has been reproduced many times, cf. Maria Milano (ed.), *Do Habitar*. Câmara Municipal de Matosinhos 2005, pp. 104-5; English translation in A. Angelillo (ed.), *Álvaro Siza Vieira. Architecture Writings*, Milan: Skira Editore, 1997.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 105.

furniture, the modification of décor, and the daily use of objects. Besides walls and façades, the house is also the undefined experience of living that the inhabitants directly or tacitly refer to, the complexity of their habits and norms, rituals and hazards, sporadic events, joys and sorrows, memories and expectations. The weather evolves, children, trees and bushes grow, someone passes away, a dog barks, the shadows move, the lights and colours are continually changing.

From this perspective, the authorship of the architectural design is not essential, nor are the identities of the builders, the cultural characteristics of the inhabitants, nor even the aesthetic quality of the dwelling. There is a certain quality of anonymity that emerges in a house and embeds itself in the intimate experience of the lives of its dwellers, in the density of materials, the intricate configuration of scales, from pipes to chimneys. In the cellar, we see that the strength of the pillars is impressive; from a distance the house disappears, veiled by the trees, muddled into the stain of the city.

This anonymity is not, however, specific to houses, but to buildings in general, small or large, whatever the function they fulfil: schools, museums, factories, religious places, offices, lodgings, hospitals, prisons, theatres, markets. These singularities are indifferent to architecture as a discipline, indifferent to the definition of architecture as art or technique, and to the relevance of the authorship of the design.

Many actors intervene in dwellings: humans, animals, plants, divine effigies or numinous entities, dead or alive entities. Nothing is fixed, things gain personalities: machines, paintings, but also pieces of memories, instruments waiting to be used – clothes in drawers, photos on shelves, the hammer on the table, bikes, the skis on the wall waiting for the season.

One cannot define each one of these singularities, nor fully describe the convergence of the different materials, the complexity of so many dynamics of such different scales. The singularities of dwellings challenge the usual intelligibility of the empirical sciences, the criticism of the arts, the evaluation of technologies.[3] If these entities are infinitely dense and changing, how can we achieve intelligibility in these singularities?[4]

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[3] Jeremy Till "What is architectural research? Architectural Research: Three Myths and One Model", *RIBA Memorandum*, 2012.

[4] We assume Till's proposal for the three aspects of research in architecture: processes,

We may recognize three intricate processes, each of them leading to and depending on decisions: the configuration of space; the production of materialities; the living experiences of their inhabitants. These processes and decisions are, however, not entirely evident, not entirely detectable, not entirely human. The implication of these three levels of decisions generates an experience of ambivalence and ambiguity, there arises an enigmatic entity, difficult to grasp, impossible to define, a stable but moveable articulation of processes and decisions, some made in accordance with expertise, taste or choice, instinct or habit, others emerging from the quality of the materials or, like a lightning bolt, from an accidental coming together of different factors.

Some of these processes and decisions define limits, the outer frontier, internal divisions of space, but we must be aware that each limitation simultaneously separates and connects, not only the external and the internal, but also the natural and the artificial, nature and culture. These limits define orientations and paths, and generate different types of steps: small, careful approaches, ordinary routes of activity or leisure, wide-ranging walks and long-distance journeys.[5] Each singular dwelling structures liminal, lively differences, generated by the transversal temporality that emerges from the three processes mentioned above, and it is this transversal temporality that creates spatial differentiation.[6]

Taken as 'atmospheric' at a particular moment, as in the Autumn twilight of Siza's interior, the singularity of each dwelling implies, in some way, a unifying character, an *ethos*, a particular junction of those implicit, multiple ontologies and spatialities, in which the many decisions that are involved, some actual, others potential and latent, are placed.

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products and performances.

[5] O. F. Bollnow, *Mensch und Raum*, Stuttgart: W, Kohlhammer, 1963, trans. by Ch. Shuttleword, London: Hyphen Press, 2011.

[6] We follow the lesson of the Spanish philosopher Eugenio Trías: Architecture is "una arte fronteriza", an art of borders, of limits; like music, architecture creates atmospheres, in contrast to painting, theatre or literature, which are "epiphanic arts". Architectural entities are situated between the outside and the inside, the natural and the cultural, natural and artificial materials; like music, architecture creates atmospheres, but is rooted in the ground, which constitutes the matrix of the dwelling. Eugenio Trías, *Lógica del Límite*, Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1991, pp. 41-48.

We can connect this sense of *ethos* with its Ancient Greek meanings: before *ethos* came to signify the quality[7] of a human personality or speech in Aristotle's thought, its most ancient meaning, in Homer, indicates the dwellings of animals, the places where animals, horses, for instance, experience the spontaneity of living. Later, in Hesiod, it means norms and coordination, to then assume a human reference in Aristotle.

The ethos is something stabilized and adaptive to a certain degree; it allows the establishment of habits, and supposes a consistent articulation of operations that can react to new stimuli. Connecting presentation and representation, ways of living and ways of ceasing life, the dwelling defines an entity without an *eidos* but with an *ethos*, based on the equivocal conjunction of different ontologies: materialities, forms, biological systems, psychological and spiritual ambiances. The conjunction adjusts and maintains itself in tense alterities and alterations: the stability of walls, floors and ceiling allow for the fluidity of the activities of dwellers, while the simultaneous degradation of the place can be concomitant with the accumulation of memories. Through its ethos, a dwelling differentiates and articulates the qualities of subjectivity: what is public or common, the domain of the private, the spheres of intimacy. The ethos joins the presentation of things and the representation of subjects, leading to the correlation between objects and subjects, the *subjectivation* of objects and the *objectivation* of subjects.[8]

The ethos of a dwelling is, strictly speaking, just an ethos, as dwelling duplicates its authentic meaning. It thus generates a sense of wholeness and balance that emerges from the implicit coordination of materials and forms,

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[7] Ethos (ἦθος, ἔθος, *plurals: ethe* (ἤθη), *ethea* (ἤθεα)) original meaning is "accustomed place" (as in ἤθεα ἵππων "the habitats of horses", *Iliad* 6.511, 15.268). Homer, *Iliad* 6.511, *Odyssey* 14.411. Herodotus, 7.125; Oppianus, *Haleutica* 1.93. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, "abodes of humans"167, 525; manners, customs, 137; character, 67, 78. Herodotus, human homes, 1.15, 157, customs, 2.30, 35, 4.106. 7. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1139a 1; *Historia Animalum*, 487a 12. See also E. Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 267-268; C. Chamberlain, "From 'haunts' to 'character': the meaning of ethos and its relation to ethics", *Helios* 11 (1984): 97-108; J-P. Vernant, "Tensions and Ambiguity in Greek Tragedy" in Vernant and Vidal-Nacquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece,* trans. by Janet Lloyd. New York: Zone Books, 1990, pp. 29-48.

[8] The implicit totality present in the dwelling can be recognized in the Vitruvean architectural axiology: the articulation and adjustments of material qualities in *firmitas*, the correspondence of forms and functions in *commoditas*, the quality of experiences of living in *venustas*.

functions and experiences, which is present even if the actual elements are in disorder, incomplete or in a ruined state. There we can recognize a tacit, an *implicit totality*, a quality that is not apprehended by categorical reason, as a logical implication of unity and parts. The dwelling defines obligations and choices for the dwellers; the ethos imposes commitments, efforts and resistance, but also grants the possibility of selection and election, arbitrariness and freedom.

The ethos is thus previous to a strict cognitive disposition of the dwellers. Cognition tacitly supposes it, but also transforms the qualities of the ethos – the ontological conjugation, the anonymity, the unifying revelation – in the neutrality of a "context", the veiled supposition where the speaking or acting of a human become protagonists.

From the ethos also arises the meaning of the representational horizon, the extension – to the limits of perceptional aptitudes – of the expectation for protection and the urgency for vigilance and prospection. From the shelter or the tower, the windows look out for tempest or pleasant weather, predators and prey, foes and allies, routines and anomalies.[9] The representational experience of external totality becomes the perceptional horizon of experiences that are an extension of the living experience of the ethos. It is the ethos that can give meaning to the qualities of the large space, directed by paths, safe spaces and perilous places, which are metaphors for the protection and prospection, the vigilance and maintenance, the habits and risks of the ethos.

This sense of implicit totality can also be found in Ancient Greece,[10] as *kosmos* could characterize the quality of carpentry, weaving, dancing, or building a ship. *Kosmos* refers also to ornaments, the quality of dresses or the makeup on a face. The implicit sense of totality signifies order and harmony, the perfectivity of the coordination of designs and materials, the skills of building, but also the reiterative training and the transformation of habits. The ethos makes possible improvement and qualification, but also the establishment of neutrality and anonymity, the installation of banality, the menace of degradation, dysfunction, and abandonment.

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[9] Jay Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, London: John Wiley, 1975.

[10] Indra McEwen, *Socrates's Ancestor*, Cambridge (Mass): The MIT Press, 1993, p. 79. See also: John R. Senseney, *The Art of Building in the Classical World. Vision, Craftsmanship, and Linear Perspective in Greek and Roman Architecture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

2.

Besides the implicit totality in the ethos of a particular dwelling, another figure of implicit totality can be found in the aesthetic experience of the landscape, as Georg Simmel's essay on "Philosophie der Landschaft"[11] makes evident. Nature, "the infinite interconnectedness of objects, the uninterrupted creation and destruction of forms, the flowing unity of an event that finds expression in the continuity of temporal and spatial existence"[12] cannot be taken partially without disrupting its essential unity. The category of landscape allows the observer to experience "a self-contained perception intuited as a self-sufficient unity, which is nevertheless intermeshed with an infinite expansiveness and a continual flux."[13]

The observer has a general feeling about the observed, an emotional relationship with the individual landscape, a *Stimmung* that can disconnect the characteristic of what is observed from the invisible unity of Nature.[14]

The understanding of landscape demands, as Simmel emphasizes, that we overcome the superficial view that makes the 'sense of nature' depend on lyricism and romanticism, which only developed in Modern Times. The emergence of the notion of landscape had an ontological and a historical meaning: it constitutes a progress, due to an inner resoluteness of the modern subject, a decision that allows one to overcome the unitary feeling of the unity of Nature which prevailed during Ancient and Medieval Times.[15]

The creative correlation of an emotional disposition of the subject with the singular landscape reveals another figure of implicit totality. How is this complex articulation of external and internal entities important to understand the function of landscape in modern society? This is the question that Joachim Ritter exposed in his conference "Landschaft: Zur Funktion des ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft," which developed Simmel's ideas.[16]

[11] G. Simmel, "Philosophie der Landschaft" in *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen* 1909-1918; Suhrkamp: Frankfurt, Germany, 2001; pp. 471-482. English trans. by Josef Bleicher, "Philosophy of Landscape", *Theory, Culture & Society* Vol. 24 (7-8): 20-29.

[12] *Ibid*., English translation, p. 21.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[16] J. Ritter, "Landschaft: Zur Funktion des ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft [1963]", in

Ritter distinguishes the theoretical and scientific understanding of Nature as objectified, from the aesthetic experience that involves emotions and sentiments: "landscape is nature that becomes aesthetically present to the gaze of a sensitive and sentimental contemplator".[17] The fruition of nature as landscape compensates for the impossibility of a direct experience of the theoretical totality that is the object of science.[18] The landscape experience achieves a universal, not through a concept, but through art and poetry, which universally express human emotions.

There is, however, a counterpart to this experience, which is the separation and autonomy of human activities from Nature, and the dominance of Society over Nature. The freedom from the terrible power of Nature, which can blindly drag in unprotected men, is also the freedom urban societies can provide. The landscape experience is a disinterested experience, marked by a freedom from duties, an experience that emerges when an urban dweller is distant from his daily urban activities, commercial affairs, lessons, civic politics, industrial production or exploitation.[19]

The writings by Simmel and Ritter allow one to recognize the implicit totality that is present in the Modern Aesthetic experience of landscape, which is related to a theoretical configuration of totality. They also allow one to distinguish the aesthetic experience of landscape from the representational experience of the horizon. Furthermore, Simmel and Ritter's considerations reveal the inner decisions that support the landscape's experience and that are ultimately connected to another implicit totality, named Soul, or Spirit, which is not developed in these writings.

Ritter emphasizes the continuity of the theoretical disposition to a

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Subjektivität (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989 [1974]), pp. 141-163. Portuguese translation: "Paisagem: Sobre a função do estético na sociedade moderna", in A.V. Serrão (ed.), *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologi*a, trans. by Ana Nolasco, Lisboa: CFUL, 2013, pp. 95-122.

[17] Our translation from the Portuguese, p. 105.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

[19] J. Wamberg,"The Landscapes of Art: A Short History of Mentalities", *Meddelelser fra Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Copenhagen), special issue on "Landskab" 7 (2005): 139-50. The human presence is not entirely absent, but integrated in nature's views, as in the general backgrounds of 15th and 16th century Italian, and Flemish painting – Gentile da Fabriano, Robert Campin, Giotto, Pattinir, Brueghel. In these images there are signs of human activities – mills, harbours, canals, roads, fields, hedges, fences, quarries – and villages in the distance.

universal, tracing it from Aristotle's episteme to Modern Science, a theoretical tradition that includes Art and Poetry. The continuity of this theoretical tradition is emphasized by the relevance that is given to Petrarch's ascent of Mont Ventoux, in Southern France, near the Alps, in April of 1326, accompanied by his younger brother, and described ten years later in one of his *Epistolae familiares.*[20] Petrarch was inspired, as a humanist, by reading, in Titus Livius' *History*, the description of King Philip of Macedonia's ascent of Mount Heamus in Thessaly, motivated simply by the curiosity to discover if it was possible to simultaneously see the Adriatic and the Black Sea, and was eager to imitate him, as the first "among the Modern" to ascend Mont Ventoux.

Our reflection on the ethos of a dwelling has led us to recognize the relevance of implicit totalities. The instance of totality that is correlated to the aesthetic experience of landscape is equivocal, as under an identical denomination, or its translation, there are different ontological characterizations and modalities of truth that internally determine the correlation of inner decisions and external characterizations. The experience of landscape is not only grounded in a theoretical configuration but also intrinsically connected with the representational horizon, in which the ethos is, at the same time, confirmed and veiled.

Reinterpreting Petrarch's ascent, two crucial moments stand out in the description: first, the encounter of the brothers on the path to the mountain with an old shepherd, who tries to persuade the young travellers of the dangerousness and futility of their intended expedition;[21] then, the confrontation, while resting at the summit,[22] between the direct perceptional experience of the horizon and the figure of totality that Petrarch intellectually has to consider through the reading of a passage of Augustine's *Confessions.* The attraction and fruition of the immense horizon seems, after reading the passage of Augustine's text, to be a secular temptation, a distraction from

[20] *Epistolae familiares* (IV, 1), English translation F. Petrarch, *Familiar Letters.* James Harvey Robinson, ed. and trans. *Petrarch: The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters*, New York: G. P. Putnam, 1898, pp. 307-20; H. Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. by Robert M. Wallace, Cambridge (Massachusetts): MIT Press, 1983, pp. 341-342; E. Cassirer, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, trans. by Hans Nachod, p. 28.

[21] *Epistolae familiares* (IV, 1), English translation F. Petrarch, *Familiar Letters.* pp. 310-11.

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 317.

Petrarch's inner spiritual life.

In his troubled doubt, a double sense of *mundus* can be recognized: as the translation of *kosmos*, a Christian transposition of the Neo-Platonic understanding of the totality of beings outside the insensible One; and as *mundi habitatori*, a term which refers to "those who delight in the world, the impious, the carnal."[23]

Although "the just are not called the world, since, though they may dwell in the world in flesh, in heart they are with God",[24] without a notion of or a value for the experience of landscape, the aesthetic experience of the large horizon gives Petrarch a confused feeling of discomfort that he cannot bear.

In Petrarch's narrative, different instances can be pointed out. First of all, the expression of the tension between ethos and the representation horizon, recognized in the contrast between the impetus of the young men and the caution of the shepherd, also in the double intention of the "expedition" to the top of the mountain, for its own sake or with a military purpose. Secondly, the theoretical configuration of beings and truth as *mundus* as *ens creatum*, which is the implicit totality that Petrarch was intensely aware of after the reading of the passage by Augustine. As Ritter points out, Neo-Platonic thought has assumed the Aristotelian configuration of *theoría tou kósmou*, which can only be achieved by an inner, spiritual disposition. The Aristotelian *kosmos* is rooted in but no longer has the archaic sense of the term we mentioned before, as a qualification of the qualities of different activities. In Anaximander's use of *kosmos*, it signifies a general expression of the arrangement, adjustment and entanglement of beings,[25] while in Aristotle's thought, *kosmos* means a divine totality of beings[26] that can only be contemplated by *nous*, the intellectual activity that introduces a separation between intellectual knowledge and the perception of experience.

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[23] Augustine, *Opera* (ed. Migne), Vol. IV, quoted in M. Heidegger, *Von Wesen des Grundes*, English edition *The Essence of Reasons*, trans. by Terrence Malick, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969, pp. 53-4.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Anaximander, B1, *Anaximander and the Origin of Greek Cosmology*, trans. by C. Kahn. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. Quoted in McEwen, *Socrates' Ancestor*, p. 14.

[26] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, (I 3, 983b 8-17).

The consideration of *kosmos* as an entity apprehended theoretically and the sense of *theoria* as a separate cognitive disposition was decisive for the adaptation of philosophical ideas to the Christian *mundus*. If God, in Aristotelian cosmology, is the First Motor and the limit that can only be thought of,[27] God is, in Christian Neo-Platonic theology, placed over *mundus*, as a supernatural entity. The Aquinean notion of God as the Great Architect assumes the transformation of these notions into an *onto-theo-logical* framework[28] that regulates the relations between the supernatural and the natural as *analogia entis*.[29]

The transformation of *kosmos* runs parallel to the transformation of meaning of *ethos* to which we have referred, and also that of *theoria*,[30] a term which characterized the ritual pilgrimage to festivals and sacred places and participation in mythic rituals before being appropriated by philosophy. In Plato's dialectical thinking, the metaphorical use of the ways, moments and events related to *theorein* are present, connecting the dialectic path to the decisive event of seeing, no longer of the traditional gods, but of the Supreme Good.[31] However, in Aristotle this metaphorical recourse was restrained. The philosophic *theóros* contemplates 'the nature of truth and reality',[32] pursuing

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[27] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, XII 8, 1074b 17ff.

[28] To a larger perspective, see M. Heidegger, *The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics*, in *Identity and Difference*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, p. 54.

[29] "God, Who is the first principle of all things, may be compared to things created as the architect is to things designed (ut artifex ad artificiata)." Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I. 27, 1.r.o.3. On the articulation between the scholastic thought that rationalized the sense of the totality of beings as "reign of the creatures" with gothic architecture, see: Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, Latrobe: The Archabbey Press, 1953.

[30] H. Rausch, *Theoria*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1982; see also J. Ritter, *Die Lehre vom Ursprung und Sinn der Theorie bei Aristoteles*, Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 1953.

[31] Andrea W. Nightingale, *Spectacles of truth in classical Greek philosophy*. Theoria *in its cultural context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Andrea W. Nightingale, "The Philosopher at the Festival: Plato's Transformation of Traditional Theoria", in Jaś Elsner and Ian Rutherford (eds.), *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman & Early Christian Antiquity. Seeing the Gods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[32] Aristotle, *Protrepticus*, in Andrea W. Nightingale, "The Philosopher at the Festival: Plato's Transformation of Traditional Theoria", p. 153.

this as an end in itself, without utilitarian purposes; as *theoria* is a completely free and leisurely activity, *theorein* only preserves its original meaning when combined with an attitude separated from practical interests.[33]

Thirdly, the maintenance of the archaic tradition of *theorein* as Petrarch understands his ascent as a pilgrimage that will have its decisive moment at the summit. This experience of 'landscape' transposes the archaic sense of *theorein* – that of ritual journeys to attend festivals in Ancient Greece, to the *mundane* configuration of totality, which transforms every being into a sign, in the double sense of *mundus*, a dense symbol of Creation and Fall, *imago et dissimilitudo.* The symbolic character defines the gardens as *hortus conclusus*, symbol of *Paradiso*, and assigns physical and moral danger to wilderness. The Medieval sense of 'landscape' is defined by pilgrimages to holy places, shrines and a network of ecclesial institutions, chapels, churches, cathedrals, monasteries and hermitages, deserts and the Holy Land.[34]

And finally, Petrarch's individualist intention to climb the mountain just for the view he will observe from the summit, anticipates the Modern experience of landscape; the ascent depends only upon his own abilities, cognition and autonomy, a disposition of freedom and self-determination that he takes from the example of a military chief, looking for strategic places and simultaneously observing the world as it is, without symbolic qualities.

3.

We have expanded the question that Joachim Ritter asked in his conference about the function of landscape in modern society by articulating landscape with other figures of totality that we will now summarize.

Firstly, we introduced the ethos that emerges from dwellings; it connects singularly living experiences, materials and shapes. Ontologically, an ethos is not centered in the consciousness of individuals nor in things, walls or

[33] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1026a 19-17.

[34] J. Scheid, F. de Polignac, "Qu'est-ce qu'un 'paysage religieux'? Représentations cultuelles de l'espace dans les sociétés anciennes", *Revue d' histoire des religions*, 227-4/2010, 237-434; S. G. Cole, *Landscape, Gender, and the Ritual Space. The Ancient Greek Experience,* Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2005; Diana Spencer, *Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. G. J. White, *The Medieval English Landscape, 1000-1540*, London: Bloomsbury, 2012.

rooms, but in the relation of alterity and alteration, as a becoming or degrading. The temporality of ethos is circular and establishes routines and habits, defining norms and their disruptions; although the unifier of these multiplicities is always present, it reveals itself eventually and instantly, as in Siza Vieira's serene Autumn twilight.

The ethos articulates different ontologies, human and non-human, and diverse ontological states. It is a convergence of temporalities and a differentiation of spaces, a domain of subjectivities: the intimacies, privacies and public dimensions of individuals. The intensity of life of dwellers is thus assumed by the ethos, granting the emotional value of dwellings in memories, perspectives and prospective. An ethos turns anonymous and neutral, and becomes veiled, as a supposition, in cognition and in the construction of spaces.

Connected to this implicit totality, there is the representational sense of horizon, which is individual and socially constructed by the extension of the perceptional aptitudes. The horizon implies the identification of the observer and the ethos of the dwelling from where he observes. The representational extension of protection and prospection enables appropriation, effort and dangerousness, experienced in gathering and hunting, in farming, and in the military and religious sense of 'landscape'.

The ontological configuration of a historical epoch is also a figure of totality, a general characterization of being and the modes of truth that are commonly accepted. The theoretical totality regulates the institutions of knowledge and the processes of validation and transmission of knowledge. The theoretical totality grants a common understanding of reality, present in the processes, works and achievements of religious, economic and political life, expressed in literate, artistic and scientific education. Each historical figure determines a complex set of cognitive dispositions and practical activities, and defines a spatiality: institutionally built complexes, relevant places, and dislocations.

Depending on metaphysical and ethical decisions, this figure of totality can be philosophically defined and discussed, but its authority is tacitly accepted and determines an ontological norm. Theoretical totalities change like the scientific paradigms proposed by Thomas Kuhn,[35] being transformed

[35] T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Chicago: International Encyclopedia of

by slow and subtle modifications, leaving an intact core, succeeded by crises, modifications, and an internal process of consolidation.

The third figure is the experience of landscape, in which two figures of totality are present: the ethos, connected to the representational horizon, and the aesthetic experience of the theoretical totality. As the veiled life of the ethos is latent in the representational horizon, theoretical totality is representatively presented as an implicit totality, an instance that can assume different characteristics.[36]

Due to the historicity of ontological configurations, there is not a univocal 'Nature' to which the landscape experience is oriented, but diverse configurations of the totality of beings and truth define different 'Natures', each of which supposes inner dispositions and experiences of constrains, arbitrariness and freedom.[37] These 'Natures' are also distinct from the experience of Petrarch's shepherd, for whom there is not a general Nature to be seen in aspect but *that* mountain and its perils.[38]

The experience of landscape is thus an ambivalent combination of the representational horizon and the aesthetic experience of theoretical totalities. The theoretical totality that conducts the experience of the observer is not, however – and this is an important aspect – the one in which he as an individual is historically positioned.[39] The theoretical totality in which

Unified Science, 1962.

[36] For a contemporary perspective, see the definition of Landscape as a form, *a priori* synthesis, that "environment", as a biological and social function, acts upon a "territory", Rosario Assunto, "Paesaggio, ambiente, territorio: un tentativo di precisazione concettuale", *Bolletino del Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio*, Vicenza, XVIII, 1976, pp. 45-48.

[37] For an anthropological consideration of multiple "natures", see P. Descola, *Au-delà nature et culture*, Paris: Gallimard, 2005; *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. by Janet Lloyd. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013.

[38] M. Merleau-Ponty, *L'oeil et l'esprit*, Paris, Les Éditions Gallimard, 1961, p. 29; trans. by M. Smith in J. Jonhson, *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, Northwesten University Press, 1994, pp. 121-149.

[39] We follow Agamben's idea that the contemporary is primarily an ahistorical concept. The landscape experience will be a disjunction and an anachronism: 'Contemporariness is, then, a singular relationship with one's own time, which adheres to it and, at the same time, keeps a distance from it. More precisely, it is that relationship with time that adheres to it, through *a disjunction and an anachronism*. Those who coincide too well with the epoch, those who are perfectly tied to it in every respect, are not contemporaries, precisely because they do not

the observer is actually living, despite shaping philosophical, theological or scientific debates and political tensions between social actors, escapes his aesthetic apprehension. The observer is intrinsically guided by the previous theoretical totality or anticipates, like Petrarch in his ascent of Mont Ventoux, the dispositions of the posterior theoretical configuration.

In the Modern Age, the totality of beings is defined in terms of Modern Science and its metaphysical and epistemic foundations, but the experience of landscape, as an aesthetical experience, transposes the intrinsic structure and dispositions of the medieval totality, *mundus*. Although a modern individual, who is educated, literate or scientifically trained, the observer of a landscape reproduces the medieval pilgrimage and devotion to *sacra reliquiae*, the search for special and rare exemplars, as a new type of wonder or marvel in 'Nature', which reveals the presence of a mighty and benevolent divine.[40]

The aesthetic experience of totality calls for a disposition towards the empirical beings and the evidence of truth, but without the impediment of methodological constraints and scientific demands. It is not the rationality of philosophical controversies about understanding and experiments, scientific debates about the laws of movement or light, or the technological exhibitions of recent innovations that the modern observer transposes to Nature, but the emotional experiences facing 'Nature' as a symbol of the transcendent entity. The Modern experience of landscape implies the sensible presence of a God who is both creator and regulator, benevolent yet terrifying in its immense power and ordering intelligence. The observer has to recognize through personal experience, and without the constrains of religious norms and corporative and stratified moral restrictions, secularized epiphanies as symbols of the presence of a mighty power, a sublime articulation of majesty and detail in 'Nature'.

These aesthetical experiences of landscape are not only contemplative or represented in paintings and sculpture or music, but they also justify the design and production of larger gardens, parks, and the preservation of natural

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manage to see it; they are not able to firmly hold their gaze on it." G. Agamben, "What is the contemporary?", in *What is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*, trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009, p. 41.

[40] L. Daston, K. Park (ed.), *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750*, New York: Zone Books, 1998.

territories. This also highlights the extensive transformation of the European and American territories, and the colonization of other parts of the Earth. To make such interventions, that follow the generally optimistic aim of improvement and perfection which underlines the *universus* as a figure of totality, the modern observer uses the knowledge and technological capacities of Modernity: hydraulics, engineering, botany, zoology, or anthropology.

4.

We assume an abstract consideration of the figures of the *theoretical* totality of beings and recognize a historical-ontological sequence of those figures: *kosmos*, *mundus*, and *universus*. We also recognize that the figure of totality supposed in the *aesthetic experience* of a certain epoch is not that of the contemporaneous prevalent theoretical figure, but the figure that was dominant in the previous historical-ontological epoch, a figure that is spread by 'learned culture', from social elites to middle classes, and to the general population, through formal learning and educated culture. From another perspective, a theoretical figure is only an aesthetic experience in a moment posterior to its consolidation.

Bearing in mind the times in which we are living, is the figure of *universus* still prevalent as the theoretical guarantee of the epistemological articulation of ontologies, as the support of scientific and technological enterprises? What is the contemporary characterization of beings as a totality, of the totality of beings? The contemporary theoretical meaning assumes a diversity of knowledge and technologies, but can no longer be characterized as the *universus*, supported by a physical-mathematical uniformity of space and time that guarantees the cumulative progress of knowledge.

It would be long and complex to describe the transformation of *mundus* into a new figure of totality, the emergence of a new figure of theoretical totality. We will just point out some of the evidence of that historical-ontological change, across different levels of sciences, historical events and possibilities: the crises of the epistemological foundations of the sciences that were the support of *universus* – Logic, Mathematics, and Physics; the catastrophic applications of scientific and technological knowledge, in particular, the possibility of an atomic destruction of life on the planet; the awareness of

the dramatic ecological consequences of industrial and economic growth; the demographic increase of the human population and the extinction of multiple species; the critical revision of the process of imperialism and colonization; the inclusion of non-Western economic and political powers, such as India, Japan and China; the proliferation of non-Western spiritualities in Western societies; the consolidation of a globalized economy and of major migrant movements of people and things across the world.

These elements, whose reference has become trivial, led to a general appreciation of the Earth as a limited resource, a bio-systematic entity modulated and threatened by the impact of human activities.[41] The contemporary figure of totality, even if difficult to define, can no longer be considered to be *universus*; there are different possibilities for its denomination: such as 'Earth', as we've said, or 'Gaïa' or simply 'World', in any case, an absolutely immanent instance. We propose to name it *Environment*, assuming as its characteristic its equivocalness and ambivalence: it includes the aesthetical sense of 'atmosphere' (Gernot Böhme),[42] the psychological relevance of 'holding environment' (Winnicott),[43] the ecological sense of 'médiance' (Watsuji, Berque)[44] and the sense of a technological 'environment', and it involves also the meaning of climate.

How does *environment* differ from *universus*? What is its ontological determination, the general quality of being it determinates, its *onticity*? What are its epistemological foundations, and have the scientific disciplines replaced those that were determinant in *universus*?

In Modern totality, the beings that arise from the homogeneity of space and time are ultimately defined by their mathematical and physical

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[41] See M. Lussault, *L'avènement du monde. Essai sur l'habitation humaine de la Terre*, Paris: Du Seuil, 2013; E. Hache (ed.), *De l'univers clos au monde infini*, Paris: Édition Dehors, 2014 ; B. Latour, *Face à Gaïa. Huit conférences sur le Nouveau Régime Climatique*, Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, La Découverte, 2015.

[42] G. Böhme, *Atmosphäre. Essays zur neuen Aesthetik*, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1995; C. Borch, G. Böhme, O. Eliasson, *Architectural Atmospheres: On the Experience and Politics of Architecture*, Birkhauser, 2014; P. Zumthor, *Atmospheres*, Birkhauser, 2006.

[43] D. W. Winnicott, *The Child the Family and the Outside World*, London: Pelican Books, 1964.

[44] Watsuji Tetsurô, *Fùdo: Le milieu humain,* trans. by A. Berque. Paris: CNRS, 2011 and A. Berque, A. *Thinking through Landscape*, London: Routledge, 2013. See also "Des fondements ontologiques de la crise, et de l'être qui pourrait la dépasser", *Vertigo* 10, Numéro 1, Avril 2010.

determinations, even if new ontological characteristics are added, the immense complexity of modes of life, of consciousness, of proficiency; these beings are limited in their original determination and actual capacity of action, but are open to the possibility of a transformation in the future, an evolution, an accumulation. The losses in the process would be compensated by the qualification of the remainders and newer beings.

However, there is not, in contemporary theoretical totality, an open sense of future, but a prospective calculus, that projects to the future the probable evolutions of the systems, in order to determine crucial alterations, quantitative or qualitative. The determination of dramatic or catastrophic alterations induces a reverse retroaction to the present, in order to define a conjuncture of decisions, an interdisciplinary convergence, a coordination of functionalities. The present is determined both by its transition from the past, and by its retroaction from the future to the present. The consequences of the temporality of the new figure of totality are the importance of the notions of 'evaluation', 'resilience', and 'sustainability'. Sustainability is thought of as the coordination of social, economic and ecological dimensions that implies a general translation of human cultures to their ecological supports, and vice-versa.

The epistemological kernel of *environment* requires that what is represented by knowledge has an explicit connection with what is presented through knowledge, the reality that the disciplines study and the effective real are interconnected and mutually conditioning. The *onticity* of environment is no longer determined by the articulation of Logics, Mathematics, and Physics, but by the integration of Biology, Economics, and Communication:

In contrast to Modern totality, which was structured by the distinction between nature and culture, the Contemporary totality tends to go "beyond nature and culture", to attribute subjectivities, culture and rights to non-human animals or ecosystems, and to strengthen naturalist explanations in the neurosciences. The theoretical totality demands going beyond modern oppositions, beyond anthropocentrism, to discuss the Western *Weltanschauung*'s categories, explicitly underlining assumptions of the Modern processes.

The figure of *environment* also determines the sense of the truth. Despite the contemporary relevance of science and technology, there is no univocal

metaphysical foundation, rather there is a dynamic coordination of knowledge, establishing interdisciplinary relations, crossed by controversies. There are therefore no foundational moments, such as those defined by the works of Descartes, Newton, Kant or Hegel during Modern Times, but a general strategy of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of knowledge. Without an unquestionable and guaranteed epistemological support, a *prima scientia* whose foundation is generally accepted, the multiple scientific knowledges and their ontologies are marked by a general sense of limitation, proper to the categories of each discipline, their methodological strategies, and the epistemological circumstances emerging from the lines of research and the debates among experts and social actors.

Assuming that there is no absolute configuration of truth, even religious, as truth is a human construction, in the contemporary period truth is a functional perspective that demands continuous innovation. Structured by the implication of subjects and objects, contents and communications, truths are dependent on the context in its multiple dimensions. As an immanent function, truth enables us to articulate individuals and groups, disciplines and common sense. Truth depends on actual consensus, is constructed through the productivity of knowledge and public divulgation, as an open and indeterminate form that requires the new coordination of functional truths. Only the consensual and the communicative, that which is relevant socially and economically, prevails in sciences.[45]

This transformation from the calculatory modern truth implies that the meaning of theory is transformed; it is no longer the determination of epistemological principles, but the functional principles of the models of epistemological strategies. Environment, as theoretical totality, implies a reversal, the virtual co-presence of possibilities, a sense of objectivity no longer strictly representational but also presentational, straddling the division between artificial and natural, meaning and its rhetorical appearance. The theoretical experience of freedom is no longer mathematical freedom, the self-binding and self-grounding evidence that sustains the Modern dwelling of science, but an ingenuous combination of expertise, choice and chance.[46]

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[45] M. Gibbons et *alii*., *New Production of Knowledge. The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*, London: SAGE Publications, 1994.

[46] L. Daston / P. Galison, *Objectivity*, New York: Zone Books, 2007, p. 414.

What are the consequences for the experience of landscape and architecture of *environment* thought of as theoretical totality? The contemporary notion of totality is no longer supported by an optimist trust in humankind, tutored by a benevolent God, and no longer assumes spatial homogeneity and temporal openness. Time is forward-looking, but implies a prospective calculation and actual validation of the proficiency and sustainability of all processes and technologies. There is no longer a unique anthropological model, or the expectation for an optimistic transformation of human possibilities. Due to globalization, there is no more 'exoticism', but the recuperation of traditional techniques and new materials and technologies.

Dependent on *environment* as theoretical totality, the Contemporary landscape experience is internally structured by the aesthetic experience of the Modern totality of beings, although aware of environmental problematics and able to use contemporary instruments. The Contemporary aesthetic experience of landscape enlarges modern openness to include eccentric and distant regions and territories, to explore the deep sea or extra-terrestrial environments, but also to explore the topological supports of modernity, such as historic cities, obsolete industries, slums, and traditional agricultural *terroirs*.

Operating from an implicit totality, Contemporary landscape experiences transform equally and simultaneously human and non-humans, rituals and common actions, techniques and knowledges into subjects and objects that are observed. These processes objectify the suppositions of the landscapes and lead to the *culturalization,* not just of pieces of art, monuments and gardens, but of entire regions and populations, which are transformed into "cultural landscapes".

The sense of freedom that is present in the Contemporary experience of landscape is no longer the connection between individuals and a powerful God, but the epistemological freedom of scientists, explorers, laboratory workers, and specialists, without the institutional constrains of the scientific *ethea*. In tourism, for instance, the formal regulations of scientific methodologies can be found, without the accuracy and standard rigidity of experiment protocols and specimen collections.

Enlarging the emotional dimension of the Modern observer, the Contemporary experiment leads to an *aesthetification* of the contents of the experiences, an obsessive need to fix and make public the moments of every

experience, by technological means. Sociologically, it is no longer a restricted experiment of individuals who are intellectually and socially differentiated – scientists, aristocrats, military officials, or clericals – but has been enlarged to extended groups of adventurers, travellers, or tourists – "average people". Integrated in the economic dynamic, the aesthetic experience of landscape includes a diversity of activities, from the *promenade* undertaken by urban or suburban people in nearby mountains to long-distance leisure travels, all named "tourism" – an extreme transformation of the archaic *theorein*.

Exploring the topologies of Modern theoretical totality, the Contemporary concern with urban landscapes and the experience of walking can be seen as a reaction to distant travels and the globalization of tourism. As the veiled supports of *universus*, as Ritter pointed out, historical cities emerge as places characterized by a living obsolescence, suspended from contemporary transformation and conflicts, as if they were somehow separated from the historical, economic, and technological dynamics.

Contemporary tourists seem also to be updating the alternatives founded by Modern epistemologies, as can be seen in the relevance of walking. Walking is a way of experiencing the sense of evidence that characterizes the Modern sense of knowledge, to be able to act and judge on a 'human' scale. Although not a virtual experience, walking is a *reverie*, a waking dream; the walker can choose to be, even without knowing the philosophical characteristics of these Modern thinkers, a Cartesian looking for evidence, a tolerant Lockean, a meditative Rousseauean, or a skeptical Humean. Contemporary observers use updated instruments, such as digital cameras and geo-localization systems, but appreciate the physical experience of "culture", the experience of embodiment, the body's effort for its own sake, by participating in activities such as trekking, biking or obsolete techniques and crafts that have been revived.

5.

Here we must return to our starting questions about the entities of architecture. Considered from the standpoint of figures of implicit totality, Architecture is intrinsically related to the ethos, although it has emerged, consolidated and been an instrument of the other figures. In architectural buildings, the ethos

appears in the most general sense, but always as a particular ethos, that grants the unifying articulations of processes, products and performances. Following Siza Vieira, the ethos gives meaning to the heroic efforts of the authentic builders, is recognized 'in a silent applause' and concedes a serene happiness. What, then, are the implications of the Contemporary totalities to the ethos, and, ultimately, to Architecture as a discipline?[47]

As we have mentioned already, there is an indifference of the ethos towards Architecture. Although Architecture as discipline emerged in different civilizations – in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Greece and Mesoamerica – and anthropological studies have attested to the sophistication of vernacular architecture and traditional techniques of dwellings in a range of diverse cultures,[48] the ethos is not concerned with the technicality and formality of the building, with its authorship and aesthetics, nor with the "quality of living" of the dwellers. A large majority of dwellings are not designed by architects, architects do not control their building, and are ignored by architectural criticism.

However, the historicity of the theoretical totalities and of the aesthetic experience of totality does affect Architecture, both as a discipline and a practice. The transformation of architects from being considered *demiourgos* to technicians precedes the thematization of *kosmos* as a theoretical totality,[49] and the accumulative expertise of the medieval masons has been transformed into the techno-scientific competences of Modern architects. Balancing between Beaux-Arts and Engineering, Architecture was perceived in the Modern Age as a political and economic instrument, capable simultaneously of materializing the imaginary and realizing extensive social reforms. Connecting the three figures of totality we have described, Architecture was able to articulate "project and utopia"[50] and to make real the "Nihilist metaphysics" of a general standardization of dwellings.[51]

[47] On the transformation of Architecture in Modern Age, see Alberto Pérez-Gomez, *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science*, Cambridge (Mass.): MIT, 1983.

[48] A. Rapoport, (ed.), *The Mutual Interaction of People and Their Built Environment*, The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1976.

[49] I. McEwen, *Socrates' Ancestor*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996, p. 75.

[50] M. Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia. Design and Capitalist Development*, Cambridge, (MASS.): MIT Press, 1976.

[51] M. Cacciari, *Architecture and Nihilism: On Philosophy of Modern Architecture*, New Haven:

Architectural Modernism can be understood as the application to the ethos of the *universus*' onticity and alethicity, while the crisis of the Modern Movement after 1950, and the posterior emergence of Postmodernism can be considered as a consequence of the alteration of dominance from *universus* to *environment*, a process that took different directions: to an internal modification of Modernism through dialogue with localism and regional cultures; to the *de-construction* of Modernity by an aesthetic *ludus* with architectural operations and theories; and to a techno-capitalist architecture that self-regulates and integrates in the building environment the demands of sustainability.[52] No more historically originated in the past, as in Modernity, Contemporary Architecture deals with the mutual implications of Biology, Communication, and Economics, as the environmental implications of building can be discovered, but it also deals with the aesthetic value of "biological" designs, or the communicative relevance of iconic buildings and the "brandisation" of the architectural profession.[53]

The environment as theoretical totality has meant the recognition of limitations, a general sense of coordination, and a concern towards ecology. This orientation can also be seen directing its attention to the intrinsic quality of the materials, to the atmospheres design can create, and to the reuse of traditional techniques. However, there is also a general transformation of scales and references, *an immanentization* of culture, and a *cosmopolitization* of information that seems to make more difficult and rare that singular unifying moment in which the ethos is revealed.

Yale University Press, 1995.

[52] For a similar analysis of Contemporary Architecture, see G. Caicco, "Introduction", in *Id*. (ed.) *Architecture, Ethics, and the Personhood of Place*, Hanover: University Press of New England, 2007, pp. 1-38. For a contrasting, analytic perspective: Saul Fisher, "Philosophy of Architecture", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/architecture/>. Saul Fisher, "How to Think About the Ethics of Architecture"; Warwick Fox (ed.), *Ethics and the Built Environment*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 170-182; For an ontological and phenomenological approach: Martin Heidegger, 1951, "Building, dwelling, thinking", in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadtertrans, New York: Harper and Row, 1975, pp. 145-161. Karsten Harries, 1997, *The Ethical Function of Architecture*, Cambridge (MASS.): The MIT Press.

[53] A. Klingmann, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy*, Cambridge (MASS.): MIT Press, 2007.

Besides, we can recognize in Contemporaneity the rising of a new sense of landscape, marked by the omnipresence of the net, the internet of things and the incorporation of interactive techniques that implicate virtual information with sensorial perception. These new experiences emerge from the generalization of prosthetics, implants and devices that alter perception, memory and physical capacities.

However, behind the configurations by the figures of totality, the ethos maintains its indifference. As in the Contemporary theoretical totality convergence of past and future in the present, the present of the ethos is unredeemable, always ambiguously present, as T. S. Eliot said in the opening of *Four Quartets*.[54] Which instance accepts all the efforts, prevails and guides forms and materials, giving in return moments of serenity and congratulation?

The multiple decisions the ethos contains, prevails over and pervades are bringing us face to face with an enigmatic presence, a presence of an indeterminable instance in the particular, concrete presence. What is that instance? The thought of Emmanuel Lévinas helps us to name it as Infinity.

In his *Totalité et Infini*,[55] Lévinas denounced the tendency in Ontology to reduce the beings in a totality to neutral entities, opposing to this the quality of ethic subjects, which are Others, irreducible to an ontological Same. The Otherness appears in an ethical relation in the *face* of the interlocutor, his singularity revealing the Infinity. The Other, who "remains infinitely transcendent, infinitely foreign",[56] is not a strict phenomenon, but an enigma, a borderline phenomenon between the visible and the invisible, the *said* and the s*aying,* the past and the present. [57]

Here lies the difficulty, the face cannot be schematized, reduced to an absent *said* without a betrayal, a *praeterization* of the present; the enigma of the face persists and asks for recognition and justice, for our responsibility

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[54] T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, New York: Harcourt, 1943: Quartet I, Burnt Norton. "Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future/ And time future contained in time past. […] All present is unredeemable […]"

[55] E. Lévinas, *Totalité et infini. Essai sur l'extériorité,* La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961. English edition *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority,* trans. by A. Lingis, Pittsburgh (PA): Duquesne University Press, 1969.

[56] *Ibid*., p. 194.

[57] E. Lévinas "Enigma and Phenomenon" (1965), first published as "Enigma et Phénomène", *Esprit* 33:6 (June 1965): 1128-42, in *Basic Philosophical Writings*, p. 73.

towards Infinity.

Bringing this dimension to our reflection on the ethos, the unredeemable present turns every ethos into an infinite presence that sustains, pervades, and guides materials, forms and experiences, as it faces that call for recognition and justice. Like in Anaximander's *kosmos,* these faces are indefinitely put together in adjustments and constraints.

Can this centrality of infinity at the core of dwelling be translated in the ethos? Can we face the Other in such immediate and multiple presences, or will we find, as Eliot's poem indicates, that "humankind cannot bear very much reality"?[58]

We have to consider, not just facing infinity, but also assuming infinity, not just being towards infinity, but incorporating infinity, not just in the subjectivities of the dwellers, but in materials, techniques, and things.

Again the philosophical word will help us, as we must consider another thinker, the Portuguese philosopher José Marinho, who published his major work, *Teoria do Ser e da Verdade*[59] in the same year as *Totalité et Infini*. Also a phenomenologist, an "onto-pneumo-phenomenologist" as he called himself, Marinho chose to follow a tradition not rooted in Husserl and Heidegger, but in Spinoza and in Idealism, and proposed a new understanding of the internal life of the Spirit, which overcame the distinction of immanence and transcendence. For him, Being and Truth are enigmatic, as is the union of Being and Truth, as well as their infinite scission. It is this union and scission that makes every being enigmatic. The authentic life of the Spirit is existentially and concretely present in every moment, as "what unifies, divides, what divides, unifies", or, as *Teoria* explained in detail, "what instantly unifies, infinitely divides, what infinitely divides, absolutely unifies".[60]

The architect as the philosopher must face and interrogate such an enigmatic situation and assume the responsibility to detect, support, and incorporate the extreme intensity of the enigmatic scission. Important for the

[58] T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, "[…] Then a cloud passed, and the pool was empty./ Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children, / Hidden excitedly, containing laughter./ Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind/ Cannot bear very much reality […]."

[59] J. Marinho, *Teoria do Ser e da Verdade*, Lisboa: Guimarães Ed., 1961. Critical edition, *Obras de José Marinho*, Vol. IX, 3 tomes. Ed. Jorge Croce Rivera, Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2009-2016.

[60] *Ibid*., p. 165.

ethos is the rhythmical articulation of unification and scission, the centrality of "infinite scissions" at the core of existence, between the instant and the absolute, as unifiers.

As far as architecture is concerned, in our interpretation of the ethos, with liminal differences that simultaneously separate and join, the crucial moment of the infinite scissions means the possibility of a revelation that involves processes, products and performances.

At the extreme of the scission, it is not just human awareness that demands recognition and responsibility, but also the materials, forms and shapes, things and memories that expect a revelation, mutual comprehension and a liberating justice.

LANDSCAPE AND THE UNSUSTAINABLE URBAN REALM

Augustin Berque

城 ***chéng***
1. 城牆：万里長～。2. 城市、都市：～郷互助。
(1. Wall: *the Great* ～. 2. City: ～ *and country help each other*).
*Xinhua zidian*新華字典 (*New Dictionary of Sinograms*), 1988.

City (Ville)
It is an enclosure closed by walls
containing several wards,
streets, public squares and other edifices.
Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné
des sciences, des arts et des métiers, 1765.

1. "Unsustainable", but still?

Let me first recall an anecdote, concerning the ten-year (2001-2010) international research project *L'habitat insoutenable / Unsustainability in human settlements.* Its first publication was a collective book entitled *La Ville insoutenable* (*The Unsustainable City*).[1] This title expressed in fact the contrary of what was meant by the content of the book. In the intention of said

[1] A. Berque, Ph. Bonnin, C. Ghorra-Gobin (eds.), *La Ville insoutenable* (*The unsustainable city*), Paris: Belin, 2006. This first book was followed by four other ones: A. Berque et S. Suzuki (eds.), *Nihon no sumai ni okeru fûdosei to jizokusei* 日本の住まいに於ける風土性と持続性 (*Mediance and sustainability in Japanese settlements*), Kyôto: Nichibunken, 2007; A. Berque, Ph. Bonnin, A. de Biase (eds.), *L'habiter dans sa poétique première* (*Inhabiting as a primary poetics*), Paris: Donner lieu, 2008; A. Berque, N. Frogneux, B. Stadelmann, S. Suzuki (eds.), *Être vers la vie. Ontologie, biologie, éthique de l'existence humaine* (*Being toward life. Ontology, biology, ethics of human existence*), Tokyo: Maison franco-japonaise (*Ebisu* n°40-41), 2009; A. Berque, Ph. Bonnin, A. de Biase (eds.), *Donner lieu au monde. La poétique de l'habiter* (*Giving place to a world. The poetics of habitation*), Paris: Donner lieu, 2010.

project, 'unsustainability' was not understood as that of the city, but on the contrary, as that of what, after various approximations, we eventually came to call 'l'urbain diffus', the diffuse urban realm;[2] that is, something quite different from a city in the traditional acceptation of that word, such as that noted in the first edition (1906) of the *Petit Larousse*: "gathering of a great number of houses disposed along streets";[3] different, all the more so, from what was intended in the 18th century by Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, and which corresponds rather to what we would today call a stronghold, behind its walls, which isolate and distinguish it sharply from the surrounding countryside. For these same reasons in Chinese, it is the sinogram *chéng* 城 (wall, as in *Cháng Chéng* 長城, the Great Wall) which has historically represented the city. From one side to the other of the Ancient World, it is that which defined the city, categorically opposing the space within the walls (*intra muros*) to that without the walls (*extra muros*). On the contrary, the diffuse urban realm erases this millenary distinction; and it is precisely this new form of settlement, not the city in its traditional definition, which we deemed to be unsustainable. In sum, that meant exactly the opposite of what the title *The Unsustainable City* let one surmise. This title, in fact, was only chosen for commercial reasons by the publisher; but paradoxically – in fact, exactly in accordance with that which the title of the book expressed! –, those reasons were indeed related with the intention of the programme, namely with the intention to ascertain the motivations which have led a majority of people to idealize a detached house in the leafy countryside, instead of living 'within the walls'.

What was the matter about, really? The idea of launching such a research programme came to me one day of spring 2000, as I was staying in Japan to teach *fûdoron* 風土論 (mesology in Watsuji's sense, which corresponds to *Umweltlehre* in Uexküll's sense)[4] at Miyagi University, on the

[2] A translation of course inspired by Melvin M. Webber, "The Urban Place and the Non-Place Urban Realm", in *Explorations into Urban Structure* ed. Webber *et al*., University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964.

[3] *Assemblage d'un grand nombre de maisons disposées par rues.*

[4] With the difference that Uexküll's mesology concerns the living in general (especially animals), whereas Watsuji's concerns the human in particular; but the principle is the same. See Augustin Berque, *La mésologie, pourquoi et pour quoi faire ?* (*Mesology, why and what for*?), Nanterre La Défense: Presses universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2014.

Northern fringe of the agglomeration of Sendai. The majority of my students were architects. It was about the time when city planners in Japan in general, and particularly in Sendai, were beginning to seriously question urban sprawl, and talk about 'compact cities'. It goes without saying that this historical turn was one of the favourite topics of the discussions I had with the students. As most of them had grown up in the indefinite suburbs of the megalopolis, they generally had some difficulty in conceiving what the deuce was represented by the neologism *konpakuto shitî* (*compact city*). What they were dreaming of was something like the return-to-the-land movement of the generation of '68 in France, or more directly the utopia born among the Beat Generation and hippie communities of the West Coast in the sixties (the transpacific link having been established by Gary Snyder, who lived several years in Japan, and was an ardent propagator of Zen in California). And just like this utopia did, it begot a cocktail of 'return to nature / digital technology'. In this way, instead of compact cities, the majority of my students saw the future on the internet, which, they said, was to allow a synthesis of technical progress and the love of nature proper to Japanese tradition.[5] One could live in the wilderness, while working and shopping from a distance thanks to the net; and thus one could, at last, be 'kind to the Planet' (*chikyû ni yasashii* 地球に優しい).

Belonging to another generation, I did not see the relation between the Planet and Humanity in the same way. Accordingly, I concocted for my students, as a written test, the following question, which I later called 'the parable of the tôfu deliverer' (which, in Oxon, could easily be rendered as the 'parable of the milkman'):

> Take a traditional city, where one hundred buyers go on foot to buy their tôfu at the street corner. Then, take that type of settlement which you idealize, where each of these hundred buyers lives in an isolated house in the wilderness, respectively at the end of one hundred roads. They order on the net their hundred boxes of tôfu. To deliver these, you need one hundred trucks, or two hundred trips of one same truck on the hundred roads. Now, calculate, in either case, the ecological footprint of one pound of tôfu, and evaluate which type of settlement respects nature better.

[5] On this theme, see my books *Japan. Nature, artifice and Japanese culture*, Yelvertoft Manor: Pilkington Press, 1997 (*Le sauvage et l'artifice*, 1986) and *Japan. Cities and social bonds*, Yelvertoft Manor: Pilkington Press, 1997 (*Du Geste à la cité*, 1993).

Such was, in spring 2000, the starting point of the project *Unsustainability in human settlements.* This being an international project,[6] it was opened with a paper in English.[7] The English 'unsustainability' was of course intended to evoke the expression 'sustainable development', internationally known since the famous Bruntland Report of 1987, *Our common future*. Yet the French idiom more generally says 'durable' here, rather than 'soutenable' in this sense, which consists essentially in not altering the capacity of the biosphere to maintain its equilibrium in the long term. Then why did the French version say 'habitat insoutenable', not 'habitat non durable'? Because the French 'insoutenable' has some connotations which cannot be limited to ecology. Witness its definition in the first edition of the *Petit Larousse*: "False, that cannot be held or defended: ~*opinion* That cannot be borne: ~*pride*". In my mind, speaking of a 'habitat insoutenable' did not only imply a disproportionate ecological footprint, it applied clearly to a certain ideology, judged to be false and unbearable.

Which ideology? First, precisely, an *ideology*, that is a mythical discourse, not something natural or matter-of-fact. Now, that ideology, as Roland Barthes had shown before in his *Mythologies*,[8] essentially consists in exalting 'nature', nature in its essence, which is the natural meant as the contrary of what results from human work, i.e. the artificial, and which, thus, eternalizes the present state of things by justifying it as a natural *necessity*, instead of historicizing it, that is, acknowledging its *contingency.*

In this instance, this myth expresses itself in the image we have of *the ideal abode: a detached house close to nature.* For decades, with a surprising regularity, opinion polls have shown that eight French people out of ten

[6] Which, cumulatively, engaged one hundred researchers from a dozen countries, from East to West: Japan, Korea, China, Australia, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, France, Brazil, Canada and the United States.

[7] Which, after having been sent on the net from Sendai, was later published in Europe: Augustin Berque, "Unsustainability in human settlements. General argument and personal project: Research on the history of disurbanity. Hypotheses and first data", in Gijs Wallis De Vries et Wim Nijenhuis (dir.), *The Global city and the territory*, Eindhoven: Eindhoven University of Technology, 2001, pp. 33-41; and "On the Chinese origins of Cyborg's hermitage in the absolute market", *ibid.*, pp. 26-32. The French version was published under the title "L'habitat insoutenable. Recherche sur l'histoire de la désurbanité", *L'Espace géographique* XXXI (2002): 3, 241-251.

[8] Paris: Seuil, 1957.

would opt for that form of settlement, if they had the possibility to choose. This regularity leads one to conclude that this is due to a natural bent, which *ipso facto* entails a justification of the system which has produced the diffuse urban realm.

The problem is that, in the diffuse urban realm, exalting 'nature' (as a representation) entails the destruction of its very object: nature (as the biosphere), by overconsuming terrestrial space and resources. 'Nature' kills nature. How could we surmount this aporia? The idea which guided the project was to *re-historicize that which the myth had dehistoricized*; that is, to trace the genealogy of this representation: the ideal of the detached house close to nature.

The subtitle of the initial argument was effectively "Research on the history of disurbanity". Why the neologism, 'disurbanity'? Because said phenomenon – the diffuse urban realm –, in my mind, was not only a problem of land use and regional development; it also concerned the social link, that is the capacity of humans to live together. In this sense, it was also a problem of ethics. It is not by chance that the word 'urbanity', which through its etymology proceeds directly from the idea of city (*urbs*) means first "the character or quality of being urbane, courtesy, refinement, or elegance of manners" (*Oxford shorter*).

In addition, from the very fact that urbanity is defined first as a capacity of living sociably, it is a *social capital*; which leads to the vocabulary of economics. However, as I wrote in my argument,

> I employ here this locution in a broader sense than its ordinary use in economics. The social capital of the city is not only constituted with collective material equipments and goods (such as sewage, buses etc.), but also with the social relations which found urbanity, thus enabling humans to live numerously in a common space (the city). Correlatively, I understand *disurbanity* as a squandering of this capital, which is both physical and moral.

Considering the diffuse urban realm as a process of disurbanity was thus much more than a problem of sustainability in the ecological sense, that is as a question of *environment*; it was a problem of sustainability in the *mesological* sense, involving the two terms of that which is called in mesology the *medial relationship*: not the sole environment as an object, but also that being for which this *Umgebung* (these raw environmental data) becomes an *Umwelt*

(the milieu proper to that being), in a process which reciprocally transforms that being itself. And in the diffuse urban realm, it was precisely that reciprocal process, becoming for that reason also an ontological problem, which I postulated to be unsustainable.

It goes without saying that such a perspective was too complex to be assumed by all the participants of the project, which federated a great number of varied approaches, which all, nonetheless, agreed that the diffuse urban realm had an unsustainable ecological footprint in the long run. Our collective publications displayed that diversity, but there is no room here to draw a general picture of all these approaches. I shall limit the topic to some of the principles which I could define in my own interpretation, such as it took shape at the end of the project,[9] together with a few more recent considerations.

2. Mesological principles

2a – *In the contingency of history and in the concrescence of the ecumene*

My general point of view being that of mesology – the study of living milieux (*Umweltlehre*), especially that of human milieux (*fûdoron* 風土論) –, my starting point was the founding principle of this perspective as defined by Uexküll[10] and Watsuji:[11] the *Umwelt* is not the *Umgebung*, the *fûdo* 風土 is not the *shizen kankyô* 自然環境, the milieu is not the natural environment. Environment is an object, abstracted by science (ecology in the first place) from subjective Being, whereas milieu is *the reality concretely lived by a certain subject*, individual or collective, living in general or human in particular. Accordingly, the founding condition of milieu is the subjecthood or selfhood of the being under consideration. Milieu, then, cannot be dissociated from

[9] Augustin Berque, *Histoire de l'habitat idéal, de l'Orient vers l'Occident* (*A History of the ideal abode, from East to West*), Paris: Le Félin, 2010.

[10] Jakob von Uexküll, *Streifzüge durch die Umwelten von Tieren und Menschen* (*Forays into the milieux of animals and humans*), Hambourg: Rowohlt, 1956 (1934). Translated by Joseph D. O'Neil as *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans, with A Theory of Meaning* (UMinn Press, 2011).

[11] Watsuji Tetsurô, *Fûdo. Ningengakuteki kôsatsu* (*Milieu. A study of the human interlink*), Tokyo: Iwanami, 1935. The English translation is a very bad one and should be avoided; refer rather to the Spanish, the German or, better still, the French version: *Fûdo, le milieu humain*, Paris: CNRS, 2011.

the existence of that being. The same principle applies to the *ecumene*, which is the sum of human milieux, or the relation of Humankind with the Earth.[12] Whereas, in the case of the sciences of the environment, there is a *pause on the object* (*arrêt sur objet*), for mesology there is a *concrescence* (growing together, common becoming)[13] between the concerned being and its proper milieu. A milieu is that *medial relationship* (*relation médiale*), which is necessarily temporal as well as it is spatial: milieu gives history its flesh, while history gives milieu its sense, conditioning by that very fact the Being of the subject itself.[14]

This amounts to saying that the proposed research was not only a positive inquiry, but also a matter of *hermeneutical phenomenology.* It did not consist in a history of the environment as the object of ecology, but in a history of the meaning of a certain medial relationship, implying unitarily the two abstract poles of the subject and the object into one and the same concrete, *eco-techno-symbolic* reality, embodied in that case in certain forms of settlement and animated by the purport of these forms; a purport which, at the same time, was the purpose of the concerned subjects. Owing to these reasons, such forms elude the reach of mechanicism as well as that of functionalism, which are limited to the object; they are *contingent like history itself*, which means that they neither result from mere chance (anything anywhere at any time) nor from necessity (always and everywhere the same thing). These contingent forms, in other cases, might indeed differ from what they are in a given case, but they are what they are owing to a certain history and a certain milieu. In other words, *these forms are never 'natural'.*

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[12] Augustin Berque, *Écoumène. Introduction à l'étude des milieux humains* (*Ecumene. Introduction to the study of human milieux*), Paris: Belin, 2000.

[13] Let us remember that *concretus* (concrete) comes from the past participle of *cum crescere*, grow together.

[14] Concerning the living in general, this mesological perspective is practically close to that of what is now known as *evolutionary ecology*, which postulates that the evolution of a given being depends on that of other beings, meaning that the environment is not passive, as it is in the classical Darwinian view. Yet there remains an essential difference with mesology, in that ecology neglects the subjecthood of the concerned beings, which is rather a matter of ethology and biosemiotics. On this point, see Augustin Berque, *Poétique de la Terre. Histoire naturelle et histoire humaine, essai de mésologie* (*Poetics of the Earth. Natural history and human history, a mesological essay*), Paris: Belin, 2014.

2b – *Landscape motivation* (motivation paysagère)

It appeared straightaway that landscape had been one of the main leitmotifs of the above history: the form of settlement which it has idealized is *the little house in the landscape.* This ideal was almost literally illustrated, in the 20th century, by the success of *Little House on the Prairie*, the long series which started in 1932 as Laura Ingalls Wilder's saga, before it reigned on NBC from 1974 to 1982 and, from thereon, pretty much everywhere on the television channels of the whole planet. The cover of the first volume of Wilder's series showed the thing in its essence: namely, the *log cabin* of the pioneer in North America. Yet, though it owes much to the United States, this motif is in fact much older. Before it became the ultimate in our suburbs, where the detached house includes a small garden *ek-sisting* in the *dismeasurable* (*démesurables*)[15] dimensions of landscape, one of its avatars was that 'delicious house' (*maison délicieuse*) of which Abbot Laugier, in his *Essay on architecture,* made the following eulogy:

> I wish that he who gave us this charming description would give us the real plan of this delicious house. Probably this plan would provide us with a good model, and by making an ingenuous blend of Chinese ideas with ours, we would succeed in designing gardens where nature would be found back with all its charms.[16]

What was Laugier speaking of? Of the description which Father Attiret, a Jesuit employed by the Chinese emperor in the laying-out of the Yuanmingyuan (the "garden of perfect clarity") had made of one of the

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[15] See Bernard Lassus, *Jardins imaginaires. Les Habitants paysagistes* (*Imaginary gardens. Inhabitants as landscape designers*), Paris: Weber. Of these "habitants paysagistes", a theme he created, Lassus writes: "Yet if the forest has been sold in plots, and the houses or factories have been built, the few trees preciously conserved around the buildings indicate that they are the relics of a vanished wood. Thanks to them, some inhabitants forget the buildings which have destroyed the forest and elaborate progressions from the vegetal to the mineral. Most often, the forest has disappeared in the mesh of the enclosures which separate the houses, and some inhabitants then suggest the vegetal incommensurable by setting a doe and a few dwarfs on a lawn. To this suggested incommensurable, we gave the name 'the dismeasurable' (*le démesurable*)" (p. 74).

[16] Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture* (*Essay on architecture*), Paris: Duchesne, 1753, pp. 281-282.

fabrics of that garden in a famous letter (let us note that a *fabric* is not a real house, whereas the expression 'delicious house' in Laugier's text makes one believe it is). The letter was published in France in 1743, and translated into English in 1749. It resounded profoundly in a Europe in which the classical age was fading out and romantic sensitivity was germinating. One might readily believe that one is reading the argument describing the Petit Trianon as the opposite of Versailles:

> Everything follows this principle: it is a rustic and natural countryside which one intends to represent, a solitude, not a palace well arrayed according to all the rules of symmetry and ratio. […] One would think […] that everything is placed at random and afterwards; that one piece has not been made for the other. [17]

What Attiret epitomizes here is none other than the landscape ideal of the scholar's garden, *wénrén yuán* 文人園, that antithesis of the cosmological order of the city, the orthogonal geometry of which reigned without the walls of the garden. This landscape ideal as opposed to the city has a precise history. It was born from the myth of the *landscape hermitage* which mandarin scholars, those self-proclaimed anchorites, construed at the epoch of the Six Dynasties (3rd-6th c.), while at the same time inventing the notion of landscape:[18] *shānshǔi* 山水.

2c – *The 'as' of reality*

The word *shānshǔi* is composed of the two elements *shān* 山 (mountain) and *shǔi* 水 (water, here meaning 'river').[19] Each of these elements exists of course from time immemorial in the Chinese language. The compound *shānshǔi*, however, appears only at the epoch of the Warring States (5th-3rd c. BC), signifying 'waters of the mountain', i.e. torrents, in the vocabulary of the engineers who were in charge of flood control and irrigation. Nothing

[17] Quoted in Jean-Pierre Le Dantec, *Jardins et paysages* (*Gardens and landscapes*), Paris: Larousse, 1996, p. 164.

[18] That this notion did not exist in the Roman Empire (or elsewhere in the world) can be ascertained by making use of seven precise criteria, which I discuss at length in *Thinking through landscape*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2013.

[19] More on what follows in my *Thinking through landscape*.

to do with aesthetics: for many centuries to come, this word was absent from poetry. It appears there for the first time about 300 AD in a poem by Zuo Si, still with the acceptation of torrent, but from thereon with positive aesthetic connotations, e.g. in this verse: *shānshǔi yǒu qīng yīn* 山水有清音, "mountain waters have a pure sound". Now, this poem became so famous among scholars that, toward the middle of the century, the positive connotation of the word *shānshǔi* had spread from the domain of hearing to that of seeing. In other words, this word did not mean only 'mountain waters' (torrent), but from thereon 'mountains and waters' in the sense of 'landscape'. We have written evidence of this change in the poems which were written on the occasion of a famous banquet held at the Pavilion of Orchids (Lanting), in the famous calligrapher Wang Xizhi's domain, on the 3rd day of the 3rd month of 353.

From thereon, mountains and waters had begun to *exist* (*ek-sist*) *as landscape*; and less than one century later, around 440, the painter Zong Bing could effectively write his famous essay, the first in this genre in human history, *Introduction to landscape painting* (*Huà shānshǔi xù* 畫山水序). By the way, as an aspect of the project *Unsustainability in human settlements*, detailing this *assumption of the environment as landscape* was to confirm the principle which has driven the doctoral school "Jardin, paysage, territoire" (Garden, landscape, territory) since its foundation by Bernard Lassus at the School of Architecture of Paris-La Villette in 1991. Indeed, according to that 'mouvance de La Villette' (sphere of influence of La Villette), as it came to be known,[20] *landscape is not the environment.* Environment there is always and everywhere, but landscape as such appeared at a certain time in history in a certain region of China (Jiangnan), which is to say in a certain milieu. This indisputable historical fact cannot be accounted for by the ill-named 'landscape ecology', since what this science deals with is not landscape, but (the objective form of) the environment. What the deuce is landscape? An aspect of a medial relationship, as such contingent, and as such non-seizable by

[20] Following its collective publications, in particular the last two: A. Berque (ed.), *Cinq propositions pour une théorie du paysage* (*Five proposals for a theory of landscape*), Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1994; *Id., La Mouvance. Du jardin au territoire, cinquante mots pour le paysage* (*The Mouvance. From garden to territory, 50 words for landscape*), Paris: Éditions de la Villette, 1999; *Id., Mouvance II. Du jardin au territoire, soixante-dix mots pour le paysage* (*Mouvance II. From garden to territory, 70 words for landscape*), Paris: Éditions de la Villette, 2006.

dualism – the dichotomy of subject and object which founded modern science, e.g. ecology. Indeed, just like the milieu, landscape is neither properly objective, nor properly subjective; it is *trajective.*

Mutatis mutandis, this trajectivity of landscape had already been sensed by the first landscape poet, Xie Lingyun (385-433). Landscape is not the environment in itself, nor is it a mere projection of one's subjectiveness onto the environment; it is a certain relationship that one concretely has with the environment. This is what is expressed by the following lines, which, for this reason, I deem to be *the birth certificate of landscape*:

情用賞為美	*Qíng yòng shǎng wéi měi*	Feeling, with taste, makes beauty
事昧竟誰辨	*Shì mèi jìng shéi biàn*	An obscure thing until it is discerned
觀此遺物慮	Guān cǐ yí wù lǜ	Forgetting at this view mundane worries
一悟得所遣	*Yì wǔ dé sǔo qiǎn*	Having sensed it, one can indulge in it [21]

And from thereon, having sensed the environment *as* landscape, one could indulge in the beauty of landscape as such. Now, this 'sensing as' is none other than the principle of the trajective reality which is that of human milieux (and of living milieux in general); that is, the fruit of a *trajection* which, through the senses, action, thought and language, assumes and qualifies environmental data (the *Umgebung*) *as something* (*als etwas*, as Heidegger would have put it)[22], something which belongs to four great *mesological categories*: resources, constraints, risks, and amenities. This trajection is analogous to a predication in logic: the environmental data are here in

[21] These are the last lines of a long poem, *By Hill and Dale from Jingzhujian.* Jingzhujian (the torrent of Jingzhu) is located near Shaoxing, in mounts Guiji, where Xie Lingyun retired in his luxurious villa of Shining. Quoted by Obi Kôichi, *Sha Reiun, kodoku no sansui shijin* (*Xie Lingyun, the lonely poet of landscape*), Tokyo: Kyûko shoin, 1983, p. 179. I comment this poem at length in *Histoire de l'habitat idéal*, p. 102 ff.

[22] On this ontogenetical or *ek-sistential* function of *als*, see Martin Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik* (*The ground concepts of metaphysics*), Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1983, p. 358 ff.

the subject position (S, what the matter is about), and the aforementioned categories are in the predicate position (P, that which is said about S).[23] These four categories are declined in all sorts of *medial holds* (*prises médiales*); landscape is one of these. The relation S/P (S as P) is the trajective reality which is that of milieu, that is, concrete reality or reality *tout court.* Necessarily contingent and historical, this reality can be represented with the formula *r = S/P*, which reads: *reality is S as P.*

Once again *mutatis mutandis*, this is precisely what can be sensed in the first two lines cited above. The environment (S) is not beautiful in itself, it becomes such (it becomes landscape) only if, by means of a certain 'taste' (*shǎng* 賞), one 'makes it beautiful' (*wéi měi* 為美, P). And since 'this fact (in itself, S) is obscure' (*shì mèi* 事昧), it is necessary that 'someone discerns it' (*shéi biàn* 誰辨), in other words, that someone predicts it *as* something beautiful: landscape, and names it so (*biàn* 辨 also means 'say distinctly, argue, discuss').

2d – *The principle of Pan's cave, or: bumpkins do not know 'nature'*

The history of ideas[24] shows that the idea of landscape was born in the milieu of "studies of the obscure" (*Xuánxué* 玄学), under the influence of Taoism and, soon after, of Buddhism. The central concept of these studies was *zìrán* 自然, "self-so", in which the natural course of things and the innate tendency of a certain person converged. Nowadays, this word is synonymous with "nature" in European languages. Laozi's *Daodejing* employs it often, but, as in ancient Chinese there is no clear distinction between verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs, this word is not strictly speaking a substantive; rather it indicates a natural state, that of inartifice.

This *zìrán* was conceptualized in China at about the same time as *phusis* in Ionia. This is to say that, before that, 'nature' existed neither in China nor in Europe. In both cases, it is among scholars, that is in urban and urbane milieux, not in the country, that the concept appeared. True, those scholars

[23] Let us not forget that, in Aristotle, the word *katêgoria* means predicate or attribute, i.e. the qualities attributed to something which is there a subject in the logical sense (*hupokeimenon*). *Katêgoria* comes from *kata (tinos) agoreuô*, i.e. affirm something about something or somebody in public, in the *agora.* In the *Categories*, the *katêgoroumenon* is the predicate as opposed to the subject (the *hupokeimenon*).

[24] Details and references on this theme in *Histoire de l'habitat idéal*, and in my *Japan. Nature, artifice and Japanese culture*.

also generally being landowners, they often went to their estates; not to work the land themselves, but as a form of leisure. 'Nature' was, then, a privilege of the *leisure class*,[25] not something for peasants. This is what I call *the principle of Pan's cave* for the following reason:

Pan, the goat-footed god, was of Arcadian origin;[26] which corroborates this other name for Arcadia, *Pania*, 'Land of Pan', together with the fact that it is in this remote region of the Peloponnese that the most ancient traces of worship of this god were found.[27] Before symbolizing nature in the whole Graeco-Roman world, Pan was for a long time simply a god of shepherds, protecting their herds. In 490 BC,[28] a few days before the battle of Marathon, according to Herodotus, the herald Philippides, when leaving Tegea (in Arcadia), was hailed by the god Pan, who promised him to help the Athenians in their battle against the Persian army. Effectively, Pan spread *panic* among the Medes, ensuring the victory of the Greeks. On the field, Miltiades thanked him with an offering; but above all, the Athenians expressed their gratitude by instituting the cult of Pan in their own city. They installed him in a cave in the North-Western side of the Acropolis, below the Propylaea.[29] Other Greek cities then imitated Athens, and rather quickly, the cult of Pan spread throughout the whole Hellenic world.

What is more curious is that the Arcadians themselves used to build temples dedicated to Pan, just as they did for other gods. It was only in Athens, and afterwards, outside of Arcadia, in other cities imitating Athens, that Pan was put in a cave. Why such a different treatment? Because in Athens, the most refined of Greek cities, people already knew what 'nature' is, and because a cave feels more natural than a temple; whereas Arcadian shepherds, though living right in the middle of it, were too rustic to appreciate 'nature' *as such*. They did not know the predicate 'nature'.

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[25] Thorsten Veblen, *The Theory of the leisure class: an economic study of institutions,* New York: Macmillan, 1953 [1899].

[26] Here I follow Philippe Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan* (*Researches on the god Pan*), Genève: Droz, 1979, p. 73 and p. 15; and commenting Borgeaud, Nicole Loraux, *Né de la terre. Mythe et politique à Athènes* (*Born from the earth. Myth and politics in Athens*), Paris: Seuil, 1996, pp. 67-68.

[27] Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan*, p. 73 and p. 15.

[28] On what follows, see *ibid*., p. 195 ff.

[29] *Ibid*., p. 222.

2e – *The principle of Georgics, or the foreclosure of medial work*

The Arcadian myth was not construed by Arcadian shepherds, nor by the Greeks; rather it was the Romans who did so, in particular Virgil with his *Georgics*, written on command from Maecenas in order to incite veterans to relocate into the countryside after the naval victory of Octavius and Agrippa over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium, in 31 BC; e.g. the famous lines:

> *O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint*
> *agricolas ! quibus ipsa, procul discordibus armis,*
> *fundit humo facilem victum justissima tellus*.[30]

which let one believe that, in the countryside, finding one's sustenance was 'easy'. However, though this myth was deliberately created in Rome for political reasons, it had more ancient roots, which once again bring us back to Greece. Indeed, Virgil has directly transferred from Hesiod the theme of the "most just earth (who) pours forth from her soil an easy sustenance", and does this 'by herself' (*ipsa*). Indeed, eight centuries before, the latter had already written the following in his *Works and Days*:

Chruseon men prôtista genos [...]	Of gold was the first race […]
Karpon d'ephere zeidôros aroura	Spelt-giver earth bore fruit
Automatê pollon te kai aphthonon	by itself, numerously and to satiety.[31]

Here we find exactly the same motif: 'the earth' (*tellus*: *aroura*), 'by itself' (*ipsa: automatê*), that is without human toil, gives its fruits to humans. True, this wonderful generosity of nature, in Hesiod, is sent back to the Golden Age, in the nostalgia of a faraway past; but eight centuries later, Virgil locates it in the present. Of course mythically too; but with a precise political purpose: hiding the reality of peasant labour from the veterans.

Indeed, Virgil purposefully carries out this occultation of labour (which, at the time, was essentially provided by peasants and slaves); yet, what he does is only to spread one and the same myth, the logic of which subsumes his own inspiration; that is, for the leisure class, which possesses the land and writes

[30] "O all too fortunate are the farmers, if they but knew! which, far from the clash of arms, most just earth pours forth her soil an easy sustenance". Virgil, *Georgics,* II, 458-460.

[31] *Erga kai hêmêrai*, 109-118.

history, the labour of those who make it live must be foreclosed. This work is not deemed to exist, it must be tucked away in nature itself. The real relation with nature – the milieu – is elaborated by labour, but for the leisure class, it must be pure enjoyment, pure hedonism. It must be natural, not artificial.

This principle is that of the *foreclosure of medial work* (comprising not only human toil, but also that which nowadays is called 'ecosystem services'). And incidentally, though Hesiod himself was a peasant, he who wrote the following line must have had a premonition of that principle:

> *Krupsantes gar echousi theoi bion anthrôpoisi*
> For gods have hidden from humans that which makes them live[32]

3. Conclusion: the unsustainability of Cyborg's mythology

The greater part of physical work, nowadays, is carried out by machines. Compared with peasants and blue-collar workers, they not only have the advantage of being more powerful, but also of always being docile. With them, the foreclosure of medial work is perfect, giving us the illusion that nature will dispense its fruits to us ever more naturally. *Zìrán: self-so: by its own movement: automatê: ipsa: by itself*, and this all the more so as we become more mechanized. Witness this advertisement, which was spread over French media a dozen years ago:

> VOUS AIMEZ LA NATURE? PROUVEZ-LE LUI.
> NOUVEAU PAJERO 7 PLACES.[33]

…a commandment which one could read in a dawn sky, with an Aurora borealis over a lakeside landscape, in a picture representing a luxurious model of SUV, the Mitsubishi Pajero 3.5 V6 GDI.[34]

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[32] *Works and Days*, 42. *Bios* (life), which I translate here as "that which makes live", has indeed among its acceptations that of livelihood, resources. Note that in the previous citation, "the earth" is in Hesiod's text *aroura*, which means in fact "ploughed earth" (witness, from the same root *ar-*, *arable*, *hectare*, etc.), which of course is not consistent with *automatê*. The real earth is ploughed by human toil, but for the myth, it gives its fruits "by itself"…

[33] "You love nature? Prove it to her [nature is feminine in French]! New seven-seat Pajero".

[34] This advertisement was published, among others, in *Sciences et avenir*, november 2003, p. 15.

But to whom was this commandment addressed? To that being named Cyborg, whose existence cannot be dissociated from its machines. The idea of relating Cyborg with the diffuse urban realm is probably due to Antoine Picon,[35] but for him it was only an image, emphasizing the fact that this way of life necessitates the use of much machinery, including cars for starts. Now, from the point of view of mesology, it does not have the same meaning, since this *cyborgy*, so to speak, is the unsustainable reality of that which our mediance has become – *mediance* being that dynamic coupling of our animal body with our medial body (our eco-techno-symbolic milieu) which, on the one hand, Watsuji called *fûdosei* 風土性 and defined as "the structural moment of human existence" (*ningen sonzai no kôzô keiki* 人間存在の構造契機), and, on the other hand, in the case of living milieux in general, Uexküll called *Gegengefüge*, i.e. the "co-assembling" or coupling of an animal with its proper milieu (*Umwelt*). Indeed, the technical systems which are part of our medial body not only tend to autonomize themselves (as Leroi-Gourhan foreboded),[36] they also tend to mechanize us, in that feedback of the milieu on Being which works at the core of the medial relationship. And to begin with, they dictate our habitat:[37] the diffuse urban realm.

However, the matter does not only concern a mere technical determinism. As we have seen, it is also and above all a matter of mythology, that is, of symbolic systems. The history which we have just skimmed over begins in the West with the myth of the Golden Age, and in the East with its equivalent, the myth of the Great Identity (Dàtóng 大同),[38] both expressing a longing for those matrical times when humans and nature had not yet been separated by labour. In psychoanalytical terms, this labour is that of the woman in childbirth, which expels the little human out of the maternal womb; hence our *longing for the matrix*, the homologue of which (our longing for 'nature') motivates Cyborg in his diffuse urban realm. Owing

[35] Antoine Picon, *La Ville territoire des Cyborgs* (*The territory-city of Cyborgs*), Besançon: Les Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 1998.

[36] André Leroi-Gourhan, *Le Geste et la parole* (*Gesture and speech*), Paris: Albin Michel, 1964.

[37] One may remember this historical judgment due to President Georges Pompidou: "Paris must be adapted to the automobile". That was not only a matter of city planning, but an ontological principle: submitting the human abode to a mechanical system.

[38] On this theme, see *Histoire de l'habitat ideal*.

to the principle of the foreclosure of medial work, this myth later begot landscape, then the landscape garden, then the delicious house, then the suburbs of detached houses, then urban sprawl, to end with Cyborg's diffuse urban realm, the ecological footprint of which is now altering the climatic homeostasis of the Planet.[39] Mere words at the origin, and now that unsustainable telluric effect! How could that be possible?

To that question, I shall propose here, as a conclusion, two complementary answers, one general and in mesological terms; the other particular and referring to Roland Barthes's *Mythologies*:[40]

—In mesological terms, the above history – which traces a path from the mythic to the telluric – illustrates the process of trajection *r = S/P*, and more particularly that of the *trajective chain.* The formula *r = S/P* is only a snapshot, meaning that things are always trajective; but in fact, trajection is a process, necessarily temporal, in which the reality S/P is indefinitely re-predicated by new predicates P', P'', P''' etc., that is by new ways of interpreting reality. This trajective chain can be represented with the following formula: (((S/P)/P')/P'')/P'''… and so on. In other words, former predicates are indefinitely shifted into the position of new subjects S' (which is S/P), S'' (which is (S/P)/P')), etc. Now, as in the history of European thought, the relation subject/predicate in logic is homologous to the relation substance/accident in metaphysics, this means that little by little, at each new link of the trajective chain, the formerly unsubstantial predicate P is substantialized into S. It is hypostasized. And this indeed is what a trajective chain consists in: there is indefinitely an assumption of S as P, a hypostasis of S/P into S', and so on.

Is this purely formal? No. In the concrescence of real milieux, it is the very process of history. In the history which we just have seen, the initial data is nature; it is the *Umgebung*, in subject position S. This given S is interpreted as a certain reality S/P by the myth, which here is in predicate position P. Then this unsubstantial myth – words, words, words… – is progressively substantialized (hypostasized) into 'landscape': (S/P)/P', then into landscape gardens: ((S/P)/P')/P'', then into deliciously detached houses: (((S/P)/P')/P'')/P''', etc., to end with a physical transformation of the Earth itself in the Anthropocene...[41]

[39] What I summarize here in a few words is the content of *Histoire de l'habitat ideal*.

[40] Paris: Seuil, 1957.

[41] Such processes are detailed, with numerous concrete examples, in *Poétique de la Terre*.

—If trajective chains concern all the aspects of reality – taking S as something through our senses, action, thought and language –, in what concerns more particularly semiotic or semiological systems, they were anticipated by Peirce's idea of *semiosis* and Barthes's idea of *semiological chain* (*chaîne sémiologique*). Here I shall only comment on this second reference, because it relates directly with myth. What Barthes showed in his *Mythologies* is that a myth is a system of signs, a sign being defined as the relation of a signifier $S^{ā}$ (*signifiant*) and a signified $S^{é}$ (*signifié*). This relation is indefinitely 'doubled', which produces the myth in a chain where the former relation $S^{ā}/S^{é}$ (i.e. the sign) is shifted to the position of the signifier in relation with a new signified, and so on.

There is obviously an analogy here between semiological chains and trajective chains. The formula *sign* = $S^{ā}/S^{é}$ is homologous to the formula *reality* = *S/P*. In other words, the signifier is in subject position, the signified in predicate position, and the sign in the position of reality. One could even summarize Barthes's argument with the following formula: $(((S^{ā}/S^{é})/S^{é'})/S^{é''})/S^{é'''}$… and so on, exactly as in a trajective chain. Now, this is not only a formal analogy. It means first that the reality of concrete milieux always signifies something for the concerned beings; and indeed, as Uexküll showed – and this is what made him the forerunner of biosemiotics –, mesology (*Umweltlehre, fûdoron*) is necessarily also a *Bedeutungslehre* – a study of signification. It also means that in concrete milieux, reality is necessarily a blend of nature (S), history (S/P) and myth (P).

Indeed, this analogy between trajective and semiological chains means that time, from the point of view of mesology as well as from that of Barthes's semiology, indefinitely tends to naturalize human artifice. Barthes's analysis was limited to symbolic systems, but mesology, on the other hand, shows that in terms of trajection, this naturalization – this foreclosure of medial work – being eco-techno-symbolic, necessarily transforms the environment itself, the overall result being the Anthropocene. And this is how, in the unsustainable urban realm, 'nature' has come to kill nature.

PART TWO

THINK – II

The Right to Contemplate

THE AESTHETIC APPRECIATION OF LANDSCAPE

Kiyokazu Nishimura

1. The Concept of Landscape

When we talk about a rural or an urban landscape, 'landscape' means not pure nature, but a place that includes both the natural and the artificial, and is therefore an environment which we can look at, living within it, as a whole. Thus, as Allen Carlson says, "smell, touch, and taste, and even warmth and coolness, barometric pressure and humidity"[1] are also possibly relevant for the aesthetic appreciation of environments such as landscape. Yi-Fu Tuan, a phenomenological geographer who expressed "human emotional association with material environment" through the word "topophilia", describes the aesthetic experience of nature as follows:

> An Adult must learn to be yielding and careless like a child if he were to enjoy nature polymorphously. He needs to slip into old clothes so that he could feel free to stretch out on the hay beside the brook and bathe in a meld of physical sensations: the smell of the hay and of horse dung; the warmth of the ground, its hard and soft contours; the warmth of the sun tempered by breeze; the tickling of an ant making its way up the calf of his leg; the play of shifting leaf shadows on his face; the sound of water over the pebbles and boulders, the sound of cicadas and distant traffic. Such an environment might break all the formal rules of euphony and aesthetics, substituting confusion for order, and yet be wholly satisfying.[2]

What Tuan talks about here is the aesthetic enjoyment of a landscape as a certain place and its surroundings, consisting of many different natural objects and events, as well as artifacts. So, when it comes to the aesthetics of landscape, we should be asking what nature is, and what the aesthetic

[1] Allen Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 48.

[2] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1974, p. 96.

enjoyment of 'a meld of physical sensations' means.

Arnold Berleant also says that we step into the environment with our body and walk through it, and that "environment activates the entire range of our sensory capacities"[3], unlike works of the many arts in which one or two senses dominate our direct sensory experience. We are 'cultural animals', says Berleant, and environment is a complex idea: "the physical-cultural realm in which people engage in all the activities and responses that compose the weave of human life in its many historical and social patterns".[4] Despite this valid affirmation, Berleant insists on "the sense of nature, which does not differentiate between the human and the natural and which interprets everything as part of a single, continuous whole", and then reduces the human activity of art to "the natural process as people live it". Consequently, his concept of environment as 'the physical-cultural realm' is inclined to lead to a somewhat empty idea of 'nature itself', which includes us and yet transcends our human experiences. Here then arises the Kantian antinomy of the "cosmological idea" of nature, or "transzendente Naturbegriffe (transcendent concepts of nature)".[5]

David Hume referred to "the definition of the word Nature, than which there is none more ambiguous and equivocal."[6] In fact, what we experience in nature is, as Malcolm Budd says,[7] each kind of natural item (water, iron, insect, tree), each particular natural thing as an instance of a natural kind (earth, moon, mountains, rivers, individual dogs and horses), or each natural event caused by the operation of natural forces (sunrise, sunset, rainbow, wind, rain). And we usually oppose them to 'artifacts' produced by the human spirit. Moreover, people are inclined to think of pristine nature as an autonomous field that has been unchanged or unaffected by human agency, as opposed to the cultural world which humans produce and live in. But this binary opposition between 'pristine nature' and the human 'cultural world' is not sustainable. For we humans came into existence from nature,

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[3] Arnold Berleant, *The Aesthetics of Environment*, Philadelphia: Temple U. P., 1992, p. 28.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 20.

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Zweite Auflage, 1787, p. 448.

[6] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose, in 2 vols., London: Longmans, Green, And Co., 1874, vol. 2, p. 249.

[7] Malcolm Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature*, Oxford: Oxford U. P., 2002, p. 3. cf. p. 97.

our bodies are natural, and our lives and activities are woven into a certain ecological system and subjected to certain laws of nature.

In reality, there are few parts of the natural field not affected by human agency in our times. Since the primeval age, wild animals have been domesticated, while others now inhabit reserves protected via certain legislative policies. Rivers have been dammed and bridged, land reclaimed from the sea, forests felled and cleared. We go to the countryside and say that here remains a bounty of nature, or that it is wonderful to live surrounded by nature. Some portions of the world considered to be comparatively pristine are, nonetheless, not free from the influences of pollution or global warming and must be designated as National Parks or World Heritage sites to be protected. In short, what we are used to calling 'nature' or the 'environment' can be nothing other than a mixture of the natural and the artificial. Traditional philosophies have tried to account for the aporia of such a binary opposition. Schelling, for example, proposed the absolute identity between nature and 'Geist' (spirit), finding nature to be 'die transzendentale Vergangenheit (the transcendental past)' from which the human spirit grew and came to stand on its own two feet, while Heidegger sees 'Physis' underlying human 'techne'. It is the same stance that permits Berleant to reduce the environment as a 'physical-cultural realm' to 'the natural process' through which everything is 'part of a single, continuous whole'. However, these conceptions too are questionable. The question concerns that which, in our everyday life, we are used to calling 'nature'.

2. The 'Natureworld'

According to Heini Hediger,[8] a species of animals only lives in a specific environment – the so-called 'biotope' of that species – which corresponds to the habitual necessities of that particular species. Within one area there co-exist and overlap the territories of numerous species, which make up a complex whole. If this is the case, we might say that humans as a species of animals also inhabit their own proper biotope. But humans, as

[8] Heini Hediger, *Wild Animals in Captivity: An Outline of the Biology of Zoological Gardens*, transl. by G. Sircom, Butterworths Scientific Publ., 1950.

Arnold Gehlen claims,[9] are 'deficient animals' that have not developed a set of specialized capabilities that suit their surrounding environment, and are therefore haunted by an excess of stimuli that deviate from the instinct-based "Nature's Plan", as well as unforeseeable surprise attacks. Because of this, humans are forced to overcome these calamities through their own projects in order to secure their future. We call the peculiar biotope of the human species the 'world'. When humans leave nature behind through culture, what they come to perceive is an environment that is there for them to shape: the 'world'. Humans are the 'subject' of a gaze that projects the possibilities of their own being in the world. For animals, however, vision – along with hearing and smell – is only a sensory organ adapted to their environment based on Nature's Plan. In the case of animals, the act of looking does not constitute a gaze. The fact that the act of looking in the case of animals does not constitute a gaze means that the eyes of humans and animals can never, strictly speaking, meet. Regardless of how affectionate the relationship between humans and animals that are kept as pets may appear, there is something fundamentally different in two humans exchanging glances. The relationship between animals and humans is obstructed by the rift that exists between nature and culture, and there is no way that we can mingle equally.

It follows that the biotope of the natural species 'humans' cannot be an environment in the sense of the biotope of other species, but just the 'world', civilization, and culture, woven with the biotopes of other animals and vegetation to form an ecological system. We can do nothing other than relate ourselves to nature, which consists of categories, things, and events found inside this world or culture, as our biotope. So what is significant for us is not the opposition between nature and the human spirit, but our relationship with a cultural realm of nature inside this world.

In contrast to contemporary environmentalism and environmental ethics which radically oppose nature to humans and criticize civilization and culture for destroying ecological systems and nature as a whole, John Passmore states: "If we ask, indeed, what human beings add to the world by their presence in it, there is, I should say, only one possible reply: civilization."

[9] Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: Seine Nature und seine Stellung in der Welt*, 13. Auflage, Wiesbaden, 1986, p. 33.

He asserts that "man can live at all only as a predator, whether on plants or animals". But this is not to say that man is master of nature.

> Ecologically, no doubt, men form a community with plants, animals, soil, [...]. But if it is essential to a community that the members of it have common interests and recognize mutual obligations then men, plants, animals and soil do not form a community. Bacteria and men do not recognize mutual obligations nor do they have common interests.[10]

Concepts such as interest, right, or morality are cultural phenomena which humans contrived and elaborated throughout their long history in order to apply these concepts to the members of their own communities or institutions. And so, as Passmore points out, we humans are not responsible *to* nature as we may be to an institution, but responsible *for* nature.

If we conceive of the nature that engendered our culture and still remains at the root of our being as 'pristine, wild nature', it is just our carefree phantasy story of a paradise lost at the moment of the appearance of humans. Is it proper to say that humans who became an isolated species by leaving the wild behind are bound in their solitude to inquire in a human way into issues such as the meaning and beauty of our own nature or our own biotope, i.e. the world, and the responsibility for our fellows and younger generations inhabiting this world? What we are used to calling nature is no more than our 'environment-world', and the science that provides the basis of our knowledge about this nature is, as Quine puts it, just our 'belief-system' about the world, just as mythology was for the ancients. In short, for humans, 'nature' can be nothing more than a cultural concept. I therefore propose to call a cultural discourse determining 'nature' as a cultural concept or category which constitutes our world, 'natureworld'.[11] For 'nature itself', the distinction between summer and winter, between mountain, hill and island, or between a typhoon and a tropical cyclone, makes no sense. Every one of them is part of a single continuous whole. But for the discourse of natureworld in a certain age and culture which is interested in

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[10] John Passmore, *Man's Responsibility for Nature*, 2nd ed., London: Duckworth, 1980, p. 116.

[11] Cf. Kiyokazu Nishimura, "The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature", *JTLA* (Journal of the Faculty of Letters, The University of Tokyo, Aesthetics) 32, 2007. (http://repository.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/bulletin/#6-5)

and concerned about those natural things or events in the world, the distinction between them is significant. In the natureworld of the age of Greek mythology, thunder meant the rage of Zeus. In 18th century Europe there was an element that chemists called 'phlogiston', which no longer exists.

Our concept of 'nature in the world' which is determined by the discourse of natureworld is different from Berleant's environment seen as a 'physical-cultural realm' and from Augustin Berque's 'Écoumène (or Milieux)'. Berque says very correctly that "there exists no pristine nature on the earth", and that nature can be nothing other than something represented by us and therefore "always mediated, socialized, and cultural". But here too, following the slogan of his book "Culture again into nature, nature again into culture", nature is reduced to culture as Écoumène. The model of Berque's Écoumène is Heidegger's concept of 'Geviert' consisting of the heaven, the Earth, the divine, and the mortal, meeting in manmade objects, such as wine jars or Greek temples. Through this mythological and cosmic Écoumène, we humans feel the supernatural in nature and express "the mystic connection with 'the whole'"[12]. By contrast, our 'natureworld' is undeniably a cultural concept so long as our biotope is a world, but in itself not a cultural product nor a continuation of the artificial. We name our milieux, our biotope, the 'world', which is complicatedly interwoven or overlapped with the various milieux or biotopes of other life on Earth or in the universe. Here lies not the monism of 'Geist' which finds nature to be its 'transcendental past', nor that of the principal 'Physis' which gathers together chirping crickets creeping on the earth or storming winds in the heaven within the cosmos as 'Geviert', but pluralism and the coexistence of manifold biotopes. And a way of appreciating nature aesthetically is culture, but with this concept we do not intend "to treat the appreciation of nature and art as essentially the same"[13].

[12] Augustin Berque, *Fuudogaku Josetsu* (*Écoumène: Introduction a l'etude des milieux humains*, Paris, 2000), Tokyo, 2002, p. 228.

[13] Berleant, *The Aesthetics of Environment*, p. 12.

3. The 'Aesthetic Framing'

Having discussed how we can talk about 'nature', let us consider what kind of experience the aesthetic appreciation of nature and landscape is. One reason why arguments about the appreciation of nature, environment, and landscape often seem to be confused is the ambiguity of the use of the word 'aesthetic' in modern aesthetics. In order to clear away the original ambiguity of the coined word 'aesthetica', M. Beardsley tackles the question of "how to distinguish aesthetic objects from other perceptual objects". In a painting as a perceptual object we find the objective qualities such as "its redness, warmth of color, shape, and position within the visual field", or "the cheerfulness of the painting, the rhythmic order of its shapes, the sharp contrasts of its hues."[14] Beardsley tries to distinguish specifically aesthetic objects from general perceptual objects in terms of "a set of characteristics that all aesthetic objects possess", i.e., "aesthetic qualities". Aesthetic objects have some noteworthy features in common in order to be called 'visual designs'; for example, "they present themselves as bounded segments of phenomenal fields, and have internal heterogeneity but with enough order to make them perceivable as wholes."[15] Thus "a blank sheet of paper is not a design" because it contains no heterogeneity. From this standpoint of Beardsley's, "a clear blue sky, a single note on a French horn, or a whiff of perfume" do not constitute aesthetic objects.

Such an approach as Beardsley's, distinguishing objects with specific 'aesthetic' qualities from other objects, is no less classic than Kant's idea of 'uniformity in variety', which has not lost its significance today at all. Kant's theory of taste accomplished a 'Copernican turn', so to speak, from the classical objective criteria of beauty to the subjective ability of taste, which easily led to so-called 'aesthetic-attitude theory'. The Kantian theory of taste supposes that a specific kind of object triggers a reaction in the subject, while aesthetic-attitude theories after Kant claim, as George Dickie says, that "either a certain mode of perception or consciousness is a *necessary condition*

[14] M. Beardsley, *Aesthetics. Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1958, p. 38. Here, there seems to be the distinction between non-aesthetic and aesthetic qualities, but Beardsley mentions only "the distinction between basic and dependent qualities" (p. 91), and does not thematize this problem in any more detail.

[15] *Ibid*., p. 63.

for the apprehension and appreciation of the aesthetic character which an object possesses independently of that mode of perception or consciousness or a certain mode of perception or consciousness *imposes* an aesthetic character on (any) object", and suppose a specific mode of "aesthetic perception" different from "ordinary perception." It is important to note that, according to this theory, "any object can become an aesthetic object if only aesthetic perception is turned on it."[16] However, with these theories, which suppose a specific attitude of perceiving an object as aesthetic and define its aesthetic qualities by means of 'aesthetic perception', "we should then have made a complete circuit"[17] as highlighted by the criticism of Joseph Margolis.

The failure common to traditional theories about 'the aesthetic' results from conceptions that a sort of quality properly named 'aesthetic' and differentiated from 'the sensuous' exists as such somewhere, phenomenally or potentially. These theories suggest that we can find these qualities out by assuming an appropriate attitude, and that we can define 'the aesthetic' by enumerating such qualities as we find them. In opposition to this, Frank Sibley did not find aesthetic qualities to be potentially existent in objects and developed a very persuasive theory that the experiences of aesthetic qualities are our particular 'responses' to 'non-aesthetic' features belonging to objects and thus "depend upon"[18] non-aesthetic features. He did not, however, explain in any more detail what kind of relationship the 'dependence' of aesthetic experiences on non-aesthetic features is. He says only that our aesthetic responses to non-aesthetic and sensuous features, and the aesthetic concepts which describe those responses, are social and cultural common properties, which are learned and passed down from generation to generation. Moreover, he simply presupposes as a fact of our experience the perception of non-aesthetic features on the one hand, and the experience of aesthetic qualities as our reaction to them on the other. But what we want to know is just what causes this sort of dependence, and how our 'aesthetic' responses are caused after discriminating non-aesthetic features through the five senses.

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[16] George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic*, Ithaca: Cornell U. P., 1974, p. 57.

[17] Joseph Margolis, *The Language of Art & Art Criticism*, Detroit: Wayne State U. P., 1965, p. 28.

[18] Frank Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts", *The Philosophical Review* 68 (4)1959: 424.

Let us paraphrase this question more simply as follows: what difference is there between looking at a blue panel and contemplating Yves Klein's *Monochrome bleu sans titre (IKB75)*? We could use the Klein as a colour sample of a particular blue called 'International Klein Blue' when we bring people who do not know the colour 'IKB' to the painting and indicate it. Then we would simply experience the non-aesthetic and sensuous features of this painting as a blue panel. But when we look at this as a work of contemporary art and say aesthetically 'it is elegant' or 'deep', we experience its aesthetic qualities. Accordingly, we can describe the same blue panel in three different ways as follows:

(a) This is a colour sample of a unique 'blue'.
(b) The 'blue' this sample cloth shows is 'chic' as a suit material.
(c) This is a work by Yves Klein, *Monochrome bleu sans titre (IKB75)*, which is 'elegant' and 'deep'.

These three descriptions can, according to Sibley, be divided into discourses which discuss the non-aesthetic features (a) of the object and those which speak of its aesthetic qualities (b, c). The question, then, is what it means when we say that three different experiences and descriptions are possible concerning the physically and therefore sensuously identical blue panel; and what makes this transfiguration – from the sensation of its non-aesthetic features to an experience of its aesthetic qualities – possible, if the dependence of the latter upon the former is not condition-governed.

For Kant, as is widely known, a simple colour like the green of a plain and the simple note of a violin are no more than "bloß angenehme Empfindungen (just agreeable sensations)"[19]. These simple colours or musical notes can be "counted as the beautiful" only if they are put into "the formal determination of the unity in diversity" and produce "the beauty of their composition". Beardsley also claims that "a blank sheet of paper is not a design" and therefore not an aesthetic object, and that "a clear blue sky, a single note on a French horn, or a whiff of perfume" do not constitute an aesthetic object, saying that a visual design as an aesthetic object must have a unity, an order, and some heterogeneity. However, Beardsley is certainly wrong. We know that the blue panel is also a painting.

[19] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790), Berlin: Dritte Auflage, 1799, p. 212.

When a piano tuner listens attentively to each note of a piano, what he tries to catch must be its sensory purity, however intense his attention towards it may be, and we do not say that a blue in a colour sample book, perceived separately, is chic or elegant. In reality, to perceive a colour or a musical note separately is exceptional in everyday life, not to mention in a hospital or a laboratory of physiology. Usually, we look at a colour sample as, say, the colour of a suit we have a tailor make, and according to the standard of the particular aesthetic qualities proper to the concept of a suit as established by the fashion industry we say that this dark blue is more chic and elegant than an indigo with a different hue and saturation.

We might neglect a simple blue panel as a meaningless empty panel. But it is an artwork if we know that it is Yves Klein's *Monochrome bleu sans titre (IKB75)*, and a critic might say that it is 'empty', which means, as Danto says, not "literally empty",[20] i.e., non-aesthetically empty, but aesthetically empty. According to Klein, it is without any dimension, immaterial, and therefore absolute. It is certain that the simple non-aesthetic feature of a blue panel cannot be transfigured into an aesthetic quality simply by taking an arbitrary aesthetic attitude or viewpoint towards it, but by the artworld which makes one of the two identical blue panels a work of art. It is important, as Danto rightly says, not that the particular aesthetic qualities an object possesses in themselves make it an artwork, but on the contrary, that the aesthetic qualities proper to the object can be experienced exclusively according to an appropriate frame set up by conferring the status of an artwork on it. Certainly, even a urinal has such aesthetic qualities, including "its gleaming white surface, the depth revealed when it reflects images of surrounding objects, its pleasing oval shape",[21] but they are the qualities of the urinal, not "the ordinary qualities of *Fountain*" as Dickie says. In fact, as Danto points out, *Fountain* "has properties that urinals themselves lack: it is daring, impudent, irreverent, witty, and clever".[22] Here, then, it is not a discovering and an actualizing of the potential aesthetic qualities of an object with an arbitrary

[20] A. Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, Cambridge: Harvard U. P., 1981, p. 2.

[21] Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic*, p. 42. In passing, Dickie says that an artwork is not just "a visual design" because it has its own "inner life" based on the artist's intention and art history, while a natural item is rather "a pure visual design" because it has not such a history and intention (p. 169).

[22] Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, p. 93 f.

change of subjective aesthetic viewpoint or attitude, but a social, cultural, and conventional shift of the aesthetic organization of the non-aesthetic perceptions of the object within an appropriate frame based on a particular concept (e.g., an artworld).[23] Let us call this social and cultural discourse or practice 'aesthetic framing'.

Paul Ziff claims that "anything that can be viewed is a fit object for aesthetic attention". Even the litter scattered on the street can be seen as "an object for aesthetic attitude: a manifestation of a fundamental physical factor: entropy"[24]. Besides, there does really exist junk art. Yet, Ziff makes an additional remark, claiming that one must "create an appropriate frame and environing conditions for what one sees" within limits and depending on one's power. In this respect, he does not take sides with so-called aesthetic attitude theory. His idea of 'an appropriate frame' can be understood, say, as a 'concept' like art, or an 'artworld' which makes art possible. But here, we should not agree with Beardsley that when, for instance, a simple panel has 'internal heterogeneity but with enough order to make it perceivable as a whole' it is an aesthetic object like a painting. We should, on the contrary, say that when such a panel is acknowledged by the artworld as a painting it will have a *frame* 'proper' to a painting and therefore also the order or relation within its "bounded segment of phenomenal field"[25], which transfigures the panel, making it an object experienced with regard to the aesthetic qualities proper to a painting. In organizing various non-aesthetic features into an appropriate order within a particular aesthetic framing, selection is inevitable. While the coughing in the concert hall is usually neglected as a noise, there can exist an artwork like John Cage's *4'33"*, which focuses upon and organizes these noises as music through a radically new framing and

[23] Ziff says that "[F]iguratively and on occasion literally speaking works of art are framed objects" (Paul Ziff, "Anything Viewed", in: E. Saarinen and others (eds.), *Essays in Honour of JAAKKO HINYIKKA, on the Occasion of His Fiftieth Birthday on January 12. 1979*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979, p. 287). The 'frame' in the literal sense means, for example, the frame of a painting or the pedestal of a sculpture. The word 'figuratively' here means that "works of art are framed mounted hung illuminated displayed exhibited". In this respect, the concept of 'aesthetic framing' is not identical to Derrida's concept of 'parergon' which is more similar to the word 'framed' as defined by Ziff, although 'aesthetic framing' does involve the dimension of 'parergon'.

[24] Ziff, "Anything Viewed", p. 291.

[25] Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, p. 63.

makes the audience experience them aesthetically. Certainly, people must learn the required social discourse and practice, and acquire different acts of "aspection"[26], as Ziff says, on the basis of some knowledge of the genres, skills, histories and styles of artworks in order to notice the aesthetic order organized within such a fundamental aesthetic framing. It is the critics, specialists of this knowledge, who help to indicate, ostensibly, the underlying aesthetic framing of a particular period and culture and bring people to notice it and to 'aspect' the aesthetic qualities of particular artworks. Aesthetic framing is not, however, restricted to the artworld. According to the mode of aesthetic framing based on the tastes of their societies and times, woodworkers selected some non-aesthetic practical features, such as the lines, forms, and planes which the legs or backrest of a chair have in order for the object to fulfil its function, and composed them into aesthetic qualities such as the pageantry and grace of the Baroque and the Rococo, or the simplicity and sharpness of Art Deco and Bauhaus.

It is, simply speaking, because we respond aesthetically to some aesthetic qualities of an object that they belong to a specifically aesthetic order apart from the logical or functional order of the object. Such an argument might appear to be 'circular'. And yet here we are not dealing with a logical and meaningless 'vicious circle', but 'a structural circle' in an aesthetic community which shares the aesthetic framing proper to it. The artworld is the discourse of aesthetic framing which determines what to create as art and how to respond aesthetically to it. It is on the basis of these discourses that we can affirm that there exist experiences of aesthetic qualities proper to art. And with regard to nature, we have a concept of natureworld based on a "common-sense/scientific knowledge" of nature, which Carlson thinks enables us to appreciate natural things, events, and environments not as artworks nor landscape paintings but as 'natural'. We also have a framing determining our 'aesthetic' response to nature which a particular period and culture acknowledges as appropriate. This is what the structural circle in an aesthetic community means. It is wrong to imagine that there are common qualities that can be called 'aesthetic' among chairs, artworks, nature, and so on. Accordingly, so-called aesthetic formalism is also wrong because

[26] Ziff, "Reasons in Art Criticism", in I. Scheffler (ed.), *Philosophy and Education*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1958, p. 234.

it confuses non-aesthetic formal features with aesthetic qualities.[27] It is the aesthetic qualities *of* a chair, *of* an artwork, *of* a natural object or event that exist. Just so, various kinds of aesthetic qualities within different kinds of aesthetic framing shared traditionally by one society or another are everywhere, not only in the artworld but in ordinary life. Aesthetic framing, the aesthetic circle, and aesthetic omnipresence are the structural properties of such social practices and discourses.

4. The Aesthetic Qualities of Nature

Let us ask again what aesthetic qualities nature has within the aesthetic framing concerning natural things and events. Budd, for example, calls a non-aesthetic feature of nature "a form of life", and says that in appreciating blossoms aesthetically we delight not only in the visual appearance of them but in what they indicate, experiencing "the flowering of the tree as a manifestation and beautiful expression of the resurgence of life triggered by the arrival of spring".[28] Yet it remains unknown what difference there is between this experience and that of a painting which is a beautiful representation of spring blossoms. Kendall Walton includes within the aesthetic category "representational" and "resemblance" properties,[29] which Sibley excludes. According to Walton, at least in regard to aesthetic properties and our experience of them, there is no difference between an actual thing and its representation, though there is a vast difference in terms of the actual non-aesthetic features, which is strange.[30] Consequently, these theories about aesthetic appreciation, if applied to nature, end up falling within the 'artistic model' as well, to the extent that they use aesthetic terms proper to describing the aesthetic response to artworks as the privileged class of aesthetic objects in modern aesthetics.

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[27] Cf. Kiyokazu Nishimura, *Plastic no Ki de Naniga Waruinoka* (What's Wrong with Plastic Trees?), Tokyo, 2011, p. 59 f, p. 171, p. 195 f.

[28] Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature*, p. 17.

[29] Kendall Walton, "Categories of Art", *The Philosophical Review* LXXIX (1970): 344 f.

[30] This confusion is rooted partly in the paradox of 'Schein' (appearance) – theory in modern aesthetics. For a critique of the theory, see, Kiyokazu Nishimura, Die Scheinhaftigkeit der ästhetischen Scheinlehre, *Acta Institutionis Philosophiae et Aestheticae*, hrsg. v. T. Imamichi, Vol. 3, Tokyo, 1983; K. Nishimura, "On the Aporia of Pleasure of Tragedy", *JTLA* 34 (2009).

Stepping away from the paradox that we cannot help using the aesthetic terms proper to describing artworks even to describe the aesthetic qualities proper to nature, insofar as we are educated in modern aesthetics and its artworld, should we say, with Ronald Moore, that "much of what we admire in nature is nameless... because it is a combination of looks, sounds, smells, glints, hues, swirls, and so on"[31] that change every moment in "the cycle of life, death, and renewal" and simply have no names? And what about, then, perfectly elaborate artificial flowers that are indistinguishable from natural ones? Moore says that they are "aesthetic twins" because of "the physical identity", just as we cannot discern between an original and a perfect clone. Yet Moore, reminiscent of Danto's artworld argument, claims that to perceive a flower not as artificial but as a product of nature is "to change the way we perceive everything about it". That is to experience it by contextualizing it "in a part of an order of being that has its own modes of growth and development, its own history, its own inter-relatedness,"[32] and then we pay respectful attention to the nameless ingredients that largely constitute natural phenomena.

There is still ambiguity in Moore's suggestive argument. According to Moore, natural flowers have their own nameless features that artificial flowers lack, although both have common 'physical' and 'aesthetic' features. But it remains unknown what these 'nameless' features are. About artificial flowers or the mimicry of the nightingale, Kant wrote that we lose "a direct and intellectual interest in the beauty of nature", i.e. a recognition that "nature has produced that beauty",[33] and cannot find beauty anymore, once we become aware of being deceived and of the apparent beauty's artificiality. But here too it remains unknown how the beauty changes in quality after the deception is noticed.

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[31] Ronald Moore, "Appreciating Natural Beauty as Natural" (1999), in A. Carlson and A. Berleant (eds.), *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004, p. 222. It is certain, as Moore says (p. 229), that the appreciation of art can influence that of nature and vice versa. He also provides us with the concept the natureworld "discernible (and properly appreciable) only in an atmosphere of history and theory – natural history and scientific theory" (p. 220), by analogy with Danto's artworld. Yet, he adds, it is not theory that makes a natural live item possible, while it is theory that makes art possible. His natureworld is also "in some ways quite independent of our judgments", which is different from my concept of 'natureworld'.

[32] *Ibid*., p, 227.

[33] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, p. 172.

It might be said that two perfect clones are not only physical but also aesthetical twins. As for Duchamp's *Fountain* and a urinal, continuing with the analogy of clones, both can be said to be 'non-aesthetically' twins, to the extent that they are of the same reproduction model. Nonetheless, as already discussed, they are not aesthetically twins. Now, we are concerned with an artificial flower which is, above all, physically quite different from a natural one – although the former resembles the latter so perfectly that we are deceived for an instant into seeing it as natural – and for that reason alone they are neither physical nor aesthetic twins. By overlooking this simple fact, Moore makes the same mistake as Dickie. When we say about a natural flower 'it is fresh and vivid', it might be said that we are literally describing its non-aesthetic features, while in the case of an artificial flower we are metaphorically describing an aesthetic quality. We name the colour of leaves depicted in a painting 'green' and call those of trees in a garden 'green' as well, but the non-aesthetic features of leaves, like hues, moisture, or freshness as the combined product of a complicated process of organic nature, have nothing in common with those of leaves depicted by means of paints even if the representation is strikingly true to real ones. The non-aesthetic features of the surface of Mount Saint-Victoire must be totally different from those of the mountain painted by Cézanne. If we name a paint 'green' we should call the colour of real leaves another name, but we have no name that can precisely express the subtle hue of leaves. Etymologically speaking, the Japanese word 'midori' (green) is said to mean 'sprout' or 'shoot', just as in an expression 'midori-go' (a newborn child), while the Japanese word for the colour is originally 'ao' (blue). We should, then, call green paint by another name. In any case, the reason why the features of nature are nameless is that we cannot describe them precisely with the terms with which we have been provided in the artworld for the articulation of colours, shapes, and the composition of art.

5. The Aesthetics of Landscape

As we have seen, there is no pure nature, and what we call nature is the 'natureworld', a realm inside our world. The nature we appreciate aesthetically is, in a precise sense, that which belongs to the category of 'natureworld'

inside the world of our biotope. What we call 'environment' or 'landscape' can be nothing other than a mixture of the natural and the artificial. We perceive flowers at a roadside and enjoy their shapes, colours, and smell. A rainbow over the high-rise buildings in a city, or a landscape with the sinking sun tingeing the mountains around the city with red, takes our breath away. Indeed, as Berleant explains, the aesthetic experience of landscape covers 'the entire range of our sensory capacities'. Yet in modern aesthetics, there is only bodily sensuous pleasure, and no aesthetic pleasure, for the 'inferior' senses of smell and taste. 'The aesthetic' of landscape should therefore be conceived of as including the traditionally 'inferior' senses Carlson enumerates, such as 'smell, touch, and taste, and even warmth and coolness, barometric pressure and humidity', as well as the privileged 'aesthetic' qualities modern aesthetics has attributed to the 'superior' senses of sight and hearing. Tuan says that such an environment might break all the formal rules of euphony and aesthetics, substituting the confusion of 'a meld of physical sensations' for order, and yet be 'wholly satisfying.' Here we are confronted with the question of how the 'aesthetic framing' theory we are proposing can deal with the aesthetic qualities of taste, smell, and touch.

Traditionally, smell and taste have been thought of as exclusively practical and inferior senses which are based on the instinct of self-preservation and do not affect aesthetic appreciation with detachment as vision and hearing do. Roger Scruton says that "in tasting, both the object and the desire for it are steadily consumed", and that "no such thing is true of aesthetic attention".[34] But this claim is not persuasive. In fact, a musical note and a firework die out soon, and we know well that the standards of beauty based on visual and auditory senses are not uniform but diverse.

More persuasive seems to be Beardsley's claim that "we cannot, at least not yet, arrange them [smells and tastes] in series and so we cannot work out constructive principles to make larger works out of them", because smells and tastes do not have such articulations as the hues of colours and the pitches of musical notes. It is sure that a dinner includes foods different in flavour, texture, shape, and colour. But "there does not seem to be enough order within these sensory fields to construct aesthetic objects with balance, climax, development, or pattern. This [...] seems to explain the absence of

[34] Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Architecture*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, p. 114.

taste-symphonies and smell-sonatas".[35] Sidney Zink similarly claims that "the apprehension of various odors and flavors consists of a succession of experiences qualitatively independent, where to shift attention from one sensation is to lose it and to impose on any return the necessity of a new seizure". If several ingredients of a salad or a dinner are taken together, "the eventuating quality is either something different from any part, or is the quality of one predominating part". In the case of the courses in a meal, certainly, "elements are so arranged as to provide in their apprehension as a group" intended by a chef as a "harmonious composition similar to that of colors and sounds", yet "flavors in combination are capable of effecting several kinds of enjoyment, none of which is esthetic"[36] because there is no order of organic unity among them. Couldn't some peculiar odour and flavour of Proust's Madeleine biscuit dunked in tea call forth those sleeping memories which are either actually aesthetic character revived, or potentially aesthetic experiences acquiring aesthetic character from the objectivity and selectivity of remoteness? On these occasions, Zink says, it just "seems to contain the experience's esthetic essence" because "odor is the herald and symbol of the experience" associated with it. Once we get absorbed in the reminiscence, the odour and taste are dispensed with and only the aesthetic "visual image"[37] evoked by them remains in consciousness.

From the standpoint of Beardsley and Zink, who demand order and articulation as elements of aesthetic quality, even a simple colour or musical note, not to mention smell and taste, must therefore have no aesthetic quality. On the other hand, when considering an aesthetic attitude theory such as that put forward by Harold Osborne, the aesthetic attitude "can be taken up towards anything at all – 'even a sausage'",[38] and so, smell, taste and touch can be experienced aesthetically with a specific kind of aesthetic perception, a purified, intensified, and "enhanced awareness" of their nature. In enjoying the taste of a particular kind of ice cream, Emily Brady says,

[35] Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, p. 99.

[36] Sidney Zink, "Esthetic Appreciation and Its Distinction from Sense Pleasure", *The Journal of Philosophy* vol. XXXIX, No. 26 (1942): 707.

[37] *Ibid*., 710.

[38] Harold Osborne, "Odours and Appreciation", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 17, No. 1 (1977): 38.

"we may be involved in contemplation" when "we reflect on the taste, making comparisons", and "call the taste of vanilla ice cream smooth, silky and mellow".[39] And Urmson allows "an aesthetic satisfaction to the connoisseur of wines and to the gourmet"[40] because things, whatever they might be, can be aesthetic insofar as they "have sensible qualities which affect us favourably or unfavourably" with no ulterior practical grounds.

In reality, so many metaphors are commonly used and sometimes such ridiculously exaggerated expressions are found in the discourses of specialists of food and wine that we are forced to doubt the standard of their criticism. Sibley quotes the following, rather absurd, description in his posthumous manuscript 'Taste, Smells, and Aesthetics', "the 1982 and 1983 vintages in Bordeaux are like two brothers. The first is extrovert, handsome, and charming, destined to be head of school... and for a brilliant career. The second is reticent, attractive in character, promising at least a top second at university."[41] Sibley himself says that "there is no logical impediment to contemplating"[42] tastes and smells aesthetically. But when he enumerates some descriptive terms of tastes and smells in his manuscript, it seems that his original distinction between the aesthetic and the non-aesthetic is no longer mentioned, a frankly bothersome omission.

Is it true that the tasting of a sommelier, commenting 'this wine has a lively, green, springlike taste', is an 'aesthetic' taste different from the usual sensuous taste? Even if a gourmet can discriminate the subtle flavours of a dinner involving various foodstuffs and spices, is it not a non-aesthetic experience of guessing the right ingredients with the aid of his exercised palate? When we smell a perfume and say 'it smells nice' or 'delicious', is it an aesthetic description as Tom Leddy[43] claims? Is it not just a figurative description of its non-aesthetic features and intensity?

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[39] Emily Brady, "Sniffing and Savoring: The Aesthetics of Smells and Tastes", in A. Light and J. M. Smith (eds.), *The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, p. 183.

[40] J. O. Urmson, "What Makes a Situation Aesthetic?", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume, Vol. 31 (1957): 76.

[41] Frank Sibley, "Taste, Smells, and Aesthetics", in *Approach to Aesthetics*, ed. by J. Benson, B. Redfern, J. R. Cox, Clarendon Press, 2001, p. 238.

[42] *Ibid*., p. 254.

[43] Tom Leddy, "The Nature of Everyday Aesthetics", in A. Light and J. M. Smith (eds.), *The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, p. 9.

As we have already seen, when we direct our attention to a deep blue in the colour sample book, or listen to just one clear note in a piano piece by Debussy repeatedly, our experience remains the non-aesthetic sense of a particular colour or tone just like that experienced by the sensitive ear of a piano tuner. The individual senses, not only of smell and taste, but also of vision and hearing, must be considered in themselves as non-aesthetic 'raw materials'. Then, it might be said that even smell and taste can be objects of aesthetic experience when they are inserted and organized into a particular order within an aesthetic framing. It is true that smell and taste do not have such distinct articulations in themselves as hues and pitches, and Beardsley is probably right when he says that we cannot work out constructive principles to make 'taste-symphonies and smell-sonatas'. It is true that Peter de Cupere performed *Scentsonata for Brussels* (2004) using a sort of olfactory piano which he invented and calls 'Olfactiano'. It consists of twenty-seven keys arranged in three layers, and each key emits a different odour from the pipes. But to call it 'a smell sonata' is no more than an analogy with music, and we cannot find here "a first step toward what might become the olfactory equivalent of small scale musical compositions"[44], as Lappy Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets do. Even so, to say that smell and taste have nothing to do with aesthetic experience is a mistake caused by the unawareness that Beardsley himself already selected and presupposed the aesthetic framing of a particular artworld which acknowledges the forms of symphonies and sonatas.

There exist, most certainly, aesthetic framings concerning smell and/or taste. The scent of a rose or the taste of a sea breeze is not, as Zink says, a non-aesthetic "accidental"[45] quality which only enhances the aesthetic pleasure of "the visual composition" of a flower or a seashore, but rather, as Urmson says,[46] an indispensable constituent of the aesthetic experience of the 'rose' or the 'seashore'. It is true that the smell and taste of Proust's Madeleine biscuit dunked in tea are 'the herald and symbol' of the experience associated with the past sweet reminiscences, yet what is experienced now is not the 'visual image' recalled in his mind but the

[44] Lappy Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets, "The Aesthetics of Smelly Art", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* Vol. 65, No. 3 (2007): 278.

[45] Zink, "Esthetic Appreciation and Its Distinction from Sense Pleasure", p. 710.

[46] Urmson, "What Makes a Situation Aesthetic?", p. 88.

aesthetic experience during the afternoon long past, which was filled with the smell and taste of tea and Madeleine biscuits. A magnificent dinner party, where gorgeous dishes and beautiful flowers are arranged on the tables with music played gently and where ladies are elegantly dressed and wearing delicate perfumes, would be unsuccessful as an aesthetic gathering if the smell of the dinner spoils the atmosphere and its taste is plain. The smell of lard which is in itself oily and not pleasant in terms of its sensuous non-aesthetic quality is an indispensable constituent of the works of Joseph Beuys. And we, Japanese, can enumerate 'sa-do' (the tea ceremony) and 'kou-do' (the art of incense) as examples of traditional Japanese aesthetic framing concerning smell and taste.

And then, landscape. Do we bathe in a disordered 'meld of physical sensations', as Tuan says, when we stand still within the landscape and experience it aesthetically? Or should we, on the contrary, affirm with David Prall that even though "we know no modes of arranging smells or tastes or vital feelings or even noises in works of art, nature does not hesitate to combine the soughing of pines, the fragrance of mountain air, and the taste of mountain water or its coolness on the skin, with dazzling mountain sunlight and the forms and colors of rocks and forests"[47]?

Sibley argues against the claim that smells and tastes cannot be aesthetic for lack of articulation and a suitable structure, and points out the fact that "many natural phenomena widely regarded as having aesthetic interest, even splendor – sunrises, storms, expanses of sky and cloud, landscapes, mountain ranges – have no clear boundaries, or any obvious organization, order, structure, or pattern in their heterogeneity"[48]. It is true that natural phenomena themselves are nothing other than a disordered meld of all the senses including not only the visual and the auditory sense but also taste, smell, and touch. And it is not nature but we ourselves who set the surrounding totality of the confused mixture of these natural phenomena and artifacts in an order. So, in order to appreciate an environment aesthetically we must know that it is a portion of the world including the nature-world. Moreover, when we stand in our surroundings with this concept of environment, we must have the knowledge to focus our attention on

[47] David W. Prall, *Aesthetic Judgement*, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1929, p. 67.

[48] Sibley, "Taste, Smells, and Aesthetics", p. 227.

the aesthetically significant parts or aspects of the environment because everything within it is not necessarily aesthetic. This knowledge is, of course, based on the aesthetic framing which is shared by the community we belong to, and so, a certain society and culture has its own particular style for the aesthetic appreciation of nature and landscape. Thus, standing still in the environment with a particular aesthetic framing based on the concept of environment as 'landscape', we organize the raw materials of our five senses into a particular order and appreciate it, the landscape, as 'aesthetic'. In this sense, 'landscape' might be considered as one of the aesthetic categories[49] which we establish under the restriction of times and cultures as a frame for 'landscape' which originally meant just a geographical section of the world. To appreciate an environment aesthetically is to frame and aspect it under the aesthetic category of 'landscape'.

[49] T. J. Diffey also presents the idea that 'landscape' could be considered as one of the aesthetic categories, though not yet elaborated in detail ("Natural Beauty without Metaphysics", in: Salim Kemal, Ivan Gaskell (eds.), *Landscape, Natural Beauty and the Arts*, Cambridge U. P., 1993, p. 60). Cf. Kiyokazu Nishimura, "The Aesthetics of Smell and Taste for the Appreciation of Landscape", *JTLA* 36 (2011). For another aesthetic category of 'ruin', see, Kiyokazu Nishimura, "The Memory of Place and Ruins", *JTLA* 33 (2008).

THE RETURN OF NATURE TO THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

Luís Sá

Recognising a certain return of nature to the aesthetic experience we shall look upon the way that such a return occurs in new aesthetics trends and will also clarify some core concepts deemed necessary to support a fruitful discussion.

We shall examine the most common argumentative traits, employed by such authors as Allen Carlson, Arnold Berleant and Yuriko Saito, namely their critique of traditional theories' limitations in the description of the aesthetic experience, the relationship established between man and nature and the building of an ethic upon such aesthetics.

We shall also initiate a discussion about the approach and appropriation of aesthetics by environmental ethics.

1. The return of aesthetics to nature

The recent history of aesthetic theories shows, to some extent, a return to the roots of Kant's explanatory system for the aesthetic experience. This assertion is underpinned by two distinctive traits that, currently, can easily be found: the importance attached to the aesthetic experience of nature and to the ethical relationship that is implicit in this experience.

The first of these traits stems from an analysis of the concept of the sublime, expounded in the *Critique of Judgement*. There it is purported that it is the greatness of "raw nature" and our incapacity to understand it that prompts the aesthetic experience to emerge from the sublime.[1] The second stems from the role aesthetics plays in joining theoretical pure reason to practical reason, thus unifying human reason. This unity, which is fundamental in the Kantian system and encloses, in itself, the fullness of this philosophical edifice, is realised

[1] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* §23; translated by Warner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

through the possible conciliation between moral finality, which, ultimately, converges in the idea of a Kingdom of Ends, and the category of causality that determines the knowledge of all phenomena of experience.

This implies that the relation with the object is not one of knowledge nor of use but one similar to a moral relation, that is, free. Expressing it in another way, it is aesthetics that enables us to look upon nature as an end in itself: awe inspiring, unlimited and endless.

To better understand these two traits one should venture a bit deeper. Kant laid out a cognitive and a moral explanatory system: in the first, reason allows us to know objects and the world using those objects as *means* for some other end; in the second, he describes how moral laws and principles are established and how those laws should guide our actions towards others, perceiving them as an *end* in themselves. At this point one would have a divided human reason: a pure cognitive reason in which objects are useful means organized by our *understanding*, and a practical moral reason that provides laws that should support a pure will to do what is right at all times and view others as an end and not as a means.

Kant unifies this apparently split human reason with its ability to make aesthetic judgements. Aesthetic judgement implies that one perceives an object (whether it is artistic or natural) as an end in itself and not as a means. To do so, as Berleant points out, "a special attitude is required, one of disinterested and contemplative attention to an object for its own sake"[2]. But, unlike Berleant's interpretation, this disinterested approach to the object does not refer to a lack of engagement or the creation of a gap between the subject and the object being contemplated. This disinterest only conveys that the relationship created between subject and object is one framed by the kingdom of ends in which an object is looked upon as having its own purpose, meaning, autonomy and beauty. An object that would usually be apprehended as a means and considered for its usefulness is regarded, in aesthetic appreciation, as having its own full value and that usefulness is disregarded. The subject is disinterested in the practical uses he would give to the object but not in the object in itself. If anything, aesthetic appreciation allows for a more intense engagement with the object.

[2] Arnold Berleant, "The Aesthetics of Art and Nature", in *The Aesthetics of Natural Environment*, Allen Carlson and Arnold Berleant (eds.), Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004, p. 77.

The richness of the concept of the sublime and its reappearance in more recent aesthetic theories, as in Berleant, forces us to consider it in more depth. On a first approach, one can describe the sublime as a result of the use of certain human faculties as defined by Kant, especially, in this instance, the *imagination*. The imagination is the faculty that allows us to incorporate our experiences through two actions: apprehension and comprehension. We apprehend a given object through our senses and their *a priori* capabilities and use the imagination to comprehend them. Our understanding relates these experiences as they become knowledge.

When put before an object of absolute greatness (and this is why Kant only refers to untamed nature as the object of the sublime experience) one can *apprehend* it with

> no problem, for it may progress to infinity. But comprehension becomes more and more difficult the farther apprehension progresses, and it soon reaches its maximum.[3]

It is in this gap between apprehension and comprehension's inability to grasp the absolute great that lays the pure judgement of the sublime; but it is also because of this failure of the imagination to give this endless greatness to our comprehension that a new concept is given to our understanding – the *infinite*. Kant calls this the *mathematical* sublime since it refers to quantities, measures and the infinite.

But the sublime can also be *dynamic*. In this instance nature is perceived as an overwhelming power, frightening and terrifying (providing you feel secure and safe). A dynamic is created by this fear of nature's magnitude upon finding that,

> in our power of reason, a different and nonsensible standard that has this infinity itself under it as a unit; and since in contrast to this standard everything in nature is small, we found in our mind a superiority over nature itself in its immensity. In the same way, though the irresistibility of nature's might makes us, considered as natural beings, recognize our physical impotence, it reveals in us at the same time an ability to judge ourselves independent of nature, and reveals in us a superiority over nature.[4]

[3] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 26.

[4] *Ibid*., § 28.

Although these ideas and concepts have been notably influential, providing an extensive account of the aesthetical experience of nature, the truth is that between Kantian criticism and the last quarter of the previous century, aesthetics, as a branch of philosophy, has dealt mainly with art. Hepburn acknowledges this. Writing in 1966 he observes that,

> in our days, [...] writings on aesthetics attend almost exclusively to the arts and very rarely indeed to natural beauty, or only in the most perfunctory manner. Aesthetics is even *defined* by some mid-century writers as the 'philosophy of art' the 'philosophy of criticism', analysis of the language and concepts used in describing and appraising art objects.[5]

Even more recent works like the *Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*,[6] with a second edition in 2005, dedicates only 17 pages in almost 700 to the aesthetics of nature, inserting only one article, written by Allen Carlson, in a total of 52. The subject is still regarded as marginal in the context of aesthetic theory.

It is unquestionable, however, that the aesthetics of nature has conquered space in the realm of aesthetic studies. The mass of articles and books on the subject that have been published from the end of the last century to the current days proves as much. Probably as a result of the growth of environmental defence movements and the impact that environmental policies have on our societies, the debate has been reoriented to the diversity of ways man has to relate to nature, among which is, quite obviously, the aesthetic experience.

As we shall see, the resurgence of the aesthetics of nature, in this context, bears consequences for the way the discussion will be carried out, namely in the blurring of concepts which may hamper advances in these studies.

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[5] Ronald Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty", in *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, p. 43.

[6] Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2nd Edition, New York: Routledge, 2005.

2. The so-called classic aesthetic theories and their shortcomings

In order to move forward a little further we have to begin by recognizing that prevailing aesthetic theories do not find any corroboration in the aesthetic experience of nature. This flaw, acknowledged by almost all authors, stems from an analysis of the aesthetic experience man undergoes in his relationship with nature. The criticism made of aesthetic theories conceived for art is particularly poignant when it comes to the experience of the landscape, and can be expounded as follows:

a) Traditional aesthetic theories aim to explain a human creation. Symbols, techniques, trends, history and culture are, generally, the analytical frameworks employed. These are useful when an artwork is appreciated and totally inadequate when a landscape is appreciated;[7]

b) They base the analysis of aesthetic experience on only a part of the human senses, assigning the most importance, generally, to sight or hearing (when referring to music). On the contrary, aesthetic appreciation of landscape makes use of all senses simultaneously and presupposes a full immersion;[8]

c) Such theories are essentially anthropocentric. Even when attempting to adjust to the experience of nature they do it, by and large, from two points of view: 1. a picture-like appreciation (a worthy landscape is one that resembles a beautiful painting); 2. associative appreciation (a landscape's worth stems from it being a landmark or venue for an important human historical-cultural event);[9]

d) They set up a definitive divide between the subject of the aesthetic experience and its object, neglecting its autonomous and essential worth. This intrinsic value would have to bear consequences on action and enter the field of morality.

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[7] See Arnold Berleant, "The Aesthetics of Art and Nature", p. 77 f.

[8] *Ibid*. Check the difficulties aesthetic theories of art have encountered when attempting to explain, for example, the appreciation of architectural works, which entails walking through the object.

[9] See Yuriko Saito, "Appreciating Nature on Its Own Terms", in *The Aesthetics of Natural Environment*, pp. 141-155.

These criticisms reveal the inadequacy of aesthetic theories developed throughout the 19th century and a good part of the 20th, envisioned and fashioned with the main purpose of explaining aesthetic experience with regard to works of art. It is this difficulty in effecting a valid explanatory description of aesthetic experience that more recent authors will attempt to overcome.

3. Nature, environment and landscape

Without getting too caught up in details and particulars, it is extremely important to define, in the clearest and most straightforward way possible some operational concepts in order to further this discussion.

There has been enormous confusion between the concepts of nature, environment and landscape. Rosario Assunto already noticed this problem[10] in 1976. In his article, he seeks to set the borders and establish the differences between landscape, environment and territory, explaining that much disagreement within this field stems from swapping these words as if they had the same meaning. Although not consensual, this paper re-directs the issue to setting the boundaries of the concepts employed.

Here, we will simply attempt to approach these concepts. The diversity of meanings assigned to each of them prevents us, for the time being, from electing an ultimate definition.

Nature is a word with multiple meanings. In the fields we have dealt with, so far, Simmel's definition of Nature, in a firm and broad scope, should be noted:

> the endless connection of things, the endless spawning and destruction of shapes, the flowing unity of events expressing itself in the temporal and spatial continuity of existence.[11]

This definition implies nature's indivisibility, rendering it impossible to analyse and study parts of it without incurring a loss of meaning. This is

[10] Rosario Assunto, "Paesaggio, Ambiente, Territorio. Un Tentativo di Precisazione Concettuale", *Bollettino del Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio*, Vicenza: XVIII, 176, pp. 45-48.

[11] Georg Simmel, "Philosophie der Landschaft"; *Georg Simmel. Gesamtausgabe*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001, Bd. 12, p. 471.

the tragedy of the natural sciences and landscape; it is also the tragedy of culture and humanity.

Another way of referring to nature is when it is presented as untouched by human action, pristine wild nature. However, as stated by Malcolm Budd,

> our aesthetic experience of the natural world is often *mixed* – a mixture of the aesthetic appreciation of nature as nature with an additional element, of a variable character, based on human design or purpose or activity.[12]

I shall draw attention, here, to only two of the many meanings of nature that may be found, agreement being rare. Often a definition is reached through negation, defining it as that which is not human and cultural. Nature is looked upon as the other, the outside of human, a leftover from its cultural and technical conquests. This, to some extent, unsurpassable alterity is quite an essential input to understanding the other two concepts we will examine here – those of environment and landscape.

Defining environment seems to be a little less problematic. Usually two approaches are put forward – one biological and another historical-cultural. This distinction is set forth by Rosario Assunto in the text already mentioned: the biological sense refers to "conditions of physical life which can be enhanced or worsened by the specific settings of certain places" and the

> historical-cultural, depending on the predominance in the territory of urban or country dwellings, agriculture or industry, commerce or herd tending, and is also dependent on ways of life, traditions, current morality and the unity or diversity of religious cults, whether they are more or less intensely practiced; and the local artistic tokens.[13]

Assunto includes herein the history of foreign occupations, the existence of ethnic minorities, migration, etc.

Hence it can be inferred that the concepts of nature and environment, although close, carry many differences, including, most fundamentally, the requirement of a subject in the concept of environment. The environment is

[12] Malcom Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature. Essays on the Aesthetics of Nature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002, p. 7.

[13] Rosario Assunto, "Paesaggio, Ambiente, Territorio. Un Tentativo di Precisazione Concettuale", p. 46 f.

the set of biological and cultural influences that shape the beliefs and behaviours of the individual.

I would state that the two most important differences between nature and the environment are:

a) The *ontological autonomy of nature*, given that the latter exists regardless of there being a subject to observe it and live in it. This contrasts with *the need for inter-connection* which is part of the concept of *environment*; the environment is the assembling of relationships that are established between the one who is living in it and what surrounds and influences him;
b) The synthetic essence of the concept of nature prevents us from carrying out its analysis without incurring a loss of meaning, rendering that analysis poor and thwarting the very notion of nature as something whole and complete. The study or appreciation of a part of nature leads to failure in its apprehension.

This delimitation of the two concepts will bear consequences on the subsequent discussion about ethical attitudes and human experiences in this context. This is why it is so important to move on to the last of the three concepts we are attempting to define.

As shall be seen further on, it is landscape as a concept wrought by philosophy in more recent times that has become the centre of reflection, as much from an aesthetic as from an ethical view point, as well as in a more general way from the point of view stemming from the tense and essential relationship of man with the world. This is the concept that will make it possible, it seems, to think about and discern the misunderstandings that arise in the discussions about ethics and aesthetics.

The concept in itself has evolved through time and to get a brief, clear, and elucidative history of the word and its meanings the essential text to bear in mind is that of Adriana Veríssimo Serrão in her introduction to the book *Philosophy of Landscape*: *An Anthology.* Entitled "The Landscape as a Philosophical Problem"[14], here can be found the origin and the evolution of the concept, as well as its problems. Therefore it will not be worth our while

[14] Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, "A Paisagem como Problema da Filosofia", in *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologia*, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2011, p. 13 ff.

here to dwell on the matter of the concept's evolution; we should simply take note that ideas of landscape as "the stretch of territory that may be reached by a glance" or "a drawing or painting representing a country site" or "a literary piece on a country subject", are poor in meaning and not useful to the discussion we are holding here.

The landscape becomes a subject of study appropriate for philosophy because it appears to carry in itself a quite extraordinary wealth of meaning. It is, at once, the meeting point between man and nature, the site of aesthetic experience, the possibility field of a completeness, which extends beyond the borders of a common solipsism. But it is also landscape that reminds us of the tragic dimension of the cultural man's aloofness and loss, it is landscape that shows us the overwhelming need to exercise control, enclosure and restraint. It is this duality that renders it so interesting and complex. Its contradictions are what make us think of a window framing an unmeasurable stretch. It is the landscape that provides us with the boundaries of what we may or may not reach, and at the same time, the means to surpass them. It is in the landscape that the aesthetic experience of the natural takes place.

4. The current trends: proposals and snags

a) Diagnostic

In the last quarter of the 20th century we saw that greater visibility was given to the themes of the beautiful in aesthetics. Slowly but surely there was growth in the number of authors and articles on the aesthetic experience of nature, almost all sharing the recognition of the inapplicability of the methods for appreciating art to this experience. Despite their recognizable differences, it is possible to find common traits between these authors and their respective theories. That is precisely what we will attempt to do next.

Recent theories presuppose a simple acknowledgement which is fully documented: the so-called classic aesthetic theories have proved to be incapable of justifying and truly describing what happens in man's aesthetic relationship with nature.

When developed, the majority of those theories took into account the analysis of artworks and make use of such categories as intention, language, symbol, technical representation, which are not applicable to nature. The

flaws in these theories are now even being pinpointed in regard to art, because its diversity is such that it is impossible to find a theory to cater for all forms of artistic expression.

This will lead us into a second criticism of those theories: the analysis of art works seems to devalue the simultaneous use of all our senses. One theory will highlight sight, but music is heard. Another may emphasise hearing, but in architectural works we move through space using several of our senses. This shortcoming becomes quite apparent when we imagine a walk in nature and see the green of trees and hear the wind moving through their leaves and the water rippling and we feel the sun on our faces and smell the fragrance of flowers and moss. It is a full immersion of all senses in the landscape to which classical aesthetic theories clearly fail to apply.

A third criticism often raised by Saito concerns the difficulty we have in establishing an aesthetic relationship without anthropomorphising nature. Although, as the author recognises, there is always a certain degree of anthropocentrism in the valuation of nature, because we are part of that relationship and have ourselves to acknowledge it and understand it; it is no less true that we often appreciate landscapes because they look like pictures (pictorial appreciation of nature) or because the sites were associated to historically relevant human events (associative appreciation of nature) and these are incorrect ways of appreciating nature which disregard nature's intrinsic value.

The criticisms made by these authors aim to re-focus the debate away from aesthetic studies towards nature's specific features, adding to its value and demonstrating that if an aesthetic theory cannot describe satisfactorily the aesthetic experience of nature it is of no use.

b) Knowledge and aesthetics

Carlson and Saito seek to give nature the limelight by pointing out the role played by the sciences in generating knowledge and discourse as examples of how a faithful report of the aesthetic experience can be developed. Science focuses on nature respecting its autonomy. It looks for answers analysing nature by itself and in its interactions excluding (as much as possible) the human element. This would stand as a model for an approach since it enables the appreciation of nature on its own terms, describing it as it is.

Besides this previous assertion, which is based on the right attitude, Carlson further contends that scientific knowledge will have the capability of enriching and making more profound the aesthetic experience of nature. We will have to accept the criticism purporting that "a meteorological concern" is incompatible with the aesthetic appreciation of clouds because "a meteorologist *is* concerned, not with the visual appearance of a striking cloud formation but with the causes which led to it".[15]

We can yet add another two shortcomings to the suggestion of resorting to scientific knowledge to deepen our aesthetic experience of nature.

The first derives from the simple fact that natural sciences are necessarily anthropocentric in so far as they provide us with a man-centered view of nature tailored to suit his cognitive capacities. Unlike what it set out to do, science accommodates natural phenomena in its explanatory grids in accordance with scientific paradigms accepted by its respective community.

The second criticism that can be advanced is that the history of scientific knowledge shows that it does not ensure an ethically correct attitude towards nature, quite the contrary. Over the course of time, science and scientific knowledge have supplied the tools that allowed man to manipulate, control and destroy nature. Therefore, such knowledge does not ensure the creation of an understanding and empathy in regard to nature. We will resume this criticism in the next entry.

c) Ethics and aesthetics

In recent thought, the relationship of man with nature has been approached as a whole. This approach has several positive aspects but also some negative ones.

It seems possible to sustain that the return of aesthetics to nature is, at least, partly due to the environmental activism that began in the second half of the last century. At the least it must be realized that the increase in quantity and visibility of the writings about the aesthetics of nature is coeval to those movements. This explains, perhaps, why the contemporary aesthetics

[15] Yuriko Saito, "Appreciating Nature on Its Own Terms", p. 148. Saito quotes Hugo Munsterberg, *The Principles of Art Education* [1905] reprinted as "Connection in Science and Isolation in Art", in *A Modern Book of Aesthetics,* ed. Melvin Rader, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962, p. 438.

theories to which we have been referring, give great emphasis to ethical questions. This occurs clearly as an assumption (in Carlson and Saito) or as a consequence (in Berleant).

This nearness may be recognized in the interdependency of these theories.

Carlson presents his aesthetic theory of the appreciation of nature in a classical framework:

> the natural environment, insofar as it is untouched by man, has mainly positive aesthetic qualities; it is, for example, graceful, delicate, intense, unified, and orderly, rather than bland, dull, insipid, incoherent, and chaotic. All virgin nature, in short, is essentially aesthetically good. The appropriate or correct aesthetic appreciation of the natural world is basically positive and negative aesthetic judgments have little or no place.[16]

Deriving from this way of thinking is an ethic favouring protection of everything natural due to its intrinsic aesthetic value. The ethical attitude is backed by this positive aesthetic. Carlson asserts clearly that there are direct interferences between the ethic and aesthetic fields because when we appreciate aesthetically we do so with great involvement from our emotional and psychological being (this goes beyond our five senses) which entails our moral and cultural values. But the reverse is also true: our aesthetic appreciation of nature contributes to the shaping of our ethical perspectives of nature.[17] As previously shown, this thesis derives directly from the initial argument that all nature untouched by man holds an essentially positive aesthetic quality.

Berleant's work sets this connection between aesthetic and ethic as a consequence of man's integrated relation with nature. In this instance, what is purported is a return of man to nature's kernel. Man lives in the landscape, runs through it, transforms it and is transformed by it. His engagement is complete and sets off a deep aesthetic experience involving all senses at once. This is also an ethical engagement since it carries all human facets. This renewed closeness with nature implies, at the same time, a deep aesthetical relationship and a demanding ethics that originate in the perception of creating a unity that

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[16] Allen Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment: The Appreciation of Nature, Art and Architecture*, New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 72.

[17] See *ibid*., p. 66 f.

supersedes the traditional separation and aloofness between what is natural and what is cultural, between nature and man.[18]

> Saito chooses to approach the ethical issue as an assumption of an aesthetics of nature. Her viewpoint that a correct aesthetic appreciation of nature is, first of all, a moral issue, makes it clear that the aesthetic and ethic fields of man's relationship with nature are dealt with simultaneously. According to her theory, a correct aesthetic appreciation of nature implies there is a moral attitude to appreciate it in its own terms, meaning that in order for an aesthetic appreciation to be valid it will have to be preceded by a shedding of all the attitudes that interpret nature in human terms, be it through the association of human historical and cultural events to particular places or through the appreciation of the pictorial beauty of a landscape (as is the case of the appreciation leading to the statement "this landscape would make a great painting"). Release from these anthropocentric constraints would allow an empathic and therefore ethical relationship. Nature would not be perceived as *another* which is incomprehensible to us but as *another* understood and appraised *on its own terms* by an ethical requirement of principle.[19]

d) Difficulties

These formulations, which are attractive because they lay down – as an assumption or as a consequence – a recognition of nature and an ethical respect in the relationship of man with it, reveal some problems often detected by their authors themselves.

The first of these complications results from the attempt to insert some form of scientific knowledge into a correct appreciation of nature. This is quite apparent in Allen Carlson but also in Saito, in spite of her restricted view of the type of scientific knowledge that enables a deeper aesthetic experience. The truth is that scientific information, in this context, seems to lead us away from a spontaneous aesthetic experience. Even when we circumscribe this knowledge to the "natural history" sciences (biology and geology, for example), their relevance in the case of a waterfall or a forest path with its intensity of smells and sounds seems to be marginal, to say the least.

Scientific language has yet another snag when it comes to upholding a refocusing in the experience of nature and an endeavour to end with its

[18] See Arnold Berleant, "The Aesthetics of Art and Nature", pp. 82-85.

[19] See Yuriko Saito, "Appreciating Nature on Its Own Terms", p. 141 ff.

prevailing anthropocentrism – science is intrinsically anthropocentric in so far as, as Saito recognises, "one may not deny that science attempts to humanise nature since it trusts our observations and renders it comprehensible to us". The reverse stance, which views nature as mysterious, ineffable and unreachable, does not appear to be better, but the snag remains.

A second difficulty, advanced in an innovative though limited and bold way by Berleant, concerns the negative aesthetic categories. The ugly, the bland, the offensive and repulsive, are hard to equate with an ethical stance of seeing oneself in a position to defend these landscapes. A second difficulty, addressed in a limited but innovative and pioneering way by Berleant, is linked to negative aesthetic categories. The ugly, the uninteresting, the offensive and the repugnant are hard to equate with an ethical stance that seeks to defend such landscapes. Doing the right thing, doing good, may require the protection of natural aesthetic objects that are uninteresting – a situation in which the good and the beautiful are not substitutable (as Plato held).

A third difficulty stems precisely from these attempts to integrate an ethic into aesthetic appreciation when the defence of the natural and a deepening of the aesthetic experience are referred to indistinctively, the reverse also being true. This search for proximity between good and beautiful, ethics and aesthetics, despite the interesting way in which it has been developed, denotes weaknesses in its immediate consequences. The intent to justify the protection of nature on the basis of an aesthetic commendation generates a serious problem besides the one already mentioned relative to negative aesthetic experiences: unlike ethical action, aesthetic experience is spontaneous and subjective. Human intervention on the natural should be exercised in an ethical and rational way; it should be thought in accordance with all available scientific information, the surveying of specific data in the area set to undergo the intervention, and should take into account, above all, a morality impelling an attitude of respect and care.

Human behaviour should be cajoled by that rational morality with the support of scientific knowledge.

Carlson and Saito's demands and proposals are definitely worthwhile for building the idea that morality and aesthetics are, in this instance, only instrumental. If that becomes quite obvious when Carlson postulates that all virgin nature has an intrinsic positive aesthetic value, when the more correct thing to

state would be that all virgin nature has an intrinsic ethic value which makes it worthy of protection, the same happens with Saito when she clearly upholds that an aesthetic judgement is adequate when it is ethically correct.

However, the protection of nature should not be dependent on a subjective and spontaneous experience, nor is that aesthetic experience *necessarily* more profound if a specific scientific education has been provided, although it may, obviously, exercise its influence.

The proposal of a commitment to nature, advanced by Berleant, seems to be the one less prone to this type of criticism, since it does not appear to make either field reliant on the other but addresses human relations with nature as a whole. This is, at the same time, an aesthetic and ethic commitment embodying all human (including cultural) and natural dimensions.

Nonetheless, this theory still suffers from a snag: commitment does not imply, necessarily, the surge of an aesthetic experience even though, apparently, it always implicit has a positive ethic attitude.

5. Conclusions

Currently, the discussion regarding the aesthetic theories that seek to describe the relationship of man with nature hinges, perhaps excessively, on two points:

a) Firstly, the integration of an ecological and scientific education as a means to deepen the aesthetic experience, rendering it richer and broader;
b) Secondly, on assigning to the subjective predisposition for aesthetic experience a moral undertone by setting the parameters of the relationship, simultaneously, on an ethical and aesthetic level, not just in its fundamentals, but also in its consequences. This identification between beautiful and good, which is explicit in Plato, will allow man's relationship with nature to be looked at in a broader way.

As we have seen these theses carry two difficulties. Respectively:

a) Scientific discourse, even that of the descriptive sciences, seems to draw us away from the aesthetic experience when it takes place;

b) Aesthetic experience is, in essence, spontaneous. Ethical action is, in essence, an act of the will; it is rational and intentional and presupposes the previous owning of a morality.

Even though the first of these criticisms is innocuous, from an ethical standpoint, the second may be quite detrimental to the defence and cherishing of nature. To make the protection of nature depend on a spontaneous subjective aesthetical judgement is a risk. It is simpler to develop an ethics, in this instance an environmentalist one, than it is to create an aesthetic theory to describe accurately and broadly the aesthetic experiences of nature.

In the same manner in which ethical action towards nature can be harmed by heterodox will, so aesthetic experience can be harmed if it is restrained by a moral law. The spontaneity of that experience may be lost in the search for ethical correctness in the established relationship. A relationship that is, first and foremost ethical, will hardly ever be spontaneous. It is fundamental to draw a clear distinction between these two fields, to enable us, later on, to find the bridges that will naturally emerge.

On the basis of all that has been stated in the course of this presentation it seems legitimate to put forward a theory that will take into account, in a first instance, a timeline rather than a space border in the relation between environment and landscape. This standpoint carries consequences both for the usefulness of ecological education and the interaction between the ethic and aesthetic fields.

The more common and less precise definitions of environment and landscape carry us back to the idea that the latter is inserted in the former, meaning that the landscape is a more restricted space (a "stretch of land that can be surveyed with a glance") and the environment is meant to include what surrounds us, the location and the conditions that impact the development of living beings and the relationships they establish with that environment.

According to the definitions previously put forward, the distinction is not made, however, by employing a space reference but rather by taking into account a timeline:

Environment would be the set of all historical, social, educational, physical and biological circumstances that are part of the history of a certain subject including the way such circumstances have been perceived and absorbed,

which interactions they have caused and what memories they have raised. The environment would, therefore, imply time.

Landscape is the venue where the aesthetic experience occurs. But what defines it is not the idea of place but rather the fact that it is a time-limited experience. As opposed to the environment, the landscape refers to a spontaneous, intense experience that is necessarily limited in time.

The environment would be, generally, the most favourable ground for ethical action in the sense that cherishing it results from culture, education and social interactions. It is within its scope that ethical will is shown and it is in its bosom that rational decision-making generates action.

Quite different is the landscape which, starting as a fragment, becomes the representation of another, shedding her obvious reality to become the arena in which a deep relationship with nature develops, a relationship of communion where lived experience momentarily fades out the boundaries between the Self and the Other.

Having accentuated the flaws inherent to current aesthetic theories of nature, the proposals that have been put forward may have to be, simply, reformulated. Bearing in mind that we are working with a time dimension we may, undoubtedly, state that ecological education, exposure and appreciation of scientific discourse (assuming it addresses nature on its own terms) and education about the richness and diversity of life can enable broader and deeper aesthetic experiences. Knowing that a certain island is the summit of a slumbering volcano or that a tree may live centuries beyond our life span can trigger an aesthetic experience of amazement and being overwhelmed. This type of foreknowledge (which would be a part of our environment) would elicit a well-thought-out ethical respect and could set off an aesthetic experience. What has to be made clear is that this does not mean that the aesthetic experience will necessarily occur and that we cannot make righteous behaviour towards nature dependent on such spontaneous judgement.

It is by insisting on an education inductive of respect and care for an autonomous nature that we may better get to know it and defend it. If that environmental education could also prompt deep aesthetic experiences, all the better. But both fields should be looked at on the basis of their autonomy and interrelations.

THE AESTHETICS OF SOUND IN LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE

Tiago Mesquita Carvalho

This chapter intends to briefly introduce the relevance of sonic aspects in landscapes and architecture as a significant contribution to the experiential relationship we have with both space typologies. As such, it undertakes a critical analysis of the way vision and its representational metaphors have been mediating experience and intervention in landscapes. It will then approach the physical and phenomenological features of sound as feasibly supporting a different kind of access to and appreciation of landscapes and architecture. Finally, it includes an analysis of how some artistic works of sound intervention, reputedly classified as belonging to *Land Art*, allow for the reconfiguration of the common notion of visual space.

1. The critique of vision as a representational metaphor

We begin our text by listing the several reasons that justify the irrelevance that the field of sound has been condemned to; or, more specifically, explain why it has been restricted only to the specialized world of music. We continue by examining the most pressing consequences deriving from such neglect, which has ultimately shaped the composition of the current aesthetics of landscape and architecture.

There are strong parallelisms between the epistemological features of the sense of vision and those attributed to rationality. The Greek word for knowing, *eidénai* shares its root with *eidos*, or the way by which a thing is seen; the access to the essence of an object proceeds, therefore, from an emulation of the visual sense.[1]

[1] F. Joseph Smith, "Further Insights into the Phenomenology of Sound", *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 3, 2 (1967): 136-137.

The prominence given to the intellect and the inquisitive abilities suitable for accessing reality is analogous to the use that the eyes routinely perform when they detect and identify the forms of objects. This comparison is still present nowadays in the countless metaphors that populate European languages; even the word *metaphor*, meaning "change, transposition", presupposes something essential that is figuratively transferred from one object or an idea to another; while the eyes detect formal and material similarities, the mind instead establishes eidetic similarities precisely because it is able to detect and identify something beyond visible things, thus expanding the applicability of metaphors to increasingly larger sets. In this way, the expression *one's point of view* encloses the idea of someone's own singular standpoint or attitude, while the expression *to shed light* on an issue also means *to clarify it*, that is, to make it intelligible.

Reason and vision both operate by means of a distancing and detaching from what is analyzed or observed; and both reconstruct the world by selecting and grouping individual units defined by sharp and clear contours. They intend to grasp the broadest possible description of what is analyzed or observed while also assuming to be external to it. In fact, the long history of the analogy between reason and vision is justified by its broad and valuable legitimacy: as humans, we take in most information concerning the surrounding environment through vision. In its focused version, vision is intentional and addresses attention and directionality to a certain object or set of objects; at the same time, it is capable of scoping out considerable distances. As Porteous states, vision is our most predominant sense:

> more than eighty per cent of our sensory input is visual. Psychologists, urban designers, landscape architects, and advertisers all stress vision as the chief mode of knowing about the world. So much so, indeed, that when we use the term perception we almost always mean visual perception. This myopia stems from our cultural prejudices and values, and from the ease with which we can study or control vision in comparison with the other senses. Yet the emphasis on vision seems rather quantitative; we have little information on the qualitative importance of other perceptual modes.[2]

[2] J. Douglas Porteous, *Environmental Aesthetics: Ideas, Politics and Planning*, New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 31.

The properties of visual perception compel it to be actively pursuing new elements and details in what surrounds the eyes. What happens though, is that reality emerges with an almost exclusive visual connotation when vision is considered only by itself or when it's not lessened by other senses. Nature, for instance, becomes a set of several objects strictly limited by their geometrized contours, and notwithstanding, visual perception can only focus its attention on one object at each time, in a linear way. Restricted as we are to this visual position, it becomes reasonable to face reality as a collection of fixed, indivisible and invariant entities that conserve their respective essences throughout time. Some qualitative changes often occur to these essences; they *can* change, yet they *remain*; we do not see them as being in constant mutation, entwined in an incessant game of flowing entities, always symptomatic of each other and necessarily in mutual continuity.

Through vision we are more apt to dwell on the gap between us and the world but also to accept it as external to us. This alteration in the primacy of experience, prompted by the visual paradigm and the impulse that it gave to representations, is nevertheless as odd as it is contradictory; as there is already a very close proximity involved in the relation between sound and image, which already appears in the genesis of writing. The verbal world precedes the world of writing and the latter also needs a physical correlative; sounds and gestures precede words and no word is solely *that* image or solely *that* sound. The experienced world of everyday life is one of paced and rhythmically spoken words where each one of them appears with a given character.

Gutenberg's invention brought about the rise of writing's importance and the consolidation and dissemination of written documents as repositories of knowledge.[3] The reality of writing, a graphical extrapolation of a physical event activated by voice, was reified into an autonomous field.[4] Henceforth, voice refers to things and expresses their relationships but it is not a thing in itself anymore; on the contrary, its onomatopoeic, guttural dimension, its tonal expression stating exuberance or drowsiness, for example, loses out to the importance of the word, the real thing in itself. The origin of the meaning of things lies in none of them as particulars, but in the

[3] Apropos the importance of the appearance of printing technology in Europe, see Stephan Fussel, *Gutenberg and the impact of printing*, Cornwall: Ashgate, 2005.

[4] F. Joseph Smith, cit., 145.

human word that identifies and organizes their universal meaning. Thus, meaning becomes independent from the world, an abstraction that shifted from a utilitarian purpose to a reification that conquered its own domain. Listening lost its place to reading; the auditory space was turned into a visualized space; metaphysics disdained time and privileged a static perspective of being. This goes together and is consistent with visual perception, which tends to take on the world as something more permanent and not in a state of constant becoming.[5]

The contention of writing as a realm distinct from its sonic origin had a significant impact on the arts. It is a particular case of the precedence of representation over the represented reality. Music has often inherited such a mentality, as the musician joined the philosopher and the mathematician as those who somewhat neglect experience. In the weaving of their mental and conceptual systems, it becomes unnecessary to face the facticity of the physical event: a musical piece or part has no proper meaning beyond the way by which the materials endorse each system, in this case in the form of musical notation. In addition, in order for someone to appreciate music, it is necessary to have access to the ideal performance conditions, such as an appropriate room separated from the outside world. The hearing of a piece should not involve sounds other than those of the instruments. The requirement of such a context in appreciation is already a delimitation of the sonic world and a rejection of non-musical sounds. As a possible explanation, Schafer mentions the increase of the relevance of private life, inside the home, as compared to public life, external to it. From now on, music would be not tied up with daily street life and, as such, would require the silence of the home so that it could be properly appreciated: the concert hall replaced outdoor life.[6]

The prominence of the visual sense also influenced the birth of landscapes and is related to the genre of landscape painting, which was introduced to the West by the hand of Renaissance painters, the canvas and its framed limits being derived from the window, which already delimited

[5] Hans Jonas, "The Nobility of Sight", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 14, 4 (1954): 507-509.

[6] R. Murray Schafer, *A Afinação do Mundo*, São Paulo: UNESP, 1997, pp. 102-104 and pp. 151-154.

the outside. This was the first mediation between landscape and the subject. It appeared shyly, at first only occupying a minimal and negligible section of the painting, where the human figure would stand out with all its relevance. Later, by conquering the remaining area of the canvas, the landscape enlarged until it became a genre in itself.[7] Several ideas were crowned with this genesis: the modern discovery of the laws of perspective simultaneously acknowledged both the unity of a subject and the existence and possibility of an object likely to be apprehended through a pictorial representation. How? Through a *point of view* that recovered the geometric and picturesque attributes from the landscape: the interplay of lines, forms, light and color were the fundamental aspects that a painter had to tame so as to display a landscape.

At the same time, the emancipation of man from natural dangers and threats should also be mentioned; by drawing it and painting it, man affirmed his mastery over nature while perceiving himself as different from what was portrayed. This landscaping notion later influenced the very aesthetic appreciation of the natural world. Its influence is still felt today in the professional skills required for the design of space: distancing, spatial representation and *artialization*.[8]

In fact, it now seems inevitable to be otherwise, for landscape paintings record the very perceptual game between subject and landscape. Still today we feel its influence, since we commonly equate the space around us as a more or less accurate sum of edges and apexes and what such abstractions conceal. And yet, would there be any other possible way for landscape to appear in history? We still do not know whether the visual paradigm established itself because, *in fact*, the world is really and mainly *just visual*, or because the available technology at that time defined the possible aesthetic mediation between the territory and the subject *as* the colours and shapes laid on a canvas.[9] That is, we do not know whether the advent of landscape

[7] In this regard, see the relevancy of the concept of "double artialization", introduced by Roger; "Nature et culture. La double artialization", in *Court Traité du* paysage, Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1997, pp. 11-30.

[8] Jean-François Augoyard, "La vue est-elle souveraine dans l'esthétique paysagère?", *Le Débat*, 65 (1991): 51.

[9] Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice. Phenomenologies of Sound*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007, p. 189.

painting obeyed only the convergence of the mentioned ideas or followed the material availability of tints, frames and brushes as a convincing surrogate for landscape itself.

By contrast, the first, rudimentary sound recorders only appeared in the 19th century. As Winkler noted, technology and ideas mutually influence each other and give us what seems to be the most correct approach for appropriating the landscape:

> Both visual and sonic environments have their respective documentary technologies: photography and recording. As always, technology and representation, e.g. the ways and habits of looking and listening, shape the technology and are in turn shaped by it.[10]

This correlation seems to be present in the successive renewals of the material mediation that interferes in the aesthetic experience of the landscape; not only painting, but also daguerreotypes, black mirrors and photography have presented themselves as the successive mediations between the subject's apprehension and the world he comes across.

2. Sound and the relational presentification of nature

The analysis of sound's physical properties and phenomenology will lead us to consider its relevance for an experiential relation with the world. Indeed, it will place us before a different perception from that provided by a visual approach to the same world. When carrying out such an analysis, we not only question the epistemological exclusiveness and legitimacy of the visual approach, but we also allow for the expansion of aesthetics into other realms of perception. We deal with a critical exploration of the assumptions that conditioned the birth of the modern landscape, the results of which, as Augoyard sensed, may need to be reviewed:

> Can the less studied and the less traditional auditory perception of the environment, with little tradition in our culture, appear among the current paradigms of landscape and beyond the modern one?

[10] Justin Winkler, Space, *Sound ant Time – a choice of articles in Soundscapes Studies and Aesthetics of Environment 1990-2005*, Basel: University of Basel, 2008, p. 41.

Due to its properties, sound contrasts sharply with vision. As we have stated, vision is far more binding. Most sounds are abrupt, however; they appear fleeting in their first instants and then they merge into nothing, as they are less prone to be registered. As stated, with vision we are inclined to face the world as a set of autonomous objects that are able to have relations; but with auditory perception, given enough training and concentration, we detect the relational constitution of objects. This is already an aesthetic engagement. With vision we can say that a table resembles the matter inside its contours, thus we perhaps judge it as independent and separate from its surroundings. The sound of a table, however, always translates a relation between the table and another object with which it interacts. If an annoyed person hits the table with his hand, the ensuing sound is obligatorily relational: the sound needs the material contribution of each object to occur. If a bored person prefers to tap on the table, the sound will also be different. The sound of a table does not exist in itself but only as various material interactions, in an apparently infinite list.

In short, the forms we see seem to be confined to the interior of their limits, and therefore we judge them to be relatively autonomous. If our table lost a leg, it would *still* be a table – its identity is previous to its relations. Sound, however, more clearly reveals the continuity between objects and therefore highlights their relatedness. It extends beyond their geometric edges, filling and measuring the surrounding space. Fixing our table with a hammer would sound different depending on whether we were nailing it inside a cathedral or in a narrow, carpeted room. Besides running through objects and undermining the basis of their autonomy in visual terms, sound thrives on their gaps. Unlike vision, sound, as a conjunction of at least two bodies, is not restricted to its compositional surfaces and aspects.

Sound speaks the matter of the implicated bodies; it evokes the qualities of a meeting, however brusque or mild, and reveals the density of the invisible. A tubby, heavy sound clearly reveals the interiority of *those* bodies, penetrates their concealed spatiality and launches them into the outside. In this regard, Boubezari notes that:

> Sound discloses not the surface of things but the nature of its materiality. It discloses their density, their thickness. While light allows us to see the objects that we endow the touch with through kinesthetic movements – thus

> inscribing them in the geometric extension that we run across –, sound itself remains movement. It reminds us that the sonic objects also occupy this other dimension that we do not explore voluntarily but in which we naturally evolve: time.[11]

Since sound is already an emergent relation, we understand it in its own terms. An object's autonomy is then a quite *relative* notion: what is the sound of one hand clapping? Since a given material interaction is necessary for sound's appearance and given the transient existence of each sound, it would be a great deal more difficult to consider man as something passive and isolated from such interactions, as well as someone interested in establishing the representation of an exterior sonic environment. The temporal and the ephemeral components of sound are fundamental. This averts any desire for the possibility of a viable and final description. The precedence of the event is primary and, therefore, in its passivity, it also includes man, because it is all-surrounding. We state with Porteous that:

> one cannot close one's ear lids. Sound, therefore, is ubiquitous; there is no end to traffic roar, building and machine hum, the rustling of leaves. Sudden silence can be extremely disconcerting.[12]

Thus, unlike the visible, the audible is less prone to be recorded and represented, given its transience. As such, it does not invoke as many material mediations; and in the absence of those mediations it does not lay claim to any entrenched pathology of respect for its origins or for a past intended to be converted into a museum, saving or describing a certain lifeless reality.

More important is the fact that, in the case of vision, the impetus for representation is all-pervasive; it does not allow for the irrepresentable to complement the making of representations, it aims to develop an all-seeing view, outside of time and history. Now, in music, as with any sound, silence, the absence of sonic manifestations, is a condition for their phenomenality. We would hear nothing without the complementarity of silence and even the duration of pauses between sonic phenomena modifies the quality of

[11] Mohammed Boubezari, *O Espaço Sonoro e as suas Tipologias*, Lisboa: Parque Expo 98, 2008, p. 42.

[12] J. Douglas Porteous, *Environmental Aesthetics*, p. 33.

their perception. Silence, as the irrepresentable of the audible, affirms more clearly to reason the need for its presence so that something sonic *actually* happens. Space, in turn, as the irrepresentable of the visible, does not appear to be very evident as a condition for how we usually constitute objects: how would we really distinguish an object if its contours were not contrasted with the space? Any figure necessarily entails a background, although usually this is not recognized in visual perception.

In the case of auditory perception, if silence did not exist we could not apprehend musical or sonic variations and gradations. And thus a purely aural world seems sometimes to be closer to the very rhythms of life and becoming. It is the product of apparently contradictory events that during their interaction yield auditory phenomena. If one commits oneself to listening, one starts to appreciate its simple and sudden appearance, its rhythm, its relentless play, its impermanence. These qualities give us impressions that seem quite a lot more truthful to reality than the static paradigm of a world anchored in strictly visual criteria. It is in this respect that sound emulates life and that the auditory sense is more innocent than the visual one: it is not worried about its expiration, but only about its execution and appearance. It manifests itself and that is enough.

Sound also details and materializes space, giving it density and presence. If a painting or a photograph can easily represent a landscape while implying, as we have stated earlier, the identity of an external observer, the sonic exploration of a space is more compact and allows for a richer exploration of the otherness of bodies. The way in which we place ourselves, lie down or walk changes, and therefore composes the properties of the sounds we hear. We inevitably inhabit the world of sounds, so we cannot extricate ourselves from it, but only diminish our presence to the point that it seems inaudible. If we devote ourselves to listening we will be able to detect the *soundscapes*[13] in urban, natural or spoken settings. This will allow us to become immersed in a domain which exists prior to objectification and which emphasizes our engaged interdependence with such phenomena. We detect the limits of such

[13] "The sonic environment. Technically, any part of the sonic environment seen as study field. The term could refer to real environments or to abstract constructions, as musical compositions or tape assembly, particularly when considered as environments", R. Murray Schafer, *A Afinação do Mundo*, p. 366.

engagement through aesthetics, that is, through the possibilities of revealing the reality in ourselves and through our actions, given the reality that we are.

In fact, the apparent opposition between the perspectives of the visible and the audible is merely illustrative. Just as a human being under normal circumstances does not see something without a possible concomitant sound effect, it is also spurious to state that we can only hear something without an accompanying visual effect. Our sensual relation with the world is total and osmotic, since we affect it only because we are affected through the structures of our own bodily senses. The definition of our actions in the world derives from our interpretation of the sensual imprint it makes on us. And hence it is also a perceptive interpretation, although a commanding one, which, throughout history, has allowed us to consider reason as a *disembodied vision* and claim that this sense is the highest sense. What really happens is that each sense is simultaneous and works with the others, all interact in mutual terms.

Our perception is not a sum of images, sounds, odours, touches and actions but one single engagement with our environment. We perceive with all our body and we show the interactive nature of the world in us each time we move or act in it. In fact, we are always and inevitably in contact with the environment. Being in the world means having porous organs that spontaneously concentrate it in our familiar senses. And so there are not only five senses, but a ramified and dynamic multisensoriality of the body.

Hull, in his blindness, was introduced to this notion:

> The sense does not become conscious of itself because it lives in the world of which it is conscious. In the case of the ear, I learnt that you don't actually listen with your ears, you listen with your whole body.[14]

The rest of the senses, for instance, could be considered as specialized extensions of the touch. The skin is the basic, permeable and movable network that covers the body and gathers the world; the body is prone to synesthesia and, as ubiquitous as it is to what we are, it assembles in experience what the remaining senses collect. A movable touch, for example, can be considered a form of *silent s*ound in much the same way that sound itself can be considered as an

[14] John Hull, "Sound: An Enrichment or State", *Soundscape, The Journal of Acoustic Ecology*, II, I (2001): 12.

expanded touch. The senses use no alphabet to read and they accumulate for the body the breath of nature and things. They unravel the flow of interdependence that runs through reality and blooms in various shapes.[15]

Thus, we unwittingly invoke the landscape for ourselves through our whole body. We apprehend its minimal differences until it becomes internalized as body memory in nerves and muscles. We spontaneously and effortlessly learn and remember it, confident with the simple adaptive gestures that perfectly respond to requests. The body accumulates and carries these appeals of the landscape, which ultimately contribute to the building of the memory and meaning of a place, along with the certainty of the bond with nature and the strengthening of the sense of the active reality that we are. It is this reverberation of the landscape in us that allows and authorizes these concrete and creative acts; architectural management and modelling also create and model the landscape and account for the awareness of our non-separateness.

3. Sound as an approach to space

It is thus also reasonable to grant vision the perceptual primacy of having fostered those architectural aspects sketched by the supposed autonomy of the disarmed and omniscient eye. This resulted in constructing featureless spaces and buildings that lacked an appeal to sensible participation as they were exclusively visual in their making.[16] The remaining professions that intervene in space, like landscape architecture and urbanism, are still to this day rooted in this matrix. Many cities in the world present a design and an urban plan which is patently guided solely by aspects of vision and colour. Functionalist compartmentalization and partition appeared as an organizational seduction for visual conscience, managing to configure the expansion of cities in sets of dedicated areas with no relations between them.

Since then, urban form itself has been threatened by the assumption that space *is* merely visual space. As such, the form of constructions is limited to their functional essence, now seen as their substance. This subjugation of

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2005, pp. 19-22.

form to function by means of an exclusively geometrical and axial notion of space resulted in isolated squares, buildings, blocks and quarters disconnected from their natural and social environment. The disregard towards all further perceptive affordances of the human body was followed by various self-indulgent and alienating architectural and urban interventions. These are generally characterized by a prominent detachment from the rest of their inhabitants' sensible and participative potential. It is therefore advisable to turn the body into the dominant reference for urban and architectural planning, and the acceptance of its perceptive plasticity and motility can firstly lead to the acknowledgment of sound perception as a tool for such professional capabilities.

3.1. Sound in inhabited architecture and landscape architecture

On the other hand, sound phenomena have been approached in the practice of architecture almost exclusively *as* noise. The relationship of the designer with sound basically involves its quantification, he can then decide to keep it away from the private sphere. In short, sound is not seen as a resource, much less as a phenomenon presenting polysemic content. Just as we mentioned, vision does not amount to establishing a mere distancing of phenomena, as it often complements other senses, namely hearing. Nonetheless, the resident and the urban dweller are also creative actors in the soundscapes they inhabit and cross; they are ever creating and participating in them.

The home is the interior space that the inhabitant configures as his own, making it personal and unique. It is there that sound aspects are especially prone to be configured, providing the familiarity and acoustic comfort that are part of most inhabited houses. Boubezari points out that interior design has also been subdued by a professional skill entrenched in an aesthetics where image and light are the sole configurative parameters of the built space.[17] Such contemplative aesthetics derives more from the professional's skills, however, than from an everyday aesthetics belonging to each inhabitant. Their skill is based on an always persistent and immediate engagement with the environment. Such an aesthetics is incapable of distancing. The sound space is malleable, fluid and entitled to multiple combinations, so invokes all the dynamics of dwelling much more faithfully.

[17] Mohammed Boubezari, *O Espaço Sonoro e as suas Tipologias*, p. 23.

It is therefore important to highlight the role of the active dweller in the creation of his own common sound culture. In it, he is the actor of a sensitive and detailed composition, ready to modify the constraints of his sound comfort. Such a performance will have to close the loopholes in the defensive attitude that the acoustic approach has towards human dwellings. Aiming to acquire quantifiable data, this attitude has guided the acoustic engineer and the policy maker towards protecting the inhabitant from noise. The inhabitant is, however, the expert in understanding the topological dynamism intrinsic to sound phenomena that expand beyond visible material limits. Recovering the inhabitant's experiential competence as a centre for articulating and modelling his own sense of comfort underlines that expertise. Every daily situation in his home stimulates not a passivity sheltered in the architectural project, but a more capable and active unfolding of compositional possibilities. This is liable to recognize several variables that lead to an experienced comfort other than that composed by the values and parameters recommended by measuring instruments and legal regulations. His sensitive and acting body is therefore the most faithful instrument for his environment's optimal orchestration. In the words of Boubezari:

> more than any known measuring instrument, the inhabitant is capable of estimating and evaluating the comfort sound relationship that he wishes to establish toward each noise. This happens within the tension that separates both in the geometric space and that joins them in the sound space. The individual organizes the relationship between all the noises that encircle him both spatially and phonically.[18]

3.2. Sound in landscape architecture

The landscape of natural parks and gardens is subject to careful planning and care, and is often protected by several legal recommendations and regulations. It is also true that landscaping practice is more frequently and prominently exercised in today's cities. This is most likely due to the axiological importance that nature has in the quality of life of current urban dwellers. The urban landscape is, however, more subject to sensitive distortions, invasions and aggressions that endanger its positive valuation, namely through the degradation of its related aesthetic experiences. In this

[18] *Ibid*., p. 151.

sense, noise acquires an intrusive dimension, which can, admittedly, even be damaging for human health. However, we will have to admit that the fullness and relevancy of the sonic world exceeds the dichotomous categories of noise and music.

Some studies certify that the correspondence between the visual landscape and the soundscape of a given place contributes towards its valuation and that such places are even more valued when the accompanying landscapes have natural aspects. The soundscape of a place therefore captures those landscape elements that visual stimuli are unable to evince and, as such, enriches it. However, if these sonic elements are incongruous with the place's visual components, its appreciation will not be so positive, and may even be spoiled.[19] Schafer's appeal concerning the urgency of a well-considered critical practice of soundscape education and listening is therefore pressing and urgent. Such impressions could then substantiate an intervention on urban and landscape planning that foresees an informed inclusion of sonic aspects:

> the acoustic project seeks to discover principles by which the acoustic environment or soundscape aesthetic quality can be improved. For this it is necessary to conceive the soundscape as a vast musical composition that ceaselessly arises around us and ask in which way its orchestration and its form can be perfected to produce a wealth and diversity of effects that are not, however, destructive for health or human well-being.[20]

Some authors seek to articulate the need to introduce sound aspects in landscaping and urban planning through the creation of a conceptual vocabulary and methodologies that would support such recognition. Hedfors recalls that 'soundscapes can be acknowledged and developed as an aesthetic resource for sustainable development' and that such perception 'qualities should be considered when planning and designing landscapes'.[21] This is, after all, the acceptance that the visual mode is just one of the various environmental

[19] José Luís Carles *et al.*, "Sound influence on landscape values", *Landscape and Urban Planning* 43, 4 (1990): 199-200.

[20] R. Murray Schafer, *A Afinação do Mundo*, p. 366.

[21] Per Hedfors, "The Sounds of Two Landscape Settings: auditory concepts for physical planning and design", *Landscape Research* 28, 3 (2003): 245.

perceptions, albeit one which has, of course, come to dominate the many ways by which the landscape can be experienced. Considering further aspects of human perception is fundamental for the inception of authentic multisensorial experiences that built-up spaces rarely seem to achieve. Indeed, we argue that such experiences definitely contribute to their value.

Given their cogency, the immediate applicability of such a vocabulary and methodology should influence the design of urban parks, gardens and roads, guiding them towards the creation of perceptive sanctuaries where many citizens already find today a sort of regenerative shelter from the city's hustle and bustle. Such spaces, however, should not articulate their appreciative qualities with auditory qualities merely through the subtractive value that is the absence of noise, or the permanence of silence. The inclusion of sounds as aesthetic resources in landscape architecture projects is therefore a requirement that avoids noise control or its consideration in terms of merely biological or social expressions.

3.3. The relevance of *sonic Land Art*

Recently *Land Art* authors have been focusing their interests on the questioning of man's presence on the Earth as a whole. Their work features the creation of new space typologies, whether through massive or subtle interventions that alter and inquire into the bystander's perception of and role in the landscape. We could roughly say that the notion of *artistic act* in the natural environment is common to all of them. This consists in emulating that primal ontological gesture over which each community establishes a place in a landscape; through an interpretation of its experience and by means of this artistic act, one makes the familiarization of our habits and the numbness of our senses known. An attentive experience *should* enable a reformulation of relational habits with nature. It is more about praising the presence of a physical envelopment with the landscape, but is also about marking space, making it predominantly human, which is to say, discovering how its closeness is translated by the body. It is an earthly acculturation that does not denaturalize Earth, but rather recognizes its resourceful gift and roots man in it.

Recurrent, the sound intervention in the river Paiva by German artist Marc Behrens invokes, for instance, the labor activities of the riverside villages. As in other works by the same artist, the focus draws on the integration between natural and human environments through the coordinated contribution of such apparently unrelated elements to the same soundscape unit. The method for the work *Recurrent* consisted in collecting recordings of agricultural, winemaking, grazing and bread baking activities, as well as of a shale quarry. These recordings were later played through fixed loudspeakers floating in the river Paiva. It provided the spectators with a synthetic apprehension of the agricultural activities that until then had remained implicit but that were necessarily connected to the river. While referring to his work, Behrens describes it as an installation where,

> the moving shapes in the Paiva river are placeholders for identification with the sounds of human and animal activity, way beyond technical or musical aspects. The sounds, auditive results of people's lives and activities, are given back, handed over to the Paiva's water, it being the biggest natural force in the region. The river is seen as the principal stream of energy, making life in the area possible in the first place. Hence it is also perceived as a source for identification. Even if the river's presence is sometimes neglected, there is a conservative awareness of it as an entity, a toponymical signifier of homeland.[22]

In this sense, sound artists also develop earthworks that aim to deepen engagement with the environment through the exploration of other perceptual dimensions. Before a sound performance or installation, one notices the complementarity between the work and the surrounding environment, figure and background, and the appeal to the bystander's bodily participation as nexuses for uncovering reality. By using and exploring the sound recordings of the "real" world, the experience of a soundscape can be thought of as 'a dialogue between the listener and the place.'[23] The intimacy with the space's reality is strengthened; the permanence of a direct experiential relation with the world through sound and motility allows for

[22] Artist personal site, accessed 21/03/2016 http://marcbehrens.com/proj/recurrent.html

[23] Chris Ray, "Soundscapes and the Rural: a Conceptual Review from a British perspective", University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Centre for Rural Economy *Discussion Paper* no. 5, 2006, 16.

a larger degree of involvement. Such interventions make us more familiar with the shapes of space and constitute a relationship with it. Thus, they engender the assignment of intrinsic value to nature. Without an adherence to materiality we would not have the sensation of connecting with things as being in time; the auditory experience reveals to its spectators the evolving materiality of the space's components.

In this sense, the project *Revenant* by Patrick McGinley and John Grzinich is a collective site-specific sound proposal that intends to intervene in abandoned spaces, long forgotten by their previous social and industrial activities. The decay of such buildings or derelict places is the first witness of the current intentions that guided their creation; such artists explore the interchange between matter and the structure of such places through found objects and their acoustic *activation*. This consists in reverberating, rubbing or scratching some of the existing objects of *that* place, giving them back to the place's own spatiality, thus creating a new space, a hidden space that starts to be real. This new sonic space echoes in the present with the resonances of the past.

This is an ephemeral sort of archeology, whose objects of study are embedded in tangible time and concentrated in *that* concrete space. These material presences are several years, decades or centuries old and only speak should the artists consent them to, disclosing, however, that they are not inexorably fading into oblivion. On the contrary, when activated either by gestures or motility, they appear as active contributors for building the meaning of a place. Forsaken human dwellings, for example, even if limited to utilitarian ends, have a deeply haunting quality. As one crosses them, each gesture matters, as it wakes up the house from a lengthy sleep and erases the silence of an abandoned structure and the absence of a long departed hustle and bustle. The standard of these sound *activations* is not a commitment to the forgone past, but to the outlining of the expressive properties of sets of organic or inorganic bodies and their ability to form common bridges, hence they bring a sleeping structure back to reality and start its potential future.

In a more generic way, Ray suggests that sound works and installations allow for various soundscape compositions in specific places through a bodily exploration of materials and their background. They appear as 'a commentary on concrete human-nature interactions, or rather, given the explicit subjectivity in the method, as an invitation to listeners to reflect on these cases of interaction:

> Thus, we see the role of the professional sonic artist in interrogating our relationships with place. By creating aurally pleasing experiences, the artist generates a commentary on the nature of localities, or rather, invites listeners to re-assess their attitudes to a place.[24]

The borders between life and art are therefore diminished; place making and being in the landscape are inevitable creative acts. They bring the spectators closer to things and to their specific time. Each sound installation grants access to the imperceptible realm of things and to an experience of space which was not possible before.

[24] *Ibid*., 17-18.

PART THREE

WALK
Reconnecting Paths

INTERTWINING BODY AND LANDSCAPE: PETRARCH, ROUSSEAU AND NIETZSCHE

Victor Gonçalves

To articulate the concepts of 'body' and 'landscape' with the idea of 'trajective landscape',[1] given their fundamental character, it will be necessary to start by referring to the background of intelligibility in which they are inserted.

In regard to 'landscape', it is not an outline of the otherness of nature, or the exclusive result of an aesthetic approach. It is not a matter of contemplating the natural beautiful, modelled after the artistic beautiful or originating from a teleology of nature itself, nor a matter of paying homage to a self-ordered naturalness resilient to anthropomorphization. We prefer to think of it in the field of the *khora*, inspired by Augustin Berque's commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* (51a-53b): the "reciprocal impregnation of place and what is found in it",[2] the 'ecumenal place' (*lieu écouménal*), the 'existential place' (*lieu existentiel*), of human inhabitation of the Earth. It is not a simple topos, a space waiting to be materially filled (as Aristotle defines it in Book IV of his *Physics*), but the set of relations between the biological ecosystemic and the techniques and symbols inhabiting it (e.g.: trees, paths, rivers, poems or philosophemes, paintings, photographs, tourist brochures). In this sense, the landscape constitutes itself, both logically and empirically, immediately after the first trace of trajection between nature and man; thus, the natural world, so to speak, is almost entirely filled with landscapes. There is, however, a gradual process of mutual impregnation, going from a minimal landscape

[1] We owe this designation to Augustin Berque, for whom *trajection* is a "movement in which the subjective and objective worlds interact, so to speak, in a spiral, thus producing a trajective reality (semi-subjective, semi-objective), proper to our means." (our translation) ("O pensamento paisageiro. Uma aproximação mesológica", in *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologia*, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2011, pp. 193-194). The interrelation between the cultural and the natural produces, therefore, a new reality made out of elements from the two poles, subjected to change, i.e., non-substantialized.

[2] Augustin Berque, *Écoumène. Introduction à l'étude des milieux humains*, Paris: Belin, 2000, p. 20.

(unknown places due to the indifference they arouse or their more or less wild character) to a landscape caricatured by the tourist industry (a form of ontological debauchery derived from anthropological colonization and ecological degradation).[3]

In regard to 'body' – abbreviating its conceptual richness, woven by philosophers from Aristotle to Merleau-Ponty, Descartes, Spinoza, Nietzsche and Husserl, among many others –, we believe that it is in Henri Bergson's 'body-action'[4] that a meaning can be find which permits one to put into dialogue the three authors studied here. Without being able to thoroughly analyse Bergson's meticulous thought, we note that, in the abovementioned book, the body is decisive in the process of knowledge, not through sensations, but through actions. In it, Bergson states:

> Let us start, then, from this energy, as from the true principle: let us suppose that the body is a centre of action, and only a centre of action. We must see what consequences then result for perception, for memory, and for the relations between body and mind.[5]

The perception with which man establishes his 'images' of the world (to Bergson, a compromise between the 'objects' of realists and the 'ideas' of idealists) is formed in the 'body-action'. The action of the body makes, therefore, the meanings of the world emerge, and it organizes the production of meaning, turning the body into something wider than consciousness.

We will use this conception of 'body as centre of action' to approach what we deem to be a philosophy of landscape based on the concept of 'trajection', a movement between the physical and the spiritual. We think of the subjective body as immerging in other bodies, making itself one more *landscaping* element, contributing, in accordance with the memory of the place – its *genius loci* –, to the definition of a landscape never petrified in a substantiality; landscapes are living, playing parts in plays.

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[3] As a supplement, we recommend the reading of Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, *Filosofia da Paisagem. Estudos*, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2011, pp. 115-16.

[4] Henri Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire*, Paris: PUF, 1939.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 228.

1. Petrarch's Letter on the ascent of Mont Ventoux

This mountain in the south of France, near Avignon – where the papacy was based at the time –, is especially famous in our day for hosting an important stage of the Tour de France and for mountain tourism. Petrarch claims to have climbed it in April 1336, when it was only a natural observation point inhabited by shepherds and farmers bound to a daily toil devoid of *vita contemplativa*. Petrarch's Letter is one of the most famous letters of the European epistolary tradition, beautiful and essential to understand the passage from the Middle Ages to Modernity. A poet and cleric at the papal court for ten years, Petrarch addresses the letter to his confessor, Dionigi da Borgo San Sepolcro, to report to him the experience of ascent, allegorically marking the overcoming of the empirical world, with its things and feelings, and the rising toward transcendence.

The nature of this epistolary text has been much discussed, from doubts regarding the date of its writing[6] to the ambiguity of its genre (somewhere between an autobiographical note and a fictional text). The scope of its addressees (a scope wider than the name presented in its opening) is added to these uncertainties, thus providing several interpretations to the community of model-readers.[7] It is cited by philosophy as much as by literature

[6] This Letter is much more than a geographical and physiological description of the climbing of the mountain, it is beyond the account of a journey. Therefore, several studies argue that Petrarch's ascent may never have happened, or at least not as he reports it, being a product of the literary creation of a man much closer in years to 50 than to the 32 of the character. Giuseppe Billanovich was the first to argue for the thesis of literary creation (*Petrarca Letterato*, I. Lo scrittoio del Petrarca, Roma: Ed. Storia e Letteratura, 1947; and "Petrarca e il Ventoso", *Italia medioevale e umnistica* 9 [1966]: 389-401). He was then followed by many others, e.g. Davy Carozza and H. James Shey in his introduction to Petrarch's *Secretum*, New York: Peter Lang, 1989.
Furthermore, by April 26th of the Julian calendar – May 9th of the current calendar –, the mountain would still have much snow, especially because, at the beginning of the 14th century, the Little Ice Age had begun.

[7] We borrow this concept from Umberto Eco. With it, we do not want to determine the reader presenting the right interpretation, but to differentiate him from the empirical reader, immersed in his historical circumstance. The 'model-reader' is a possible reader capable of reading one or more of the several meanings of a text. As stated by Eco, "A text can foresee a model reader entitled to try infinite conjectures." ("Overinterpreting texts"; in Umberto Eco, *Interpretation and overinterpretation*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 64).

or theology, deemed, for example, by Jakob Burckhardt (*Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, 1860) to be an important part of the Petrarchan corpus that indicates the invention of landscape; by the 19th century Italian poet Giosué Carducci to be the foundation of alpinism; or by others still to be associated with the dawn of the Kantian sublime.

However, this perspectivism does not diminish the presence of a Petrarch dazzled by the theological conversion recounted by Saint Augustine in his *Confessions*. Throughout his life, Petrarch tried to reproduce that process of pre-beatification in an experience of his own and the Letter of Mont Ventoux on his conversion is a testimony of that desire. The ascent of the mountain stages a spiritual drama: during the walk, the narrator meditates on moral imperfection, the difficulties of orientation, physical suffering, innocuous chatter, the futility of natural observation points…, all transmuted when he arrives at the summit and replaces his body with the soul. The conversion, in an Augustinian *Stimmung*, occurs by abandoning outwardness for inwardness. The Letter's terminology itself changes from the material ('earth', 'toil', 'sweat', 'body', 'fatigue', 'rocks', 'briars'…) to the spiritual ('blessed life', 'spirit', 'soul', 'virtue', 'nobility'….); and from words – still matter – to the silence of theophanic revelation. As Donald Beecher argues,[8] the sequence of the Petrarchan narrative is a Christian parable of elevation as spiritual work: the abandonment of baggage; the old shepherd's nihilism; the miscalculated detours, the irrelevance of optical beauty; the conversion of space into time, of matter into spirit; the search for inner peace against the disorder of the outside world. Each one of these resources (narrative, stylistic and symbolic) is one more element of conversion, dramaturgically starting with the initial guilt and imperfection which, after being intensified by an extenuating physical effort, are transmuted, enabling the final spiritual revelation.

For that reason, taking this *mise-en*-scène into account, one can hardly secularize the ascent by favouring a proto-theory of landscape over the parable of spiritual and religious elevation. There is, furthermore, a crescendo initiated in the prosaic motives and suffering of the body at the beginning of the climb which is sustained until two paragraphs from the text's end, when Petrarch writes:

[8] "Petrarch's 'Conversion' on Mont Ventoux and the Patterns of Religious Experience", *Renaissance and Reformation* / Renaissance et Reforme vol 40 no. 3 (2004): New Series vol 28, no. 3 (2004): 55-75.

> How earnestly should we strive, not to stand on mountain-tops, but to trample beneath us those appetites which spring from earthly impulses.[9]

The writing starts with the exposition of the secular motive leading the poet to the mountain ("'To-day I made the ascent of the highest mountain in this region, which is not improperly called Ventosum".[10] Then he goes on to discuss the difficult choice of a companion, a religious ceremony of communion of sorts, falling back on blood kin (a brother), a simile of the 'spiritual family'. Thirdly, he details the difficulty of physical ascent; it is still a poet that says: "Remorseless toil conquers all"[11] as a stimulus to master 'the nature of the place'. The shepherd, 'at great length', also tries to dissuade them from the climb, invoking the damages it brings to the body; hence, the brother chooses 'a direct path straight up the ridge', while Petrarch hopes 'to find an easier path'. Suddenly, in the middle of the text's symbolic economy, Petrarch introduces an analogy between the hardships of the physical climb of the mountain and the much less visible but more essential difficulty of a spiritual elevation to the 'blessed life', a demanding path for the soul, much more important, after all, than the one forced on the body in the climb.

This passage from the material to the spiritual is based on the dichotomy imperfection/perfection, in the Augustinian dialectics of recollecting the imperfect in order to better love the perfect, i.e., God (See *Confessions*, II, I, 1). But human imperfection makes elevation more difficult: one stays in the material world despite knowing that only spiritualization leads to blessedness. Now, while Petrarch is struggling with this dilemma, the event of bibliomancy strategically comes about: it occurs to him to look into the small book of the Confessions he had with him, and while opening it to read whatever came to hand, 'it chanced that the tenth book presented itself', which roughly states the following:

> And men go about to wonder at the heights of the mountains, and the mighty waves of the sea, and the wide sweep of rivers, and the circuit of the ocean, and the revolution of the stars, but themselves they consider not.[12]

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[9] Francesco Petrarca, "The Ascent of Mount Ventoux".

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] *Ibid*., citing Virgil, *Georgics*, I, pp. 145-146.

[12] *Ibid*., citing *Confessions*, X, VIII, 15.

In light of what we have just said, any interpretations placing Petrarch's Letter as the opening of an aesthetic Modernity able to constitute the idea of landscape seem to be ruined. Notwithstanding, we think that the text affirms a certain aestheticizing of nature, albeit hidden behind the liturgy of religious conversion, particularly in the account of the poet's arrival at the summit:

> At first, owing to the unaccustomed quality of the air and the effect of the great sweep of view spread out before me, I stood like one dazed. I beheld the clouds under our feet, and what I had read of Athos and Olympus seemed less incredible as I myself witnessed the same things from a mountain of less fame. I turned my eyes toward Italy, whither my heart most inclined. The Alps, rugged and snow-capped, seemed to rise close by, although they were really at a great distance, the very same Alps through which that fierce enemy of the roman name once made its way, bursting the rocks, if we may believe the report, by the application of vinegar. I sighed, I must confess, for the skies of Italy, which I beheld rather with my mind that with my eyes.[13]

In the whole of the text, this description marks the beginning of a prevalence of the spiritual over the material. However, its extension and intensity, although merely secular, cannot be diminished. Here a certain discursive autonomy is insinuated: the pleasure of the optical spectacle and the geographic design of the views do not only surely serve as a negative impulse for the later spiritual *Aufhebung* (overcoming and subsuming). Indeed, in the perspective of the aesthetic relation between man and landscape – trajection movement – one should also emphasize that the condition of the possibility of the abovementioned landscaping contemplation is due to the traject that the body – soaked in sweat, sore, tired… – has made between the bottom and the top of the mountain. Petrarch seems to devalue both its pleasures and its sufferings, magnifying the pleasures and sufferings of the soul. However, the body runs through the whole text in the same way that it follows the entire mountain path. It is omnipresent and wanting to erase it just accentuates it more, even if through concealed ways.

[13] *Ibid*., our italics.

This interpretation would, of course, be unlikely before Jacob Burckhardt's consideration of Petrarch as one of the early Moderns.[14] The horizons of expectation prevented any other interpretation beyond the liturgy of the religious interpretation. Nowadays, while acknowledging that it is not the only available reading, this interpretation seems to us to be legitimate within a probably wide set of possible readings. Therefore, we look at the case of Augustinian bibliomancy as an almost anachronistic narrative device, the Middle Ages still wanting to shape an already pre-modern thought.

2. Rousseau: from Romantic contemplation to the bodily dive into the landscape

Parts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The New Heloise*, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, *Confessions* and *Emile, or On Education*, find themselves simultaneously at the beginnings of the idea of Romantic contemplation of the landscape (sometimes symbiotic) – containing also remnants of the classical vision of 'ideal landscape' – and at the beginnings of the idea of a landscaping post-Romanticism that replaced the sentimental vertigo of poetic sublimity and, in a dialectical process, the Apollinity of the natural beautiful for the biotic and ecological relation between man and nature. On the beginning of the Romantic worldview, the fictional framework of the dialogue between the Savoyard vicar and the narrator (Rousseau?) in *Emile's* book IV is paradigmatic:

> I indicated eagerness to hear him. The appointment was put off till no later than the next morning. It was summer. We got up at daybreak. He took me outside of the city on a high hill beneath which ran the Po, whose course was seen along the fertile banks it washes. In the distance the immense chain of the Alps crowned the landscape. The rays of the rising sun already grazed the plains and, projecting on the fields long shadows of the trees, the vineyards, and the houses, enriched with countless irregularities of light the most beautiful scene which can strike the human eye. One would

[14] "But the significance of nature for a receptive spirit is fully and clearly is played by Petrarch – one of the first truly modern men. That clear soul – who first collected from the literature of all countries evidence of the origin and progress of the sense of natural beauty, and himself, in his 'Aspects of Nature,' achieved the noblest masterpiece of description." (*The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, Project Gutenberg, February 2000, p. 182).

> have said that nature displayed all its magnificence to our eyes in order to present them with the text for our conversation.

Generally speaking, we are presented with a description that seems to be made for painting, still a classical pictorialization of the landscape. Overstating the harmony of the composition, he frames the landscape in a setting radiant with equilibrium, beauty and serene vital strength, an authentic Claude Lorrain. But the 'projected shadows' and the 'countless irregularities of light' foretell the passion, the symbolism, the vertigo of enigma, the multiplicity of composition… of Romantic landscapes, as shown, for instance, by Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot.

Without following a line of thought subjected to the chronology of his works – a chronology that is, furthermore, difficult to establish –, Rousseau describes, in his seventh walk of the Reveries, the optical experience of contemplation, starting by establishing the (classical) conditions of an enchanting landscape:

> Trees, shrubs, and plants are the attire and clothing of the earth. Nothing is so sad as the sight of a plain and bare countryside, which displays only stones, clay, and sand to the eyes. But enlivened by nature and arrayed in its nuptial dress amidst brooks and the song of birds, the earth, in the harmony of the three realms, offers man a spectacle filled with life, interest, and charm – the only spectacle in the world of which his eyes and his heart never weary. The more sensitive a soul a contemplator has, the more he gives himself up to the ecstasies this harmony arouses in him. A sweet and deep reverie takes possession of his senses then, and through a delicious intoxication he loses himself in the immensity of this beautiful system with which he feels himself one.[15]

The relation is centred on the subject, the objects of contemplation are anthropomorphized, the initial ugliness of the 'bare, barren countryside' imposes itself through human taste and the final delight is a prerogative of the observer. The human being sculpts with the force of his imagination and that of prejudices favouring order and equilibrium, a nature amiable to mathematical proportions, isomorphic sanctuary for the rationality that

[15] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Œuvres Complètes*, Paris: Gallimard/Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1961, pp. 91-92.

interprets it, still reluctant to embody the 'ecstasies' and the 'intoxication' that are also part, albeit apocryphally, of the natural composition.

However, in a notable shift, in the same work and, indeed, the same chapter, Rousseau drifts away from this contemplation (somewhere between Classical and Romantic), introducing a more physiological relation of the body with the landscape:

> I clamber up rocks and mountains, I go deep into vales and woods in order to slip away, as much as possible, from the memory of men and from the attacks of the wicked. It seems to me that in the shade of a forest I am as forgotten, free and peaceful as though I had no more enemies or that the foliage of the woods must keep me from their attacks just as it removes them from my memory; and in my foolishness I imagine that by not thinking about them, they will not think about me.[16]

Leaving aside the emphasis given to the 'politics' of enmity, a Rousseauian constant, individual and nature now establish a new relation beyond the traditional asymmetrical contemplative distance. The individual traverses and protects himself in a nature made into a landscape by trajective gestures; he lives in it, a body among other bodies. Without spatial or mental distance, unyielding, a post-culturalist symbiosis arises; Rousseau wants to be one more element of the landscape, turning away from over-cultured humanity.

In the renowned "Lettre du Valais" of *The New Heloise* – Letter XXIII of the epistolary novel published in 1761, in Amsterdam –, Rousseau describes the alpine landscape while presenting a firm apology of the simple and rustic life of the inhabitants of Valais (quite in the style of the myth of the 'noble savage'), and also praising solitude as a source of true meditation. But the most important feature of this text is revealed in the way Rousseau makes the landscape-nature interfere with human spirituality. For this reason, some have seen in this letter the official birth of Romanticism. In it, Rousseau, presents, firstly, a landscaping contemplation, now distinctly Romantic:

> I wanted to daydream, and I was always distracted from doing so by some unexpected vista. Sometimes huge cliffs hung like ruins above my head. Sometimes high and thundering waterfalls drenched me in their thick fog. Sometimes a perpetual mountain stream opened by my side an abyss the

[16] *Ibid*., p. 99.

> depth of which eyes dared not fathom. On occasion I got lost in the darkness of a dense wood. On others, on emerging from a chasm a pleasant meadow suddenly delighted my sight. […] All that makes up an inexpressible mixture for the eye the charm of which is further enhanced by the subtlety of the air which makes colours more vivid, outlines sharper, brings all lines of sight closer...

A second passage, cited below, describes, in a different fashion, an isomorphic process between the individual and nature turned into landscape, a process, which is, moreover, led by the latter. This is a new paradigm, in which the other of the landscape is no longer constituted through aesthetic contemplation, but out of an aesthesic interaction that demands a redefinition of the Cartesian dualism of *res cogitans/res extensa*:

> it is a general impression experienced by all men, although they do not all notice it, that high in the mountains where the air is pure and subtle, one breathes more freely, one feels lighter in the body, more serene of mind; pleasures there are less intense, passions more moderate. Meditations there take on an indescribably grand and sublime character, in proportion with the objects that strike us, an indescribably tranquil delight that has nothing acrid or sensual about it. […] There, one is grave without melancholy, peaceful without indolence, content to be and to think: all excessively vivid desires are blunted; they lose that sharp point that makes them painful, they leave deep in the heart nothing but a light and sweet emotion, and thus it is that a favourable climate causes passions to contribute here to man's felicity which elsewhere make for his torment. I doubt that any violent agitation, any case of vapours [maladie des vapeurs] could stand up to a comparably prolonged sojourn, and I wonder that baths of the salutary and beneficial air of the mountains have not become one of the principal remedies of medicine and morality.

Lastly, in book IV of *The Confessions*, Rousseau recounts a relation with the landscape that deepens what we have cited in the last excerpt from *The New Heloise*, coming rather close to recent landscape theories: "Walking has something that animates and enlivens my ideas: I almost cannot think when I stay in place; my body must be in motion to set my mind in motion."

In spite of everything, we feel that the human (at this point somewhat more than a terminological difference in regard to 'man') is still too immunized regarding otherness, regarding the other of the landscape: he walks and breathes in it, but keeps a qualitative distance, invincible in its essence, between them. It is true that part of the last two excerpts could have been written by Nietzsche and would fit in rather well with the current ecological reflections of geophilosophy,[17] but there is not as yet a mutual welcoming, without unyielding ontological distinctions, between the landscape and man.

3. F. Nietzsche: thinking with and in the landscape

Nietzsche was not a long-distance traveller; he always kept his travels within the central European corridor linking the North (Germany) to the South (Italy). Naumburg, Bonn, Leipzig, Bayreuth (the circuit of his cultural provenance); Basel, Luzern (Tribschen) and the alpine Upper Engadine (particularly the beloved Sils-Maria, Canton of Graubünden), in Switzerland; Naples, Rome, Genoa, Venice, Turin, Sicily – once –, in Italy; and Nice, in France. This wanderer's map represents very much and very little. Very much, if we consider his constant travels (especially after leaving his teaching position at the University of Basel in 1879). Very little, in the various unfruitful projects of *Wanderung* (secular pilgrimage) he devised (Paris, Corsica, Mexico, Spain, Poland…) or if we compare him to the transcontinental adventurers of the time. But with him – and this is what interests us here – a new way of thinking and being in the landscape comes forth. From the preparatory texts for *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) onwards, Nietzsche evaluates the progressive and degenerative distancing of the cultural in regard to the natural. For him, the Dionysian ground of Greek tragedy had the power to conciliate man and nature (remnants of the Romantic interpretation of Nature). But the young Nietzsche – still strongly influenced by Schopenhauerian metaphysics and

[17] Developed by Luisa Bonesio in *Geofilosofia del paesaggio*, 2.ª ed., Milano: Mimesis, 2001 (excerpt in *Filosofia da Paisagem. Uma Antologia*, pp. 465-473). Paolo Portoghesi states that Bonesio makes us rethink the human condition of inhabiting an earth deeply degraded by massive industrialization and consumerist values, desacralized to the extent of being our enemy. There is, nowadays, urgency in the constitution of new alliances, founded in a deep respect for what was, not a long time ago, regarded with indifference, as a little aesthetic delight over the weekend or merely as a source of revenue. See "Editoriale", *Matéria* 24 (1998).

by the mythology of Wagnerian musical megalomania – was no more than an epigone of the vast and multiform German Romantic movement. It is symptomatic that, in the first work in which he distances himself from that worldview, he states, with orthodox Neoclassicism:

> all of the landscapes that appeal to my taste in a lasting way have a simple, linear geometric schema beneath all their variety. Without this sort of mathematical substratum, no setting will have anything aesthetically pleasing about it.[18]

After this break with the aesthetic contemplation of nature – general formula for the determination of the landscape ontology of the time as a perceptive phenomenon (a given ontology) – he has to re-inscribe the field of landscape within his general project of an epistemology and axiology of the will to power. Absolutes, whether substantial or dialectical, give way to the singularization of modus vivendi resulting from the conjunction, belligerent or cooperative, of organic and inorganic, human and natural, rational and sensual forces… The landscaping individual cannot thus be the great contemplator delineated by Caspar David Friedrich in *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer*, but rather *der Wanderer* that walks, breathes, listens, smells, sees, feels each landscape into which he immerges so that his body is confronted with other bodies, other forces that will enter into trajection with his own, forming plots that overcome the old man/nature polarization.

Nietzsche lives inside the landscapes, he traverses them, puts his whole body, that 'great reason', amid landscaping bodies. An almost compulsive walker, he wandered for several hours a day in the mountains of Upper Engadine or in the Southern cities. This disposition did not originate merely in an existential whim; it is instead a testimony to his wider desire to break with old logical-rational styles of philosophy, to invent a new peripatetic school in which thinking would follow rhythms and subjects closer to the vital flows. During the walks, stimulated by his surroundings, he would suddenly stop and, with his knee on the ground, draw up one statement or another in his small notebook, later polished and copied, oftentimes by his aid, Heinrich Köselitz. Nietzsche contributed towards the philosophical rehabilitation of the body (opposing it to Plato's 'body-alienation', to Descartes' 'body-error', and to Pascal or

[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human II*, "The Wanderer and His Shadow", §115.

Christendom's 'body-sin'), and gave it precedence in the origin and co-ordination of thought (something that, mutatis mutandis, will later be recovered by Henri Bergson, in *Matière et mémoire*).

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "Of the Despisers of the Body", he announces his good tidings:

> Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage – whose name is self [Selbst]. In your body he dwells; he is your body.

But a walking body takes up again the basic disposition of thousands of years ago, when man was a wandering animal by necessity. So, Nietzsche sympathetically traverses the landscape, he does not stand before it in order to draw representations. He does not conceive a theory of the landscape, he elects it as his companion, inhibiting as far as possible all filters that usually turn it into a false, domesticated otherness that gives itself to us to be contemplated or thought about. Nietzsche lives in the landscape; his is one more body within the landscape's body (which is actually always plural).

His work is sown with discursive fragments translating the news of thinking as an event of a walking body. E.g.: in *The Gay S*cience §298, it is regretted that words do no justice to the ideas arising on the way (swift, light, alive, accurate…); in Twilight of the Idols, "Arrows and Epigrams" §34, "Only peripatetic thoughts have any value…"; in *Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am So Clever" §1:

> Sit as little as possible; do not believe any idea that was not conceived while moving around outside, – with your muscles in a celebratory mode as well. All prejudices come from the intestines. – Sitting down – I have said it before – is a true sin against the Holy Spirit.

More clearly still in §366 of *The Gay Science*:

> It is our habit to think outdoors-walking, leaping, climbing, dancing, preferably on lonely mountains or near the sea where even the trails become thoughtful.

It is not only an iconoclastic rhetoric, to think while walking is a constant in post-Basel Nietzsche. To walk in order to put movement into the thinking

body, expecting a new way of doing philosophy from the game matter/spirit, the truth of the living being, breaking with centuries of submission to the still calmness of the thinker at his work table,[19] in which philosophical formalism and idealism were born. A thought that is swift, light, free, ironic, mordacious, critical; use of aphorisms as a main stylistic technique is the most adequate technique for his peripatetic neo-philosophy. It is not, therefore, surprising that the 'revelation' of the Eternal Return of the Same occurs while he is walking in Upper Engadine, beside Lake Silvaplana, "6000 feet above the sea and much higher above all human things".[20] Only a walker could receive and deal with that enormous intensity because, as stated by David le Breton, a walker lives more in time than in space, but in a time other than the chronological time.[21] Let us examine one last testimony of Nietzsche's, in dissent with Petrarch's Letter, to conclude this idea:

> Many hidden spots and heights in Nice's landscape are made holy to me by unforgettable moments; the crucial section that bears the title 'Old and New Tablets' was composed during the most tiring climb from the station up to the glorious Moorish eyrie of Eza, – my muscular dexterity has always been at its best when the richest creative energies were flowing through me. The body is inspired: let us leave the 'soul' out of it... I could often be seen dancing; at that time, I could hike in the mountains for seven or eight hours at a time without any thought of tiredness. I slept well, I laughed a lot –, I had the most perfect vigour and patience.[22]

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[19] The paradigm is delineated by Rembrandt's painting Philosopher in Meditation. However, if we look closely, the light erupting through the window comes from the outside world, an illumination that has always been synonymous to knowledge, superior to what is bearable by the poor seated man. It will be precisely in that outside world that Nietzsche will seek the brightest thoughts because they can only be born there and not in the enigmatic garret of painting and philosophical tradition.

[20] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Posthumous Fragment*, 1881; 11[141]; *Werke*, Kritische Studienausgabe, Munich-Berlin-New York: dtv-Walter de Gruyter, 1999.

[21] "As a matter of fact, the Walker does not elect a home in space, but in time: the late afternoon break, the night's rest, meals inscribe an inhabiting in duration (*durée*) that is renewed at each day. […] If he chooses this way of pilgrimage instead of others, he marks his sovereignty regarding the calendar, his independence before social rhythms". (David le Breton, *Éloge de la marche*, Paris: Éditions Métailié, 2000, p. 26).

[22] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", §4.

In a clear exercise of radicalization of the hierarchical exchange body/conscience (as part of the project of the 'Transvaluation of all values'), Nietzsche wants to grant the feet a privilege only granted to the head until then. In almost all his work he proposes dancing – those feet domesticated by aesthetics – as a criterion for the theological quality of new divinities (*Zarathustra*, "On Reading and Writing"); as an impulse for different religious tablets (*ibid*., "On Old and New Tablets"); as a gesture of new pedagogies (*ibid*., "The Seven Seals", §6, e Twilight of the Idols, "What the Germans Lack" §7); as the vital burst of a different man (*Zarathustra*, "On The Higher Man" §§17, 19 and 20). And, regarding what interests us the most here, as the rhythm for a new writing. He states, in *The Gay Science* §366, that a book must know how to dance, and in order be able to do so, it must have been written with the feet: "Only in dance do I know how to speak the symbol of the highest things" (*Zarathustra*, "The Grave-Song").[23] And lastly:

> Writing with One's Feet. Not with my hand alone I write: / My foot wants to participate. / Firm and free and bold, my feet / Run across the field-and sheet.[24]

At the same time, reading must also respond to this imperative, reading while wandering, open to the unexpectedness of life, in an uncontrollable and unpredictable trajection of forces (logic and truth are the most predictable things there are); (cf. *Daybreak* §454).

Conclusion

This landscaping Nietzsche is an important stage in the long journey of approximation between man and the landscape, the discovery (or re-discovery) of an ethos that frees us a little more from anthropocentric alienation. Trajection between man and the landscape is a project of mitigated ontological realization, i.e. the existence of landscapes and humanity results, as we have said, from a mutual impregnation that goes on to constitute their own character without any intention, however, of perpetuity.

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[23] Besides this one, two songs of Zarathustra, in the second and third books, are about dancing.

[24] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, "Joke, Cunning and Revenge. Prelude in German Rhymes", §52.

This new way of inhabiting the world, and of the world giving itself to be inhabited, makes us rethink, and perhaps reformulate, the great moral treatises of Western philosophy, without intending to reinvent the centrality of environmental ethics based on biocentrism (on the intrinsic value of all living beings) and ecocentrism (the duties of the human being toward the biotic community of which he is part and parcel). We think that any variation of these founding propositions must contain the moral dimension of our relations with nature turned into landscape. By introducing this otherness in the most recent moral game, environmental ethics cannot merely be an ethics applied to new objects out of traditional moral theories, because these were restricted almost in their entirety to relations between human beings. Besides man, besides anthropological, sociological and theological good and evil, environmental ethics should, first of all, conduct a meta-ethical reflection, reconsidering its fundamental concepts, its normative justifications, its temporality (duty toward 'future generations' imposes the consideration of beings already in the world, albeit intangible beings) and the conditions for its applicability.

For the new practical philosophies, the vital field of each landscape as a fundamental bio-environmental reserve but also as source of intellectual inspiration is essential to the cultural dimension of life. Without landscapes, without a given cultural and environmental quality of landscapes, it is thought itself that decays. Landscapes are fundamental for aesthetic consolation and bio-environmental quality, but also for the preservation of a living logos, of a general sense of world revealed through the human activity of thinking, profoundly and decisively influenced by the way the landscapes affect the production of thoughts. To the old question 'What gives itself to thought?', we answer: first and foremost, the way in which we are affected by the landscapes in which we are in trajection. Moreover, our thoughts will only be as good as the aesthetic, environmental and cultural respect and care shown for landscapes. Otherwise, the degradation of a landscape regarding all or just one of those dimensions will always be a factor of decay, of the human being and the metaphysics that overcomes it.

ABOUT WALKING AND UNVEILING LANDSCAPES

Vladimir Bartalini and Arthur Simões Caetano Cabral

What we see, hear, touch, that is, what we notice (and also what we create and transform) can be defined as one among the many possibilities that emanate from the "deep darkness from which all beings come out into the light"[1] when the human world is unfolded. And, coexisting with so many things that we see and touch, there is everything that one can't see or lay hands on, but that we carry inside us.[2] In very simple terms, one may state that what is visible, tangible, audible, in one word what is noticeable by our senses corresponds to a tiny part of what sustains what we perceive. Regarding the invisible, Merleau-Ponty has already said that it is "that tissue that coats what is visible, that sustains it, feeds it, and that, in its turn, is not a thing, but the possibility, latency and flesh of things".[3]

Therefore, if the landscape belongs to the visible order, it is only due to the occlusion of what makes it possible, whether it is the invisible it presupposes,[4] or the *whole* from which it descended and was plucked out,

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[1] This is how Eric Dardel, reporting to Heidegger, refers to the Earth as the foundation on which man establishes his habitat: "[...] the Earth [...] points to the dark bottom from which all beings come out into the light, and the essence of the Earth is to be that which always hides something inside each of the beings the moment they open up to the light." Eric Dardel, *L'homme et la Terre. Nature de la réalité géographique*, Paris: Editions du CTHS, 1990, p. 58.

[2] The thirteenth of Heraclitus's fragments says: "What we see and catch we leave behind; what we neither see nor catch we take with us". *The Fragments of the Work of Heraclitus of Ephesus on Nature*, translated from the Greek text of Bywater by G. T. W. Patrick, Baltimore: N. Murray, 1889. This was originally Patrick's doctoral thesis at Johns Hopkins University, 1888. http://classicpersuasion.org/pw/heraclitus/herpate.htm

[3] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, Paris: Gallimard, 2006.

[4] Referring to this, Eugenio Turri says: "The landscape is what is visible, what is noticeable. But since, in the visibility, it is not stated that the world should be entirely expressed, it is also not stated that the landscape should express the whole reality of which it is the sensitive projection […]." Eugenio Turri, *Il paesaggio e il silenzio*, Venezia: Marsilio, 2004, p. 67.

and from which it can't extricate itself.[5]

For this reason, even in the rudeness of its sheer visibility, the landscape preserves bonds with the depths from which it emerges, or with the horizon that, at the same time, establishes its boundaries and stretches it beyond itself, or even with the openness that leads it to new possibilities.

The connections between the visible – what happens to be and presents itself to be acknowledged – and the invisible or imperceptible – possibility, latency and the flesh of things – can already be found in Plato's *khôra*. The *khôra*, being the recipient matrix of all bodies, will not assume any shape, so that all shapes that might be generated from it become possible. For the same reason, the *khôra* will also not be made up of this or that matter. In *Timaeus*, Plato warns about the mistake of considering the *khôra* "visible and noticeable by all senses". It is, on the contrary, "invisible and amorphous, recipient of everything".[6] More than that, Plato says, the *khôra* belongs neither to the gender of the being from which things are shaped – a being that has always existed, that wasn't generated and is incorruptible –, nor to the gender of the beings that are generated and, therefore, are bound to transformations. He represents it as a third gender.[7]

In another sense, but also linking the landscape to the opening of possibilities and a third condition, we have the spaces that Gilles Clément includes in the *third landscape*[8] category: a set of places handed over to undecidability,

[5] "The landscape is haunted by the infinite, and maybe, deep inside, this wraith, this overflowing presence of the infinite in the finite might be the most intimate strength of the landscape experience." Jean-Marc Besse, *Voir la terre. Six essais sur le paysage et la géographie*, Arles: Actes Sud / Centre du Paysage, 2000, p. 11.

[6] Plato, *Timaeus.* In *Platonis Opera,* vol. 4 (edited by John Burnet), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] "When we cease to see the landscape as the object of an industry, we suddenly discover – could it be a failure of the cartographer, a neglect of the politician? – a few wavering spaces, deprived of function, which are difficult to name. Such groups belong neither to the territory of shadows, nor to that of light. It is located at the margins. On the edge of the woods, along the roads and the rivers, in the forgotten nooks of the culture, where machines don't go. It covers surfaces of modest sizes, spread out like the lost corners of a field; unitary and vast fields, such as bogs, heathers and empty lots resulting from recent abandonment. There are no shape similarities among these fragments of landscape. They only have one thing in common: they all form a refugee territory for diversity. In all other places, it is chased. That justifies gathering them under only one term. I suggest Third Landscape, the third term of an operation that organizes the main visible details under shadow, on one side, and under light,

with no defined purpose, shape, dimension or scale, which therefore become the matrix of uncountable possibilities. An expression of the Earth's collection of what wasn't farmed; the spaces of the third landscape would be, in the widest sense of the term, opportunities.

The association of the landscape with the horizon, understood not only in a literal way, as the delimiting line of a visual field, but also in a figurative way, as a field of possibilities, is also worth mentioning. Open and conceptually inapprehensible, the landscape nevertheless has a character, delimitation and materiality, but doesn't cease to be unstable, elusive and unachievable… just like the horizon which forms it at every instant.

The notion of horizon is able to condense its shape – a moving limit –, and is of special interest when talking about landscape, since the horizon, on the one hand, embraces all that's visible and, on the other hand, conceals everything there is beyond it, a "beyond" that will only reveal itself to those who move, originating, in turn, another "beyond" that is never reached.

This condition is expressed, in the Yoruba mythology, by the representation of Euá, daughter of Nanã and sister of Oxumaré:

> Euá is the horizon, the meeting of the sky and the earth. It is the meeting of the sky and the sea. Euá was beautiful and bright, but lonely and so quiet. Nanã, worried about her daughter, asked Orunmilá to find her a love, to get Euá a marriage. But Euá wanted to live alone, dedicated to her task of bringing the night to the horizon. Nanã, however, insisted on marrying her daughter. So Euá went to her brother Oxumaré for help. The Rainbow hid Euá where the arch of its body ended. It hid Euá behind the horizon and Nanã could never again reach her. Thus the two siblings started to live together, forever intangible on the horizon, where the sky meets the earth.[9]

Other ineffable features of the landscape are expressed by the same divinity. Wishing to end the mortality that was spreading in her kingdom due to disputes among the rivals that wanted her, Euá asked orisha Orunmilá for help, and Orunmilá asked her for offerings. She fulfiled his desires, getting the promised blessing, and started to disintegrate:

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on the other side." Gilles Clément, *Manifeste du Tiers Paysage*, p. 4. http://www.gillesclement.com/fichiers/_admin_13517_tierspaypublications_92045_manifeste_du_tiers_paysage.pdf, accessed 01/04/2016.

[9] Reginaldo Prandi, *Mitologia dos Orixás*, São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2001, pp. 238-239.

> She started to disappear, losing her shape, until she evaporated completely and became a thick, white mist. And the bright mist of Euá spread throughout the Earth. The mist sang with unique strength and expressions. The supreme God then determined that Euá would look after the wavering lovers, pay attention to their problems, guide their relationships.[10]

The surreptitiousness and the elusiveness of the landscape have, therefore, the horizon as an emblem, and the myth of Euá.

The horizon brings boundaries to the landscape, but only temporarily, lasting just a moment. At the same time it restrains the landscape, the horizon takes it to a beyond that will never show itself. It is because there is a horizon that the landscape stretches before our eyes and unfolds itself to a walking body, and it is because there is a horizon, close or far away, that the landscape may be considered a fold, a question, an inquiry.

If it is the invisible that sustains and nurtures the visible and grants its flesh, it could be said that, on the other hand, that which is below, behind or beyond and which therefore can't be seen, insinuates itself through that which conceals it. We cannot say that there is a "truth" underlying the landscape, a "truth" that the landscape covers up. What we can say is that what presents itself to the senses is inseparable from what wriggles out of their grasp and vice versa.

The point here, then, is not to deny the materiality and the visibility of the landscape – on the contrary, we should embrace them entirely as a condition of the existence of a landscape experience – but to focus on the invisible and intangible presences that form it, on the possibilities or opportunities that are generated in this way – its horizon – and on walking as a method of unveiling the landscape, all the while aware of the impossibility of consummating it thoroughly. Finally, whereas we are human and work as landscapers, the idea is to explore the expressions of this unveiling, which justifies incursions into poetry, since, at the same time as it "reveals this world", it creates another.[11]

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

[11] Octavio Paz, *El arco y la lira: el poema, la revelación poética, poesia e historia*, Ciudad del Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986.

For this purpose, we have chosen to focus on more ordinary situations in an environment where common sense supposes there are fewer conditions to experience the landscape: the great contemporary metropolis.

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If we consider the landscape in the sense of aesthetic contemplation of nature, it can rarely be appreciated in the daily life of the great contemporary metropolis. Indeed, what one can observe in highly exploited territories, with a high level of artificiality, subdued to a strict functionality, are expressions of a nature which is confined to the exceptional spaces that are granted to it.

The position that is taken here goes against exceptionality, since it states that, by the use of walking and scrutinizing with eyes that are, at the same time, detached from functionality, the space can be rediscovered in its inoperative dimension, thus generating "landscaping situations".

It is a matter of scanning the trivial spaces of the city, in order to recognize, among the incompleteness and the residues of any action, the persistence of a latent nature, which can, sometimes, express itself in a vigorous way.

There is no privileged point of view, from which it might be possible to contemplate these latencies, to unveil them. Therefore, it is not a matter of looking for high spots from which the landscapes might be unconcealed; it also wouldn't be necessary to gain some distance to appreciate them in a vast horizon. The materiality of the urban routine in which they hide is unveiled not by the sharpness of the eyes, but by the tangibility of the body.

Since the landscape is usually considered to be part of the visible order, we ought to highlight in what sense (or senses) one can approach the invisible of the landscape: 1) as a possible field that underlies everything that is visible; 2) as something that, when no longer in sight, is not part of the landscape anymore, even though it lurks beneath it as a spectrum and addresses us in its spectral language, made up of images and auras, but also of sounds, smells and even material traces; 3) as something that, despite being present in the visual field, it is not noticed, since it has been trivialized by eyes that no longer look, or that prejudge and discard it.

The landscape, in addition to the visuality that belongs to it, is populated and enlivened by dimensions that the eyes can't find. Nestled in halfway between the subject and the object and detached from this kind of dichotomy, the landscape experience requires additional approaches other than the mere triggering of the senses organs. Through walking, when one frees oneself from strict objectivities, the eyes may mingle with the ears and the nose; as the body walks, it feels and allows itself to be felt by the surrounding world. Through this physical contact, the landscape is unveiled not by what is aesthetically exceptional in it, but by what is frequently invisible to the eyes. It is by means of walking, with attentive eyes, that are more willing to get lost than to be rationally guided, that landscape is experienced in the most trivial situations.

At the same time that there is a familiarity gained due to an ancient interaction that persists in the relationship between man and nature, there is also an awe that Rilke not only noticed, but said to be a condition for real landscape art[12] to exist, which shows a respectful attitude towards the unfathomability that saves it from banalization. And the Earth, by nature, is unfathomable; it is, in Heidegger's words, "essentially what closes itself. Developing the Earth means: bringing it to open as the one who closes itself."[13]

The landscape happens as an act of coming out into the open, as a discovery, a meeting between man and what is foreign and, at the same time, intimate to him, and before which he experiences a relation of original dependency. It is the meeting between a subject who is haunted and thus "out of oneself" or diminished (Octavio Paz says that "amazement provokes a kind of reduction of the self")[14] and another one which is not exactly an object and that, no matter its size, will be recognized by the subject as superior.

In this meeting, the landscape arises as a discovery or as an invention.[15] The inventiveness that is associated to this discovery becomes even more prominent when one considers the Latin origin of the word: *inventio*, which

[12] Rainer Maria Rilke, "Del paesaggio" / "Introduzione", in Paolo d'Angelo, *Estetica e Paesaggio*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009.

[13] Martin Heidegger, *Der Usprung des Kunstwerk*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 2008.

[14] Octavio Paz, *El arco y la lira: el poema, la revelación poética, poesia e historia*.

[15] In this regard it is to refer to Jean-Marc Besse, "Les cinq portes du paysage", in *Le goût du monde. Exercises de paysage*, Arles: Actes Sud / ENSP, 2009, p. 65.

means "found" or "discovered", and *invenire*, which means "to discover", "to find". Enlivened by the sensitive means that were employed in it, the landscape is born when the invisible gains visibility, when the senses "convert themselves into servers of the imagination and make us hear the inaudible and see the unnoticeable".[16]

The landscape experience is thus marked by the merging of the visible and the invisible, of the audible and the inaudible, that is, of the apprehensible and the inapprehensible. It resembles the poetic experience, in that "it is a somersault: a change in nature that is also a return to our original Nature".[17]

The landscape reveals and conceals itself just like a text, with its spoken and unspoken words and its undertones, or like a music score in which sound and silence are distributed by the beat. In a way, it takes part in language, it raises images that indicate, mean and denote wishes and emotions. Since it is an experience that happens in space, it requires the movement of the body, which implies the elapsing of time. If the landscape is related to space and time, it concerns a speed and also a rhythm, which is a way of giving a metric to time. Language, rhythm and images are elements not only of poems, but also of the landscape, and it is the poet Octavio Paz himself who authorizes this approximation:

> Painters, musicians, architects, sculptors and other artists don't use as material for their compositions elements that are extremely different from those that the poets employ.[18]

When Octavio Paz mentions the poetic performance, he states that experience and expression happen in an inextricable way: according to the poet, it's not about translating into words what has been experienced, but letting the words, as an expression, be the core of the experience. Therefore, the revelation of the landscape is also about naming that which, until it receives a name, doesn't really exist.[19] So in order to access the invisible that exists in all visibility, we bring the discovery of the landscape and all that is inventive about it closer to the poetic testimony.

[16] Octavio Paz, *La llama doble: Amor y erotismo*, Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1994.

[17] Octavio Paz, *El arco y la lira: el poema, la revelación poética, poesia e historia*.

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] *Ibid*.

Nestled in the conjunction between *seeing* and *believing*, "what the poem shows us we don't see with our material eyes, but with the spirit Eyes"[20].

In the poetic experience, what is intangible is allowed to be touched, what is inaudible is allowed to be heard. Poetry does not imply, from this point of view, an overcoming of the senses, but shakes them out of their numbness. What is latent, unnoticeable even to the most awake eyes is, in poetry, subverted and returned to the environment as sensitive shapes. Concerning that which exists between what is visible and what can't be seen, it can even be stated, in Octavio Paz's words, that

> the poetic testimony reveals to us another world inside this one, another world that is this world.[21]

If, on the one hand, the timbre of man's contact with the Earth doesn't allow for the aesthetical appreciation of such a relationship to resound in everyday speech, on the other hand, by means of a wandering walk, open to the most different possibilities of landscape experience, our senses are employed in the recognition of landscape dialects. The language of poetry, even though it is the same as everyday speech, reveals unusual senses. Without wasting words, poetry grabs hold of them to say the unspeakable. Likewise, through tangible contact with the world, such as the poetic testimony, an approximation can occur with language which, for being so trivial, is often disregarded and that, once subverted by poetry, is restored, just like a landscape revealed to the senses.

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The inconspicuousness, or, more specifically, the invisibility that arises to the attention of the senses during landscape experience regains several approaches and thoughts. In order to assert the exchange between writing and the landscape and, by extension, between the poet and the landscaper in his eagerness to unveil, we propose a journey through João Guimarães

[20] Octavio Paz, *La llama doble: Amor y erotismo*.

[21] *Ibid*.

Rosa's tale *O Recado do Morro*[22] ("The Message from the Hill"). Here a group of travelers walks along the roads that cross the hills and fields ("sertões") of the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. Between reason and what escapes it, or between accurate orientation and the loss of references, unintelligible and veiled things are revealed in the tale's *poiesis*.

Whom is the hill – "raw" nature – addressing in Guimarães Rosa's tale? How is the "message" communicated and decoded? We shall, before undertaking our "literary journey", briefly recall the relation between nature, landscape and *poiesis*, sketched out in several passages above. If Dardel, following in Heidegger's footsteps, states that the Earth – nature – is "the dark bottom from which all beings come into the light" and that "the essence of the Earth is to always conceal something inside each of the beings as soon as they open up to the light",[23] he does not mean that these beings were already there, in the "dark bottom", as invisible beings, or, in a broader sense, that they weren't available to our senses until their *artialization*[24] made them available to us. Therefore, the landscape isn't concealed in nature, it descends from it and only starts to exist the moment it comes out into the open, into the light. What we are trying to highlight is that when we are talking about the landscape, we are not talking about that invisibility as a condition to which any and every thing is subdued for never showing itself as a whole, for never being totally transparent. It is also not that invisibility that, just like blindness, would prevent us from seeing the landscape due to distance and an aesthetical culture, or a lack of *reculture*.[25]

A great deal of what we understand as "landscape" , a great deal of our capacity to judge landscapes undoubtedly originates from the cultural dissemination of aesthetical values, either through painting, or poetry, or *in situ* landscaping interventions. We can also admit that, since landscape has emerged from nature in the poetic instance and was converted into art, landscape must pass through a whole chain of transmutations before reaching the

[22] João Guimarães Rosa, "O recado do morro", in *Corpo de Baile,* vol. 2, Edição Comemorativa 1956-2006, São Paulo: Nova Fronteira, 2006 [1956].

[23] See footnote 1.

[24] Alain Roger, *Court Traité du Paysage*, Mayenne: Éditions Gallimard, 1997, p. 16.

[25] *Reculture*: contraction of *recul* (retreat, distance) and *culture*, a pun created by Alain Roger, *Court Traité du Paysage*, p. 27.

recipient, which would make him or her indebted to the genius of a painter or a poet. Yes, landscape is brought into the light by *poiesis* and through language, understanding *poiesis* as "that action that grants sense, that is, that grants the voice that is language, because through it the sacred, granting itself, expresses itself",[26] but that is not the same as saying that, after having blossomed because of the genius of the artist, landscape has to reach us, "common people", as a simple product; we don't necessarily have to be mere landscape consumers. For this purpose, we have to be its addressees, that is, it has to reach us after being sent by destiny, understanding "destiny" as "the guiding strength of re-union, which puts man on the path of an uncovering".[27]

And if there is, in the landscape experience, an unveiling, that doesn't mean that there isn't still something that remains hidden, something that closes up, which is the trait of the dark bottom from which it came, a sort of "feedstock" that poetic language develops without wearing it out.

O Recado do Morro's tale accepts an understanding in which this process is witnessed in a journey through the countryside of the state of Minas Gerais. This journey is undertaken by a foreign naturalist, a priest, a farmer, a donkey herder and a guide called Pedro Osório who is travelling on foot and is also known as Pê-Boi – a land worker, who lives off the fields of the region but was born in a different place, full of enviable joy, strength and seductive power.

Besides the landscape description of the places they travel through, in which the author's sensitivity is manifested not only in general features, but also in the details and nuances of his descriptions of the nature of the arid fields of Minas Gerais, the account of the incidents of the trip is of great interest for the subject we are discussing here, as it shows, in an apparently prosaic story, the birth of poetic revelation. Right at the beginning of the journey, the group, which will have to walk for a whole week, come across Gorgulho, an old hermit who is traveling with the purpose of finding a younger brother of his, who lives in a cave just like him. The group run into Gorgulho when he is annoyed, making furious gestures and raving about a

[26] Manuel Antônio de Castro, "Notas de Tradução", in Martin Heidegger, *A origem da obra de arte*, trans. by Manuel Antônio de Castro, São Paulo: Edições 70, 2010, p. 239.

[27] Martin Heidegger, "Die Frage nach der Technik", in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfullingen: G. Neske, 1959.

message he has received from a "lonely, scalene, dark, pyramid-like"[28] hill, a hill that Pê-Boi knows through hearsay, and whose ever-the-same presence "was what was most tiring":[29] Graça Hill. The priest makes an effort to find a scientific explanation for what has happened: the thunderous voices that the hallucinating Gorgulho supposed came from the hill and were addressed to him were only the collapses of underground limestone formations. "And what had the hill said?",[30] they insist on asking. Gorgulho repeats nonsensical sentences that he has heard from the hill, referring to kings, swords, parties, destiny, death for treason, night and skulls. After walking together for quite a while, Gorgulho follows a narrow path upwards and the group continues its own course. They never meet again.

After a few days, on the porch of a cottage where the group is resting during its return journey, the travellers meet Catraz, Gorgulho's brother, a naïve and talkative man, a kind of fool known for the silly ideas he often boasts about when given the chance. After having some fun at his expense, everyone grows tired of listening to the nonsense Catraz iss saying and retires, except for Joãozezim, a clever boy, who lives in the cottage and never fails to notice anything. This is when Joãozezim hears about what Gorgulho told Catraz about the message he had received from the hill and repeats the story to a man who works as a delivery man at the same farm, Guégue. A foolish man, Guégue is a perpetually lost courier, who can never find the right way to get to where he is supposed to be. Guégue has been sent by his bosses to deliver an order to a farm located along the route that the group of travellers is going to pass through and thus goes with them.

On their way back, they spot Graça Hill far away, and, when they get closer,"the naked slopes – always with those little roads, the bumpy trails […] always the always".[31] Someone in the group asks himself: "How can one know these spurs? It's all the same, all the same…"[32]

At one point, Pê-Boi and Guégue are alone, because the rest of the group has gone a little further on to admire a waterfall. This is when a very skinny,

[28] João Guimarães Rosa, "O recado do morro", p. 401.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 414.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 402.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 426.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 426.

possibly insane man, who is practically naked, approaches them and, shaking a cross in his hand, announces the end of the world. This is Nominedomine, a delirious ex-seminarian, also known as Jubileu, who wanders around the countryside. Guégue, who is impressed by the strange figure making even stranger speeches, ends up telling him what he heard from Joãozezim about a hill who sent a message speaking of death and skulls on a party night, of a king with his sword and seven men, destiny, and so forth.

To whom was the hill's message given and addressed? Firstly, to the odd figures of two troglodyte hermits, then to a child and finally to a fool and a mystic. The transmission of the encrypted message happened in a truncated way, as time passes, to people who wander with no practical purpose – furthermore, the only one who is actually carrying out an imposed task, Guégue, is a confused, spatially disoriented person. On the way back, the group passes by Graça Hill, where the mysterious sign was delivered the first time, once more, and it represents nothing besides a far-away hill that stands out because of its shape. How could anyone recognize the slopes along the road, in the foreground, if what one sees is always the same, "always the always"? There iss no fun in such trivial features. Whoever tried to guide himself/herself by what he/she had already seen would probably get lost between one trail and another. But as one walks, as one covers the distance towards a horizon that is always postponed, the landscape fulfils itself as a promise. What the folds and the horizon conceal, however, is only recognized by the contact of the body with the world. It is necessary to travel each bumpy trail on each slope; one has to open one's ears, one's feet, one's whole body, and not only one's eyes, to what is merely a whisper in the landscape and which vanishes, as a latency, among the minutiae of what is perfectly visible.

Now let us return to the tale, to its ending. When Guégue arrives at the farm where he has to deliver the order, he stays there while the others continue with their journey. At the end of the next day, which is a Friday, the group arrives at a small village, where the patronal feast is being organized. Saturday dawns with screams in the street: Nominedomine has arrived at the village, amplifying the nonsense he heard from Guégue. He goes to the main church, dragging the people with him, urging them to repent: the end of the world will arrive soon. A priest approaches, holds up his hand

and says: "You may go, son. God bless you",[33] and this is enough to make Nominedomine leave with his nonsense, which he now just mumbles. After the incident, Nominedomine's words are quickly forgotten, except by the Collector, "another crazy fellow",[34] a megalomaniac obsessed with book-keeping his assets, who writes down the numbers of an imaginary fortune on walls and pieces of paper. While he is making his endless calculations and cursing Nominedomine's prophecies about the end of the world, which, if they actually come true, will prevent him from spending all his money. The Collector repeats the nonsensical sentences of the mystic out loud.

This is how Laudelim, the guitar player, poet and folk singer, who has been wandering with Pê-Boi around the village, hears, from the Collector, the message from Graça Hill, given first-hand to Gorgulho, before being and recounted again and again to Catraz, to Joãozezim, to Guégue and to Nominedomine.

Laudelim is cheerful and friendly, but there is also a sadness about him, "with no particular reason".[35] The Collector's words hit him hard and he wants to hear more about the enigmatic message, unlike Pê-Boi, who tries to persuade him not to listen to such foolishness. But what can one do, "if Laudelim was just like that – happened to not see with his eyes, not hear with his ears, and kept messing things up, building castles in the sky?"[36]

With the fragments of the encrypted message, which have travelled from mouth to mouth through the outback, Laudelim writes a story with rhymed lines. On Saturday evening he takes up his guitar and performs this song, to the people, including the group of travellers, who get together at the bar of a small hotel. Laudelim's music and poem touch everyone. Moved, the foreign naturalist, "sensed he was witnessing the birth of one of these migrating songs that land in people's hearts: that the guitars sow and the blind people sell on the roads".[37]

Pê-Boi also enjoys listening to Laudelim recount, with his guitar, the story of that boy king, with the sword in his hand, whose fate was to die in an ambush planned by seven treacherous friends who invited him to a party.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 443.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 442.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 446.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 449.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 460.

Death, the skull, destiny, the party, the night, the seven men, all the signs that the message from the hill passed on to Gorgulho are there, presented one more time by Laudelim's poem. The audience applauds and asks for more. At this point, however, Pê-Boi, who is restless and is already looking forward to a party to which some friends have invited him in the next village, decides to leave with them.

On the little road, on the way to the other party accompanied by seven friends, Pê-Boi relives, in the blink of an eye, the whole journey that he has just made through the arid fields of Minas Gerais. During those wanderings he had been so close to his homeland ("pays", "paese") of origin, but never got there. He dreams of, one day, going back to his home and settling down, and at the same time he feels like he is "the owner of that place, of those tracks of woods, of the green slopes, the great hills, the dug grottos, and the dens with tiny lagoons, water pits".[38]

He is a king… Suddenly, he realizes that the story that was sung by Laudelim was about him: the seven men, the party, the night, the king, the death for treason. With this sudden revelation, he takes the lead, faces the seven men who want to kill him and, being very strong, knocks them out. Are they dead?

When the fight is over, Pê-Boi, who is afraid of having committed some crime, gathers his possessions and, with large steps, crosses the night. "He measured the world. Though so many mountains, skipping from star to star, until he arrived at his Gerais."[39]

The indecipherable hill's message reaches its destination after passing through many mouths during a long walk. The transmitting belts are "marginal" people: hermits, children, fools, madmen, mystics, megalomaniacs. The matter that travels like this, enigmatic, fervent and still shapeless, rough and even denied by many people who have been in touch with it, takes shape as a poem when it reaches Laudelim – a man whose feet are on the ground and whose head is in the clouds – and, after being transformed into (and by) the poem, finds a literally vital sense when revealed to (and by) Pê-Boi, who defeats those who wanted to kill him because of his joy of living. Pê-Boi returns to his homeland, to his "landscape", and "skipping from star to star", escapes beyond the horizon… where Euá lives.

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 465.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 467.

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The same tale allows us to explore other sides of invisibility. One of them is the spectral side. What could Gorgulho have heard that no one else could hear? The message from the Earth, received by its recipient, the hermit, reaches the others through the reverberations of a sound that no longer exists, as a manifestation, in the present, of a past that subsists through the marks that were left. We ought to, considering this hypothesis, investigate what is unintelligible, the invisibility of the message as something that, kept away from the eyes, is no longer part of the landscape, although it prowls it like a spectre and addresses us in its spectral language, made up of images and auras, but also through sounds, smells and even material traces.

The spectrum is the impalpable appearance, it is something that makes itself present by being intangible. Although it is abstract, unstable and elusive, the spectrum of a place condenses everything that has happened there, at all times. Every place has its own times and, at any moment that it is considered, it keeps all its times, the past ones – the time of consummated facts – as well as the ones that might still be – the time of the future spectra.

Spectrality is a kind of life, says Agamben, even though it is

> a posthumous or complementary life, which only starts after everything is over and thus has, regarding life, the incomparable grace and cleverness of the things that are accomplished, the elegance and the accuracy of those who have nothing left before them.[40]

Who and how does one access and decipher the written lines of the past and future spectra? Who can understand their whispers, and how? Agamben concludes his thought assuring us that it is only to those who have learned how to become intimate with and close to the stones and to the naked words, that a breach through which life abruptly erupts in order to fulfil its promises may, perhaps, be opened.[41]

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[40] Giorgio Agamben, "Dell'utilità e degli inconvenienti del vivere fra spettri", in *Nudità*, Roma, Nottetempo, 2009, 2ª ed., 2013, p. 62.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

However, as spectra of what is visible, the invisibility of the landscape isn't acknowledged by means of positive materialization, or by means of an objective freezing of what is spectral. An attempt to reconstitute the obliterated message literally wouldn't be appropriate either: it is through retransmission that the hill's message is updated, undergoing modifications, suppressions and additions, but also reverberating as a spectrum on the folds of the hill that has uttered it.

There is also a third invisible dimension that reflection regarding the landscape arouses. Especially in prosaic situations, in which there seem to be few opportunities left for the strangeness that unveils landscapes, traces of possible landscapes subsist latently. Initially, they were visible traces, having been so trodden by everyday prose, they don't form shapes that are visible to the eye. Either in the slopes, with their little roads and bumpy trails at Graça Hill ("always the always"), or in nature epiphanies that take place in the breaches of the urban scenario – in the residues of strict functionality and operativeness – in these third landscapes, there are signs of the pulse of the dark bottom of the Earth, which harbours possible landscapes.[42]

[42] It is in this sense that the research carried out by the Landscape, Art and Culture Laboratory of the Architecture and Urbanism School of the University of São Paulo are aligned, especially when it comes to the unveiling of the hidden creeks of São Paulo and, in a broader perspective, of the manifestations of nature's original strength in the interstices of the metropolis. Visit the website: http://www.labparc.fau.usp.br/.

WALKING THROUGH LANDSCAPES?

Luca Vargiu

According to Francesco Careri, since the dawn of mankind walking has been the first "symbolic form that has enabled man to dwell in the world", the "first aesthetic act, penetrating the territories of chaos, constructing an order on which to develop the architecture of situated objects".[1] The charm of this idea raises some questions which can be summarized as:

How is the experience of walking an aesthetic act? Is walking an experience of space or an experience in space? Is it an experience of landscapes or an experience in landscapes?

In order to try and understand the meaning of these questions, we can start by introducing John Brinckerhoff Jackson's concept of 'odology'. Jackson, basing his etymology on the Greek *hodós*, 'road or journey',[2] used this word to describe the study of roads and ways. He proposed the following definition:

> Odology is the science or study of roads or journeys and, by extension, the study of streets and superhighways and trails and paths, how they are used, where they lead, and how they come into existence.[3]

Hence, odology's category of study is "part geography, part planning, and part engineering" without neglecting sociopolitical aspects.[4] While referring

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[1] Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes. El andar como práctica estética / Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*, Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2002, p. 20.

[2] John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984, p. 21.

[3] John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994, p. 191. Although Jackson writes 'odology', there also exists the version 'hodology', which has been used, for instance, in the title of an article published in *Landscape*, the magazine that Jackson founded and edited. See Derk de Jonge, "Applied Hodology", *Landscape* 17, no. 2 (1967-68): 10-11.

[4] John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, p. 191. See Id., *Discovering the*

mostly to the North American roadway system and its organization, Jackson stated he was convinced that roads are not just crossings, but rather that they create new space forms and with them new forms of sociality and ways of inhabiting these spaces. Quoting a famous statement of his, "Roads no longer merely lead to places, they *are* places".[5]

Aside from Jackson's own definition, it is worth noting that the term already had its own history, a fact which requires us to look at least as far back as Kurt Lewin. It is, in fact, to Lewin that we owe the elaboration of the concept of 'hodological space' in the framework of a human behavioral theory which takes individuals not in isolation, but instead situates them in their environment. In this light, hodological spaces, considered as lived spaces, take the shape of discrete and qualitative spaces, organized in 'regions' whose meaning and value depend on the degree of psychic investment in terms of "interpretation, emotions, expectations, aspirations", as observed by Jean-Marc Besse.[6] The sum of these regions constitutes the 'life space', defined by Lewin as the "totality of facts which determine the behavior of an individual at a certain moment".[7]

Thus this space distinguishes itself from 'Euclidean' space which is continuous, homogenous, and measurable. Not only because it is generated by an embodied subject, but also because the subject's field of forces varies continuously.[8] In this sense, as observed by Gilles A. Tiberghien, "odology favors […] walking over the path, the 'sense of geography' over metric calculation".[9]

Vernacular Landscape, pp. 21-27.

[5] John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, p. 190. See Gilles A. Tiberghien, "Hodologique", *Les Carnets du Paysage* 11 (2004): 7-25: 7-9; *Id*., "Nomad City", in Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, pp. 10-17: 14-15.

[6] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes sur l'introduction de l'hodologie dans la pensée contemporaine", *Les Carnets du Paysage* 11 (2004): 26-33: 27.

[7] Kurt Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology*, New York and London: McGraw-Hill, 1936, p. 216.

[8] See Adrian Mirvish, "Sartre, Hodological Space, and the Existence of Others", *Research in Phenomenology* 14 (1984): 149-173: 157.

[9] Gilles A. Tiberghien, "La città nomade", in Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes. Camminare come pratica estetica*, Turin: Einaudi, 2006, pp. VII-XIII: X (this passage is absent in the Spanish-English edition); see *Id*., "Hodologique", p. 9.

The first formulation of the notion of life space can be traced to Lewin's 1917 essay "Landscape of War", dedicated to analyzing the transformation of a front line soldier's perception of landscapes.[10] Upon closer inspection, the words 'life space' and 'hodological space' are not found in this brief essay, as they actually surfaced later. However, it is possible to observe how even in the absence of its 'name', the 'thing' is already present in all its essential features. It is also significant that in this essay Lewin talks about landscapes, whereas in his subsequent writings the recurring terms are 'environment' and 'space'. For example, in the 1936 *Principles of Topological Psychology* the word 'landscape' only appears once.[11]

In soldiers' perceptual experience – Lewin notes – landscapes are transformed in relation to their experience and needs, particularly to those relating to their personal safety. So a normal 'peacetime landscape' appears "to extend out to infinity on all sides almost uniformly" and presents itself "round, without front or behind", unlike a 'landscape of war' which "appears only to be *directed*; it has a front and behind, and a front and behind that do not relate to those marching, but firmly pertain to the area itself".[12]

The landscape/space, to Lewin, is always perceptively and emotionally oriented: the regions in which it is organized are more or less attractive according to the values and meanings they convey. In virtue of these values and meanings the individual will follow a 'distinguished path', surely created in virtue of the objective that they are pursuing, but also based on the specific situation (which is never finalized), and the psychophysical state of the person. Urgency, the will or lack thereof to encounter people, health-related issues, their tiredness or freshness, all play a role in what Lewin defines as 'principle of choice'.[13] As we can gather from these examples, a path is chosen regardless of whether or not it is the shortest or most direct from a 'Euclidean' point of view. Distinguished paths followed by an individual will thus show their concrete experience of the world, of which they embody the deployment.

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[10] See Kurt Lewin, "The Landscape of War" [1917], *Art in Translation* 1, no. 2 (2009): 199-209.

[11] Kurt Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology*, p. 19.

[12] Kurt Lewin, "The Landscape of War", pp. 201-202.

[13] See Kurt Lewin, "Der Richtungsbegriff in der Psychologie. Der spezielle und allgemeine Hodologische Raum", *Psychologische Forschung*, 19, no. 1 (1934): 249-299: 283-286.

Still explicitly referring to Lewin, at a later time Jean-Paul Sartre also used the notion of hodological space, but in a different perspective – first, in 1939's *Sketch for a Theory of Emotions,* and even more profusely in his *Being and Nothingness*[14] of 1943. It is in the latter that Sartre elaborates in more depth on his famous theory according to which "man and the world are relative beings and the principle of their beings *is* the relation".[15] He thematizes a world as a 'world-for-me' whose relational implication between world and me is such that "the world refers to me that univocal relation which is my being and by which I cause it to be revealed".[16] The essence and meaning of the world therefore coincide in the relation between myself and the world. And to the self, being signifies its engagement in the world, temporally and spatially. According to Sartre:

> For human reality, to be is to-be-there; that is, 'there in that chair', 'there at that table', 'there at the top of that mountain, with these dimensions, this orientation, etc.' It is an ontological necessity.[17]

This implies that even a *dégagé* attitude cannot be anything but a form of engagement.

In this context Sartre reminds us that "the real space of the world", which is that of our engagement with the world, "is the space which Lewin calls 'hodological'".[18] In his reconstructive analysis of the concept, Otto Friedrich Bollnow highlights that, to Sartre, this space is, aside from what has already been discussed, tied to the significance which places and paths have acquired to other people: the hodological space is the space of the encounter with the Other.[19] On this matter, he refers to a passage, inspired by Proust's *Recherche*:

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[14] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Sketch for a Theory of Emotions* [1939], London and New York: Routldedge, 2002; and *Id*., *Being and Nothingness* [1943], New York and London: Washington Square Press, 1992.

[15] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 407.

[16] *Ibid*., pp. 411 and 407.

[17] *Ibid*., p. 407.

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] See Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space* [1963], London: Hyphen Press, 2011, pp. 187-188.

> A being is not situated in relation to locations by means of degrees of longitude and latitude. He is situated in a human space between 'the Guermantes way' and 'Swann's way', and it is the immediate presence of Swann and of the Duchesse de Guermantes which allows the unfolding of the 'hodological' space in which he is situated.[20]

On the other hand, we must point out that in Sartre there is a strict relation between hodological space and corporeality. The body, according to Sartre, is primarily "*lived* and not *known*": it is revealed to me starting from my originary relation to the world, it "is *given concretely* and fully as the very arrangement of things".[21] As 'me' or as 'mine' the body is thus not separated from the world, but instead, according to what we have discussed so far, it is intertwined or even coincides with it:

> It would be impossible for me to realize a world in which I was not and which would be for me a pure object of a surveying contemplation. But on the contrary it is necessary that I lose myself in the world in order for the world to exist and for me to be able to transcend it. Thus to say that I have entered into the world, 'come to the world', or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and the same thing. In this sense my body is everywhere-in-the world.[22]

As Besse puts it, hodological space appears to be an "intermediate reality, which is neither the subject nor the object in terms of classic dualism, it's simply the real world or the concrete world", it is the "concrete space of human existence".[23]

It is a space which appears to have four distinguishing traits or characteristics:

1) It is a space which is actively lived: it is not a space of abstract spatial coordinates, but a space which is defined by "axes of practical reference".[24] As seen in the 'Proustian' example, the localization of a person or thing, or the direction taken to reach a person, thing, or location acquire their own

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[20] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 372, partially quoted in Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space*, p. 187.

[21] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 427.

[22] *Ibid*., p. 419. See *ibid*., pp. 428-429.

[23] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", pp. 29 and 30.

[24] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 424.

meaning and their existence (which as we said is the same thing) in relation to the concrete movement of an existing being. As Sartre specifies: "Perception is in no way to be distinguished from the practical organization of existents into a world."[25]

2) Insofar as it goes beyond classic dualism, hodological space is not just subjective, but it also possesses a certain degree of objectivity: it is in space that one can find, as Besse points out, "the thickness of things, their texture, their light, their orientation, their way of opposing my movement or not".[26]

3) In its objectivity, the world appears to Sartre as "objectively articulated": the world, in fact, "never refers to a creative subjectivity but to an infinity of instrumental complexes".[27] Besse considers this trait "decisive": with it, the matter of odology becomes that of the "use of the world".[28] Sartre, drawing on Heidegger's studies – but also on Lewin himself, and on Uexküll before him[29] – considers the lived world as the world in which "each instrument refers to other instruments, to those which are its *keys* and to those for which it is the *key*".[30]

Hence the lived world manifests itself as a system of relations and actions, as an "indication of acts to be performed",[31] which in turn refer back to other acts and so on. Sartre summarizes it as:

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[25] *Ibid*.

[26] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", p. 29.

[27] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 425.

[28] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", p. 29.

[29] Sartre's reference to Heidegger on this point is recurrent within Sartrean studies. It is asserted by, among others, Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", p. 29. However, Lewin himself, with an explicit mention of Uexküll's notion of the operative world (as complementary to the perceptive world), considers the primary signficance of objects in terms of "functional possibilities". See Adrian Mirvish, "Sartre, Hodological Space, and the Existence of Others", p. 155; with reference to Kurt Lewin, "Environmental Forces in Child Behavior and Development" [1933], in *Id*., *A Dynamic Theory of Personality: Selected Papers*, New York and London: McGraw-Hill, 1935, pp. 66-113: 76-77. An affinity between Sartre and Uexküll on this point is seen by Tiberghien, without recognizing a direct link (or so it seems). See Gilles A. Tiberghien "Hodologique", pp. 12-13.

[30] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 424.

[31] *Ibid*.

"The space which is originally revealed to me is hodological space; it is furrowed with paths and highways; it is instrumental and it is the location of tools".[32]

4) All of this implies that paths, roads, and that which is perceived and acted present themselves as bearers of possibilities, promises, as openings towards the future. In fact, things always refer us back to a project horizon in virtue of which the future already seeps into the present. The world, as it is "the correlate of the possibilities which I *am*", appears "as the enormous skeletal outline of all my possible actions"; it manifests itself as "an 'always future hollow', for we are always future to ourselves".[33]

Bollnow carries out a further analysis of the hodological space in his 1963 *Human Space* in the framework of a thematization of life space or, as he prefers to name it, 'experienced space', which is defined as "the general form of human living behaviour".[34] His intent is to assign the "problem of the spatial element of human existence […] its place with a weight and question of its own beside that of temporality",[35] whereas 20th century philosophy placed the issue of space in the background to focus on the matter of temporality. On the topic, Bollnow himself reminds us of Bergson, Simmel, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Minkowski.[36]

In this light, Bollnow essentially takes the same stance as Lewin. In so doing, he moves away from Sartre, claiming that the latter's theory is an illegitimate broadening of the former's which ends up confusing its traits and minimizing its innovative aspects.[37] Bollnow would rather consider Sartre's vision within "an entirely different aspect of spatial construction", which he designates as 'space of action' and defines, at first, as "the space occupied by

[32] *Ibid*.

[33] *Ibid*., p. 425.

[34] Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space*, p. 24.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 17.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 15. As Andrea Pinotti points out, maybe Bollnow's diagnosis is too pessimistic. After all, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty – to name just two examples and not even mentioning Sartre – "dedicated fundamental analysis to spatial constitution": Andrea Pinotti, "Introduzione", in Erwin Straus and Henri Maldiney, *L'estetico e l'estetica. Un dialogo nello spazio della fenomenologia*, Milan: Mimesis, 2005, pp. 7-33: 8.

[37] Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space*, p. 191.

man when engaged in meaningful activity, working or resting, dwelling in it in the widest sense".[38] He agrees with several aspects of Sartre's reasoning but refutes their overall framework. In his view, it is more appropriate to separate the original idea of hodological space, as conceived by Lewin, in order "to distinguish it as a special aspect from the more general concept of experienced space and to look out for other aspects that may make visible the greater wealth of this concept".[39]

Thus, hodological space, even though it renders "transparent a certain inner structure of experienced space, […] cannot simply be equated with experienced space itself"[40].

In order to avoid a unilateral observation, it is necessary to take into account the other dimensions of experienced space such as the space of action and the mood space.[41]

So as to "make visible the greater wealth" inherent in the concept of hodological space, and with the intent of providing some examples to make it less abstract, Bollnow refers to what he calls "the hodological structure of landscape".[42] Consistently with his assumptions, his starting point is Lewin's essay on the "landscape of war". He attributes a foundational role to it, but also an exemplary value. This essay, in fact, reveals some general traits of landscapes by presenting an "extreme" and "borderline" case.[43] Numerous examples follow, especially concerning the borders and obstacles that can be found along our paths and which influence the accessibility of locations (mountain ranges, the ocean, the great rivers which split cities in half, etc.). Relying on examples can be seen as a distinguishing attribute of Bollnow's method. In it, examples are not to be considered as external empirical data, but rather it is only through the concrete phenomenological analysis of the experienced space that we can come to ontological conclusions on the structure of human spatiality.[44]

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[38] *Ibid*., p. 193.

[39] *Ibid*.

[40] *Ibid*.

[41] See *ibid*., pp. 191-201 and 215-228.

[42] *Ibid*., pp. 188-191.

[43] *Ibid*., p. 189.

[44] See Salvatore Giammusso, *La forma aperta. L'ermeneutica della vita nell'opera di O. F. Bollnow*,

It is in this context that Bollnow focuses on distinguishing the abstract concept of mathematical space, which is measurable and homogenous, from experienced space.[45] For his part, Besse also sees this difference establish itself between 1880 and 1940 in different fields of knowledge – geography, biology, psychology, philosophy, and others still – thereby bringing about a reformulation of the relations between man and space. This reformulation is based on the juxtaposition of a space that can generically be referred to as 'Euclidean', that is "scientific, abstract, geometric, homogenous, uniform, isotropic, and quantitative", and a space of life intended as 'vital space' or 'lived space', that is "not scientific because it is felt or imaginary, and nonetheless concrete because it is intensely lived, heterogeneous, oriented, anisotropic by nature, and qualitative".[46]

Based on what has been observed so far, we can say that life space is not unique and given once and for all. Besse insists on considering as the 'decisive point' of the matter the relation between lived space and the general context of meaning which space itself is made of.[47] Likewise, he stresses the plurality of worlds in which existence takes place, both on the primary experiential plane, and on that of symbolic systems through which man takes possession, so to speak, of the external world.

Besse's interest in the notion of odology is not exclusively explained from a purely abstract theoretical point of view, nor from a reconstructive one. Instead, it can be placed in the line of thought pursued by the periodical *Les Carnets du Paysage*, whose editors in chief are, precisely, Besse and Tiberghien. Within the variety of interests that distinguishes it, this periodical has always sought to keep its distance from a scientific-naturalistic and quantitative approach to space, which is to say from the *landscape sciences* approach. Instead, it has attempted to be closer to human sciences, or to the *landscape studies* approach.[48] In line with this intention, the periodical's col-

Milan: Franco Angeli, 2008, pp. 113-114 footnote 211.

[45] See Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space*, pp. 17-19.

[46] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", p. 31. The authors that can be mentioned in this context are countless (Uexküll, Husserl, Jaspers, Cassirer, Heidegger, Minkowski, Straus, Binswanger, Weizsäcker, Buytendijk, Merleau-Ponty, Bachelard, Dardel, Bollnow, Schrag, de Certeau, Deleuze and Guattari…).

[47] Jean-Marc Besse, "Quatre notes conjointes", p. 31.

[48] See Pierre Donadieu, "Éléments pour une histoire de la recherche à l'École nationale

laborators create a 'phenomenological paradigm'[49] which, on top of opening up new avenues on a more exclusively theoretical plane, allows the current of landscape planning to propose a valid alternative to the rationalistic methods of Anglo-American origin.[50]

In the same phenomenological perspective, and making particular reference to Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, but also to Jackson and Tim Ingold, Besse came to formulate a "geography of the sensitive body" which allows him to speak of an *'être au monde' paysager*.[51] Starting from Husserl's distinction between *Körper* and *Leib* – between the body as a "neutral physical object" and a body that is "living, perceived, lived, experienced from within, our body" – he highlights how the latter is the "sensitive body of landscape experiences […], the centre and receptacle of its affective spatialities".[52] In this perspective, for Besse as for Bollnow before him, the notion of 'dwelling' acquires an "ontological and phenomenological charge that is entirely decisive. It is through our own body that we inhabit the world".[53]

Hence, the sensitive body occupies "a central place in atmospheres and in landscape experiences". Or better still, in a more basic manner, "the sensitive body is the core and the condition of the possibility of landscape experiences".[54]

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supérieure du paysage de Versailles (ENSP)", *Projets de Paysage* 2 (2009), online, http://www.projetsdepaysage.fr/fr/elements_pour_une_histoire_de_la_recherche_a_l_ecole_nationale_superieure_du_paysage_de_versailles_ensp_ (accessed 11/04/2016).

[49] Pierre Donadieu, "Retour sur la recherche à l'École nationale supérieure de paysage de Versailles-Marseille (1995-2011). Projet paysagiste, projets sociétal et politique de paysage", *Projets de Paysage* 7 (2012), online, http://www.projetsdepaysage.fr/retour_sur_la_recherche_a_l_ecole_nationale_superieure_de_paysage_de_versailles_marseille_1995_2011_ (accessed 11/04/2016).

[50] *Ibid*., with reference to Frédéric Pousin (ed.), "Autour du projet", *Les Carnets du Paysage* 7 (2011): 58-147.

[51] Jean-Marc Besse, "Tra la geografia e l'etica. Il paesaggio e la questione del benessere", in Silvia Aru *et al*. (eds.), *Sguardi sul paesaggio, sguardi sul mondo. Mediterranei a confronto*, Milan: Franco Angeli, 2012, pp. 47-62: 54-55. See also Besse's chapter in this volume.

[52] Jean-Marc Besse, "Tra la geografia e l'etica", p. 57.

[53] *Ibid*. Such a perspective has been further developed by the author in *Habiter. Un monde à mon image*. Here he recalls that, according to Bollnow, "to dwell means to have a fixed place in space, to belong to this place and be rooted in it": Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Human Space*, p. 124, quoted in Jean-Marc Besse, *Habiter. Un monde à mon image*, Paris: Flammarion, 2013, p. 207.

[54] Jean-Marc Besse, "Tra la geografia e l'etica", p. 56.

We could consider the manner in which so-called 'walking artists' use their bodies under the same light. I'm referring to those artists – often categorized as land artists despite their desires to the contrary – who placed walking at the centre of their practice such as Richard Long, Hamish Fulton and Michael Höpfner.[55] In a recent article, Besse focuses on walking as the "fundamental or foundational moment" of the corporeal experience of landscape.[56] For his part, referring to the same topic, Tiberghien points out that in his view the artistic approach is a useful tool for understanding the "dimension of the sensitive and affective experience of walking".[57] In these artists' practice, on the one hand the body can act as a 'tool for drawing', as in Long, who leaves traces of his passing, as fleeting and destined to disappear as they may be. On the other hand, the body can be interpreted as a mere 'instrument of perception', as in Fulton and Höpfner, who instead do not intentionally leave any trace of their passing.[58] Höpfner thinks that walking "is clearly about achieving a different – heightened – state of perception"[59].

[55] See, among others, Andrew Wilson, "'The Blue Mountains Are Constantly Walking'. On the Art of Hamish Fulton", in Ben Tufnell and *Id*. (eds.), *Hamish Fulton. Walking Journey* (exhibition catalogue, London 2002), London: Tate Publishing, 2002, pp. 20-31: 25; and Gilles A. Tiberghien, *Land Art*, Paris: Carré, 2012, p. 32. For Long, "Land Art is an American expression. It means bulldozers and big projects. […] All this absolutely does not interest me": Richard Long in Claude Gintz, "Richard Long, la vision, le paysage, le temps", *Art Press* 104 (1986): 4-8: 8 (this passage is translated in Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, p. 146). When Fulton is concerned, suffice it to recall the statement "This is not land art", written in various wall paintings tied to the climb to the summit of Denali, Alaska (2004), which was also the title of an exhibition (Oslo 2005). See the presentation at the Galleri Riis, Oslo, website, http://www.galleririis.com/exhibitions/60/ (accessed 11/04/2016).

[56] Jean-Marc Besse, "Le paysage, espace sensible, espace public", *META: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology, and Practical Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (2015): 259-286: 270-271.

[57] Gilles A. Tiberghien, "La città nomade", p. X (this passage is absent in the Spanish-English edition).

[58] In this perspective Fulton shows his debt to the ethical practice of "Leave No Trace". See Hamish Fulton, "Foots Notes", in Raimund Stecker (ed.), *Hamish Fulton und Peter Hutchinson* (exhibition catalogue, Düsseldorf 1998), Düsseldorf, Verlag des Kunstvereins für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, 1998, pp. 27-29: 28; and *Id*., *Mountain Time Human Time*, Milan: Charta, 2010, p. 41. For the expressions 'instrument of perception' and 'tool for drawing', see Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, p. 148.

[59] Michael Höpfner, in Christian Reder (ed.), "News from No-Man's Land. Michael Höpfner Talking to Christian Kravagna and Christian Reder", in Kunstraum Niederösterreich (ed.), *Micahel Höpfner. Unsettled Conditions* (exhibition catalogue, Vienna 2008), Vienna: Kunstraum Niederösterreich, 2008, online, http://wp12522008.server-he.de/en/artists/

Fulton, in turn, sometimes tries to push his physical, perceptual and mental limits, for example walking for days without sleeping. In any case, beyond their reciprocal differences, every walking artist would agree with the following sentiments expressed by Long: "All of my work is carried out entirely with my body, it is composed of the time of my walking, of the measurement of my steps".[60]

Paraphrasing the title of an article by Pierre Donadieu, at this point we could ask ourselves if the act or practice of walking can be considered "sufficient to think up the landscape".[61] In his article, Donadieu reports an experiment his students were made to perform. It consisted of carrying out two-hour itineraries in the surroundings of Versailles, encompassing different spaces – countryside, city or town, woods – and writing a report on this experience. These reports showed a prevalence of language revolving around emotions, sensations, and the polysensorial engagement of their own bodies.

While describing and commenting on this experience, Donadieu points out how, on the one hand the sensations experienced while walking and the opinions stemming from these observations and sensations are inescapable and come to form a "veritable sensorial knowledge". On the other hand, however, this knowledge proves to be void of various elements that help provide the understanding and explanation of what we experienced and lived. Much in the same way as there are various ways of walking and different locations in which to practice walking, walking itself is "nothing but a spatialized practice among others" which does not exhaust the modalities of experiencing space. Donadieu, for example, reminds us that "the walker's space is not the same as the inhabitant's or the farmer's", and that the latter two organize space and carry out their activities in it according to their own modalities. An understanding of landscape limited to the experience of someone who walks can thus be partial and misleading.

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michael-hoepfner/unsettled-condition-dt/ (accessed 11/04/2016).

[60] Richard Long, quoted in Ester Coen, "Richard Long. Cerchio di fango", *La Repubblica*, May 4, 1994, online, http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/1994/05/04/richard-long-cerchio-di-fango.html (accessed 11/04/2016).

[61] Pierre Donadieu, "Paysages sans horizons. Suffit-il de marcher pour penser le paysage?", *Chroniques de Topia*, November 28, 2011, online, http://topia.fr/archives/chroniques/archives-des-chroniques/chroniques-2011/ (accessed 11/04/2016, from which the following quotations are taken).

Furthermore, an understanding of the social dynamics which preside over the transformation of landscapes is precluded to the walker and so are the potential contrasts implied by such dynamics. Hence, whoever walks across the landscape, in the absence of explicative elements, runs the risk of putting in place "their own explanatory models of landscapes and locations", resulting in a misrepresentation of the meaning of what they see and of its attributed value. To cite only a few examples, "they will not look for the fields belonging to farmer X, but for an idyllic section of countryside. They do not see Y's house […], but a composite fragment of a dormitory town, deserted and inhospitable". Furthermore, they risk knowing nothing about the social and political decisions that were taken in planning, such as, for example, the implementation of development plans imposed from above or instead of the townspeople's associative projects, of any conservation initiatives, or touristic promotion aspects, and so on.

In summary, according to Donadieu, the horizon of experienced space is limited to what he calls "the poetry of the *inhabited world*". Without it, our relation with landscapes would be devoid of "veritable sensorial knowledge", but without the explanations and conceptualizations which have to complement this poetry, we would risk downplaying the meanings and the social and political forces which shape a landscape. With an affirmation that seems to suit both the common walker and the walking artist, Donadieu concludes by stating that "with or without mist, the landscapes of landscape walkers do not have common horizons of meaning, other than the *poetic* ones".

According to what we have seen so far, wanting to circumscribe walking's meaning horizon to the poetic dimension looks to be limiting in more than one respect. This approach, in fact, appears to minimize the ontological, existential, and phenomenological scope of the life space. Especially if we consider the "ontological necessity" that Sartre attributes to man's engagement with the world or if, like Bollnow, we interpret the experienced space as "the general form of human living behaviour". However, it also appears to minimize the value of poetry and art.

For example, we can find aspects of social and political criticism in the activities of walking artists. It is true that Fulton does not claim any kind of direct political activism and that, when he recreates the experiences he has lived, he does not wish to impose any kind of message in an authoritative

manner. However, as pointed out by Muriel Enjalran, "he bears witness to a state of the world that is in many ways extremely worrying".[62] This is apparent in his profound environmentalist dedication which is explicitly influenced by Arne Næss, the father of 'ecosophy'.[63] This is also apparent in his interest for Native American culture, and his firm stance in favour of Tibet. Another example would be his *Slowalk*, performed in 2011 at the Tate Modern art gallery of London, in support of the Chinese activist Ai Weiwei and in name of the freedom of artistic expression.[64]

But, at its root, practising a leisurely and free activity such as walking to the point of making it "an art form in its own right", as Fulton stated,[65] can be interpreted as a political stance against our technocratic contemporary society which is devoted to urgency, efficiency, to the rationalization of labor, and to maximum profit. Walking artists, therefore, not only pose "a kinetic counterpoint to the principle of speed" and create the basis of "a kinetic and kinaesthetic counterculture against the principle of acceleration", as Ralph Fischer writes about Long.[66] They also "move within the interstices and the downtimes of productivism", to quote Nicolas Bourriaud.[67] This is the common thread which connects Long, Fulton, and the other walking artists to the wanderings of dada and surrealist artists, and to the *dérives* of lettrists and situationists.[68]

This common thread is very familiar to Careri who has made it one of the pillars of the narrative he set out in *Walkscapes*.[69] The urban and suburban exploration activity performed by *Stalker*, the collective of artists and

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[62] Muriel Enjalran, "The Value of Experience", in Lorenzo Giusti (ed.), *Hamish Fulton, Michael Höpfner: Canto di Strada* (exhibition catalogue, Nuoro 2015), Nuoro: Nero / MAN, 2015, vol. 1, pp. 17-23: 21.

[63] See Hamish Fulton, *Mountain Time Human Time*, pp. 47-49.

[64] See the video *TateShots: Hamish Fulton's Slowalk (In Support of Ai Weiwei)* on the Tate Modern YouTube channel, online, https://youtu.be/oCc8Rs4sOVY (accessed 11/04/2016).

[65] Hamish Fulton, *Mountain Time Human Time*, p. 39.

[66] Ralph Fischer, *Walking Artists. Über die Entdeckung des Gehens in den performativen Künsten*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011, pp. 59 and 61.

[67] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Forme di vita. L'arte moderna e l'invenzione del sé* [1999], Milan: Postmedia, 2015, p. 10.

[68] See *ibid.*

[69] See Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, pp. 68-176.

architects to which Careri belongs, can also be reconnected to that same common thread. Drawing from the artistic movements mentioned above, this group conceives "the practice of path-journey" as "an evocative mode of expression and a useful instrument of knowledge of the ongoing transformations of the metropolitan territory",[70] considering walking a valuable tool for city planning:

> The aim is to indicate walking as an aesthetic tool capable of describing and modifying those metropolitan spaces that often have a nature still demanding comprehension, to be *filled with meanings* rather than designed and *filled with things.*[71]

Walking, thus, far from limiting itself to sensitive and 'poetic' aspects – or maybe in virtue of being founded on these aspects – "triggers thought about new forms of individual freedom, but also about the possible re-establishment of lost relationships between subject and surroundings, between places, time periods and cultures" as Heike Eipeldauer comments about Höpfner.[72] So if, as stated by Careri, at the dawn of humanity walking was the first "symbolic form that has enabled man to dwell in the world", and if with walking artists it has become "an art form in its own right", all that remains for contemporary man is to keep walking and further experience himself and the world. To quoting one of Fulton's exhibitions: 'keep moving'.[73]

Translated from Italian by Giuliano Cataford.

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[70] Stalker, "Transurbanza", quoted in Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, p. 188.

[71] Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes*, p. 26.

[72] Heike Eipeldauer, "Off the Beaten Track: Walking and Failing", in Lorenzo Giusti (ed.), *Canto di Strada*, vol. 2, pp. 12-15: 14.

[73] See Hamish Fulton, *Keep Moving* (exhibition artist's book, Bozen 2005), Milan: Charta, 2005.

CORPORE PRAESENTI. WALKING IN URBANSCAPE WITH SIEGFRIED KRACAUER AND GEORGES PEREC

Marcello Tanca

We did not seek the formula for overthrowing
the world in books, but by wandering
Guy E. Debord

1. Walking in Urbanscape

In chapter 6 of *Don Quixote*, Cervantes draws a very clear distinction between courtiers and knights based on the different relationship that these subjects maintain with the world:

> the courtiers, without stirring out of their apartments, or crossing their thresholds, traverse the whole globe in a map, without a farthing expense, and without suffering heat or cold, hunger or thirst. But we, the true knights-errant, measure the whole earth with our own feet, exposed to sun and cold, to the air and the inclemencies of the sky, by night and by day, on foot and on horseback. Not only do we know our enemies in picture, but in their proper persons.[1]

Despite the fascination the cartographic simulation inspires, by offering the chance to see all the world with ease, without even having to go out and suffer the hot and the cold weather, hunger and thirst, geography still remains an uncomfortable, tiresome science that measures the world with its feet. And there's more, according to Armand Frémont, "geographers often have muddy feet"[2]. New-born errant knights, their feet are muddy because

[1] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1847, p. 53.

[2] Armand Frémont, *Aimez-vous la géographie?*, Paris: Flammarion, 2005, p. 28.

geographers roam everywhere, stepping on the ground and taking deep breaths. They walk around the world without ever stopping, 'by night and by day': they know that, as a great 18th century walker reminds us,

> wheresoever I go, I always see before me a space in which I can proceed further. Thus I am conscious of the limits of my actual knowledge of the earth at any given moment, but not of the limits of all possible geography.[3]

Walking can represent a revolutionary act. It contradicts the typically modern idea of a static subject, which contemplates the world standing motionless in front of it. On the contrary, the experience of places solicits its movement. Leibniz was also perfectly aware of this, when in §57 of the *Monadology* (1714), he wrote that "the same town, looked at from various sides, appears quite different and becomes as it were numerous in aspects".[4]

To this first consideration, the source of so-called 'perspectivism', we add another, this time from Leibniz's short essay *On social life* (1679):

> Thus one can say that the place of others […] is a place proper to help us discover considerations which would not otherwise come to us; and that everything which we would find unjust if we were in the place of others must seem to us to be suspect of injustice.[5]

In these two fragments Leibniz is not just simply stating that the vision of the city from different points of view enables us to observe different things; but that the city does not exist as a 'total' object, a reassuring and definitive unit. In order to bring into focus a global image that is as variegated and accurate as possible, it is necessary to multiply the points of observation. The result of this operation goes well beyond the specific case: a single look at the city is, for its own nature, misleading; the compresence of different gazes (of different evaluation criteria, different observation practices, etc.) overcomes the limits that every individual point of view holds, and it is a *necessary condition to discover new things*.

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[3] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, London: MacMillan & Co, 1922, p. 609.

[4] Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, *The monadology and other philosophical writings*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898, p. 248.

[5] Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, *Political Writings. Translated and edited with an Introduction and notes by Patrick Riley*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 81

This idea can be found across various fields of knowledge. We can find it, for example, in the theories of James J. Gibson, the great psychologist of visual perception. In *The Ecological Approach To Visual Perception* he states that "The single, frozen field of view provides only impoverished information about the world".[6]

The way in which we meet the world (what Gibson calls *natural* or *ambulatory vision*) is not one that can be artificially created "we look around, walk up to something interesting and move around it so as to see it from all sides, and go from one vista to another"; and so it is necessary to start again from the fact that "the observer who walks from one vista to another, moves around an object of interest, and can approach it for scrutiny".[7]

We can find a similar approach in the words of the urbanist Bernardo Secchi. For Secchi, urbanism is also made by feet and the city is a space we experience with our body:

> bodies in movement that with their movement explore territories […]. Bodies of men and women, bodies that meet houses, sidewalks, pieces of asphalt and stone, cars and trains, pools and gardens.[8]

The experience of urbanscape implies movement, and for this reason it necessarily passes through our body, forcing us to confront ourselves with the hardships connected to corporeity ('bodies that meet houses, sidewalks, pieces of asphalt…'). We have to walk, we have to move, to change our point of view, if we really want to explore different aspects of reality.

Walkscaping is a complex, tiresome, probably infinite activity (the limits of all possible geography can never be known, only the limits of our actual knowledge of the world can), but also necessary. This activity can use or produce very different descriptive practices, which are embodied respectively by the German sociologist and philosopher Siegfried Kracauer and by the the French writer Georges Perec. These two authors, so different from each other in terms of biography, geography, cultural background and *forma mentis*, still present some features in common. Both are deeply in love with

[6] James J. Gibson, *The ecological approach to visual perception,* New York: Psychology Press, 1986, p. 2.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 303.

[8] Bernardo Secchi, *Prima lezione di urbanistica*, Roma: Laterza, 2000, p. 143.

the urban space, and so dedicate themselves elegantly to the art of flânerie, walkscaping as a philosophy and a writing practice; both use the eye as an instrument of investigation into reality; both are interested in what usually passes by unnoticed, the obvious, the secondary, the daily (both have polemical instances against sociology, which captures only the most extravagant and exceptional aspects of life). Borrowing an expression from Stefano Boeri, both Perec and Kracauer can be defined as 'detectives of space'.[9] Their apprehension (as much as their hopes) denote an unmistakable urban matrix that makes their work actually unintelligible if it's deprived of its reference to the urbanscape (whose chasms they explore restlessly, walking on its streets). The city is an integral part of their personality, it's their *chez soi*. But, leaving these affinities aside, there are also differences between the two in the way that they look at the urbanscape. In the following pages we will try to point out their visions of walkscape, focusing and discussing them.

2. Siegfried Kracauer: There is an 'Inner Siberia' in Urbanscape

Born in Frankfurt in 1889 and deceased in New York in 1966, architect, writer, journalist, philosopher, sociologist and cinematographic critic of Jewish origin, Siegfried Kracauer was one of the leading intellectuals of the Weimar Republic. Author of two novels (*Ginster*, 1928; *Georg*, published posthumously but written in 1934), of the theoretic-methodological essay *Sociology as Science* (1922), of a philosophical treatise about *The Detective Novel* (1922-1925) and of a study on *The Salaried Masses* (1930), in the 1930s Kracauer directed the cultural supplement of the Berlin issue of the prestigious 'Frankfurter Zeitung'. In 1933, following the fire of the Reichstag, Kracauer leaves Germany and goes into exile in Paris. In 1938 he publishes *Jacques Offenbach and the Paris of His Time*. In 1941 he moves to the U.S.: his works during the American period, with titles like *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (1947) and *Theory of the Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (1960) strengthen his fame as a theorist and cinema critic.

[9] Stefano Boeri, "I detective dello spazio", *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 16 March 1997.

In the 1960s the same Kracauer tries to draw attention to his Weimar production with two collections of articles from the 1920s and 30s: *Das Ornament der Masse* (1963) and *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo* (1964). The latter in particular highlights the undisputable fascination that urban spaces – Berlin, first of all, but also Paris, Marseille, Nice and Positano – inspire in him. According to David Frisby, who in *Fragments of Modernity* attributes the utmost importance to the German philosopher, alongside Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin, "if the metropolis is one of the key sites for the changing modes of experiencing modernity, then Kracauer must be judged to be one of its most sensitive excavators"[10]. Effectively, the texts he dedicates to urbanscape often assume the tendency of walkscapes, of a "reportage on the spot", as though their author redacted them 'with the pencil in hand' – taking the expression from Adorno –, little by little, as, taking a walk, he sneaked into streets, squares, alleys and passages.

Methodologically, Kracauer is a flâneur: the city appears to him as a *terra incognita*, a fragmentary and labyrinthic space that can only be known in one way: piece by piece, street after street, walking all its distances. Only an eye like his, trained in architecture studies, can read in the jumble of street life and in its constitutive elements the topic qualities that make the places unique and unmistakable. In his own words, he describes this aspect as an "obsession", an "intoxication of the streets", which he cannot resist, and which leads him to walk Paris streets "for several hours each day through the quarters". Let's have a look at this emblematic passage from *Memory of a Paris street*:

> I roamed about on these routes and must have awakened in every passerby the impression of an aimless stroller. And yet, strictly speaking, I was not aimless. I believed that I had a destination, but to my misfortune I'd forgotten it. I felt like someone who searches his memory for a word that burns on his lips, but he cannot find it. Filled with the longing to finally reach the place where what I'd forgotten would come back to me, I could not pass the smallest side street without entering it and turning the corner at its end. I would have liked best to explore all the courtyards and search through one room after another. When I peered to all sides, from the sun into the shadows and

[10] David Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer and Benjamin*, New York: Routledge, 1986, p. 5.

> back to the day, I had the distinct sensation that I was moving not only in space in search of my desired goal, but often enough transgressed the bounds of space and penetrated into time. A secret smugglers' path led into the realm of hours and decades, where the street system was just as labyrinthine as that of the city itself.[11]

This passion for urban details lets him capture the differences between Paris and Berlin in the different relationships these metropolises have with the memory of their past. In Paris the present has the shimmer of the past: the city carries the signs of age upon its urbanscape, and retains its handed-down possession as something alive. Berlin, on the contrary, is a vanguard city dominated by rootlessness, by the frenzy of the eternal and the ever-changing which eradicates the memories. If in Paris what has passed remains fixed to the urbanscape that during its lifetime was its home, here the streets appear to be without memory: "If in Germany something has not crumbled which remains standing in France, then this is only because it has never existed for us".[12]

The observation programme he adopts does not end simply in the impressionistic registration of the most blatant aspects of urban reality. Walkscaping suggests to Kracauer that the city isn't a smooth and homogeneous space, but a differentiated and qualitatively heterogeneous one: "Each social stratus has a space that is associated with it".[13] A great metropolis like Berlin for example harbours *at least two different kinds of urbanscape*:

We can distinguish between two kinds of urbanscape: first, those that are knowingly formed, and then those others which reveal themselves unintentionally. Those first ones spring from artistic will, realized in squares, vistas, groups of buildings and perspectival effects which Baedecker usually marks with an asterisk. The latter emerge, on the other hand, without prior planning. These are not compositions which, like Parisier Platz or the Concorde,

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[11] Siegfried Kracauer, "Memory of a Paris Street", translation by Ross Benjamin of "Erinnerung an eine Pariser Strasse", in *Id., Strassen in Berlin und anderswo*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2009, pp. 9-16 (http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/memory-of-a-paris-street) (accessed 13/04/2016).

[12] Siegfried Kracauer,"Paris Beobachtungen", *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 13 February 1927.

[13] Siegfried Kracauer, "On employment agencies: the construction of a space", in Neil Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture. A reader in cultural theory*, London-New York: Routledge, 1997, p. 15.

owed their existence to a uniform built meaning, but are the creations of accidents, which cannot be drawn into calculation. Wherever stonework and roadways find themselves together, the elements of which proceed out of wholly different directions of interest, such an urbanscape is brought into being which has never itself been the object of any interest. It is as unformed as nature, and therefore resembles a landscape, in that it maintains itself unconsciously. Uncaring for its expression, it dawns over time.[14]

This distinction between intentional and unintentional/unconscious urbanscapes must be taken very seriously, because it has a central place in his Berlin reportages. As a whole, the city does not necessarily owe its overall configuration to a uniform built meaning: just like a building presents two façades – the main one, public, official, visible to everyone, while the other stays in the back, apart, hidden from view – in the same way it is possible to individuate a knowingly formed urbanscape, produced by conscious intentions, and an urbanscape that society refuses and removes, that gives voice to the contradictions that grow inside the city and where the vegetation of common people flourishes. If we read the miniatures that Kracauer dedicates to urban spaces with the attention they require, we notice that certain surroundings, details and atmospheres constantly recur, almost obsessively. These are uninhabited or dilapidated houses, railway stations, amusement parks, employment agencies, bars, passages, proletarian quarters, heated halls and underpasses. The atmosphere of each of them is one and the same, and this impression comes from the fact that these urbanscapes are characteristic locations, typical spaces that correspond to typical social relationships (small dependent existences, ordinary people, etc.). These spaces can be described as actual *darkscapes* – places of shadow, hidden from view, wrapped in the light of dusk: the employment agency is located "in the shadow", in the rear sections of large building complexes; in the heated halls men "have stopped to shine"; inside the passages a "furtive half-light" seeps, etc. But why has Kracauer's flânerie led him here? What does he hope to find?

[14] Siegfried Kracauer, "Looking out of the window", translation of "Aus dem Fenster gesehen", in *Id.*, *Strassen in Berlin und anderswo*, 2009, pp. 53-58 (http://coyotedialectic.tumblr.com/post/125164140163/siegfried-kracauer-looking-out-of-the-window) (accessed 13/04/2016). I have slightly modified this translation.

We can see it clearly in one of the most fascinating essays of the '30s, *Farewell to the Linden Arcade*. This is a real immersion in one of those characteristic marginal locations, where, similarly to what happened in "the inner Siberia", all memories, instincts and desires unfit for the adornment of the social façade are stored ("Desires, geographic debaucheries, and many images that caused sleepless nights were not allowed to be seen among the high goings-on in the cathedrals and universities, in ceremonial speeches and parades").

The Kaisergalerie – also called the Linden Arcade–, was inaugurated in 1873 in the presence of the Emperor; it was a covered gallery that connected Linden Avenue (a boulevard in the Mitte District of Berlin, so named for the lime trees that line its grassed pedestrian mall between two carriageways), with the crossing between Friedrichstrasse and Behrenstrasse. When Kracauer crossed it ("When I recently strolled through it once again…") it was already experiencing a later stage of decadency: it is no longer the destination of the strolls of the elites, and the luxurious Wiener-Café no longer rests under its arcades, where it has been replaced by small shops selling stamps, lingerie and souvenirs. Slabs of ice-cold marble and a partially opaque vault of glass have covered its Renaissance architecture, making it "completely neutral", similar to the vestibule of a department store. Transformations like this, which denaturalize the vocation of these transitional places to receive the "waste materials" of society, permit them to show, in the name of 'modernization', their enormous salvific potential:

The peculiar feature of the arcades was that they were passageways, ways that passed through the bourgeois life that resided in front of and on top of their entrances. Everything excluded from this bourgeois life because it was not presentable or even because it ran counter to the official world view settled in the arcades. They housed the cast off and the disavowed, the sum total of everything unfit for the adornment of the facade. Here, in the arcades, these transient objects attained a kind of right of residence, like gypsies who are allowed to camp only along the highway and not in town. One passed by them as if one were underground, between this street and the next. Even now the Linden Arcade is still filled with shops whose displayed wares are just such passages in the composition of bourgeois life. That is, they satisfy primarily bodily needs and the craving for images of the sort that appear in daydreams. Both of these, the very near and the very far, elude the bourgeois

public sphere – which does not tolerate them – and like to withdraw into the furtive half-light of the passageway, in which they flourish as in a swamp. It is precisely as a passage that the passageway is also the place where, more than almost anywhere else, the voyage which is the journey from the near to the far and the linkage of body and image can manifest itself.[15]

This fragment highlights a fundamental element in the exploration of the urban labyrinth: marginal and decadent places host the last shards of a memory that is destined to disappear.

In other words, they are counter-spaces, places of a possible albeit temporary escape from the rules and power relationships that supervise the functioning of society. Later, others will call "heterotopies" these crossing spaces, where the infringement of the social norm is allowed.[16] But it is in Kracauer that we can already find the discovery of the presence, in urban archipelagos, of frail and ghostly eterotopic islands: in 1944 the Linden Arcade would be bombed, and, at the end of the war, burned to the ground.

3. Georges Perec: The Neutrality of the Gait

Born in Paris in 1936, son of Polish immigrants, Georges Perec loses his parents very young: his father dies in the war in 1940, his mother is deported to Auschwitz, where she dies in 1943. A student at the Sorbonne (where he gets to know Roland Barthes) and a documentary researcher at the CNRS, he makes his debut as a novelist in 1965 with *Things: A Story of the Sixties*, which wins the Renaudot Prize. Member of the OULIPO (*Ouvroir de littérature potentielle*, which means 'workshop of potential literature') and author of crosswords, Perec publishes in 1966 the novel *Which Moped with Chrome-plated Handlebars at the Back of the Yard?* and in 1967 *A Man Asleep*, which will later be turned into a film in 1974. Among his variegate literary production we cannot forget to mention *A Void*, entirely written without using the letter 'e' (the most common letter in French) and, most of all, his masterpiece: *Life a User's Manual*; in 1984 Italo Calvino wrote that this book represents "the last real event in the history of the novel thus far" and defines

[15] Siegfried Kracauer, "Farewell to the Linden Arcade", in *Id., The Mass Ornament. Weimar essays*, London: Harvard University Press, 1995, p. 338.

[16] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", *Diacritics*, Spring 1986, pp. 22-21.

its author as "one of the most significant literary personalities in the world".[17] Perec dies at the age of 46, in 1982, from lung cancer.

To live, explains Perec, "is to pass from one space to another, while doing your very best not to bump yourself".[18] Now, these spaces are always, inevitably, urban spaces: "I am a man of the cities". The special relationship the writer maintains with the urbanscape is intimately connected with one of the principal themes of his poetic: memory. Writing is commemoration and an uncertain but incessant stitching of the shreds of a negated childhood, an intent to re-elaborate a trauma – the loss of his parents – through a continuous work of remembrance that is a struggle against oblivion and the tragic consequences of History.[19] The frailty of memory finds an antidote in space: this is a reservoir of mnemonic traces of the past, and the practice of walkscaping is the privileged instrument of memory rescue. Perec's topophilia is manifest both in the book *Species of Spaces* and in an unfinished project significantly called *Lieux* (Places), and based on a precise working plan. After choosing twelve spots in Paris, which were somehow related to his biography, starting from 1969 the author would write every month, and for the following twelve years, two descriptions of one of them; the first one by going personally to the chosen spot and noticing in the most neutral way possible everything he came across while walking, or which he saw while sitting at a café. The second description would be written while staying far from the place and remembering all the memories related to it.[20] A double writing, of the place and of the memory; as Jacques-Denis Bertharion suggests once again, this project combines description and narration of the urbanscape to reach a simple yet very difficult objective: *lest we forget,* or, as Perec himself writes,

> keeping something intact, rehearsing the same old memories year after year, summoning up the same faces, the same tiny events, gathering everything together into a crazy tyrannical memory.[21]

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[17] Italo Calvino, "Perec e il salto del cavallo", *Riga*, 4, 1993, p. 134.

[18] Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 6.

[19] Jacques-Denis Bertharion, *Poétique de Georges Perec. "...une trace, une marque ou quelques signes"*, Saint-Genouph: Librairie Nizet, 1998, p. 224.

20 Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, London: Penguin, 1999, pp. 55-56.

[21] Georges Perec cited in Philippe Lejeune, *La mémoire et l'oblique: Georges Perec autobiographe*,

From one part of this project the small book *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris* was born; sitting at a café in Place Saint-Sulpice in Paris, Perec spends three days (from the 18 to the 20 October 1974) taking note of everything that passes by – every person, object, event, action, and atmospheric condition – in a kind of stenographic report of a fragment of urban reality:

> There are many things in Place Saint-Sulpice, for instance: a district council building, a financial building, a police station, three cafés, one of which sells tobacco and stamps, a movie theater, a church on which Le Vau, Gittard, Oppenord, Servandoni, and Chalgrin have all worked, and which is dedicated to a chaplain of Clotaire II, who was bishop of Bourges from 624 to 644 and whom we celebrate on 17 January, a publisher, a funeral parlor, a travel agency, a bus stop, a tailor, a hotel, a fountain decorated with the statues of four great Christian orators (Bossuet, Fénelon, Fléchier, and Massillon), a newsstand, a seller of pious objects, a parking lot, a beauty parlour, and many other things as well.
>
> A great number, if not the majority, of these things have been described, inventoried, photographed, talked about, or registered. My intention in the pages that follow was to describe the rest instead: that which is generally not taken note of, that which is not noticed, that which has no importance: what happens when nothing happens other than the weather, people, cars, and clouds.[22]

The deal is to rescue and give value to what he calls "the infra-ordinary", that *background noise* that fills everyday life, the whole of the habits and the repeated, ordinary, taken-for-granted gestures, which are never mentioned in official discourse, which only cares about the "great events", what is extra-ordinary, and uncommon:

> What speaks to us, seemingly, is always the big event, the untoward, the extra ordinary: the front-page splash, the banner headlines. Railway trains only begin to exist when they are derailed, and the more passengers that are killed, the more the trains exist.
> […]

Paris: POL, 1991, p. 159.

[22] Georges Perec, *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris*, Cambridge: Wakefield Press, 2010, p. 3.

> Behind the event there has to be a scandal, a fissure, a danger, as if life reveals itself only by way of the spectacular, as if what speaks, what is significant, is always abnormal: natural cataclysms or historical upheavals, social unrest, political scandals.
> ln our haste to measure the historic, significant and revelatory, let's not leave aside the essential: the truly intolerable, the truly inadmissible.
> […]
> The daily papers talk of everything except the daily. The papers annoy me, they teach me nothing. What they recount doesn't concern me, doesn't ask me questions and doesn't answer the questions I ask or would like to ask.
> What's really going on, what we're experiencing, the rest, all the rest, where is it? How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual?[23]

In all these efforts to elaborate a phenomenology of daily life, walkscaping is the recovery of memories and fragments of the past which are inscribed in space and which are waiting to be saved before falling into oblivion for ever. It's not a coincidence that, among the twelve Parisian spots chosen by the author, Rue Vilin is included. Here, at no. 24, stood the house where Perec spent his early years with his parents and, after 1940, with his mother (who also worked there as a hairdresser). It's here that, after entrusting him to a Red Cross train that will take him to his father's family, his mother will be arrested and then deported to Auschwitz, where she will die "without understanding", as we read with discomfort in *W, or the memory of Childhood*.[24] At the time of the project on urban places Perec's birth house still existed, but it was already threatened with demolition: bulldozers and excavators tore to pieces the old, impracticable walled-up houses to transform the old popular neighbourhood of Belleville (where the house was situated) in accordance with new urban plans.[25]

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[23] Georges Perec, "Approaches to what?", in Ben Highmore (ed.), *The Everyday Life Reader*, Oxon: Routledge, 2002, p. 177.

[24] Georges Perec, *W, or the memory of Childhood*, London: Harvill, 1988, p. 33.

[25] About this, the short-film *En remontant la rue Vilin* (1992) directed by Robert Bober and dedicated to the French writer: https://youtu.be/ZBhQAyHRo3c (accessed 13/04/2016).

From this perspective I would like now to focus my attention on the third novel of the author, *A Man Asleep*. Its plot is weak and can be easily summarised: one day an anonymous student, instead of getting up and getting ready for an exam, suffers a deep ataraxic attack, feeling indifference towards everything and everyone. The motto of his days becomes "to be without desire, or resentment, or revolt"[26]. His non-rebellion (since in order to rebel some force of will and interest in the world are still required) becomes an apprenticeship in neutrality: "All hierarchies and preferences must crumble and collapse".[27] He becomes a murky shadow, hard kernel of indifference to which words such as hope, enterprise, success and perseverance sound void, because they have lost all their meaning; whose eyes "register no interest in what they see".[28] Now, what is more relevant is that this "neutral eye" on the world, when it isn't laying down sleeping or observing the cracks on the ceiling, when it isn't playing solitary day-long games, or listening to the noises coming from the flat next to his, strolls through Paris, covering its spaces far and wide (as shown by the insistent use, in the text, of verbs of movement, such as walking, drifting, wandering, strolling…). A restless and desperate flâneur, "like someone carrying invisible suitcases" he goes in or goes out, crosses, skirts around or, "sitting outside a café", gazes at the places which form the urbanscape, in an obsessive pilgrimage, which seems endless because it lacks a final destination: local cinemas where the insistent stink of disinfectant hangs in the air, bookshops and galleries, monuments, churches, equestrian statues, public urinals, Russian restaurants, fenced gardens, fun-fairs, markets, museums and back-street bars selling only wine by the glass; the Louvre colonnade and hoardings disfigured by tattered posters, etc. There is no element of the complex topography of Paris that is not touched by this "messenger delivering a letter with no address": roads, squares, boulevards, stations and passages where an anonymous crowd bustles, unaware, restless, flocking together in useless and frantic gestures. An example, among several others:

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[26] Georges Perec, "A Man Asleep", in *Id., Things. A story of the sixties with A Man Asleep*, p. 161.

[27] *Ibid*., p. 169.

[28] *Ibid*., p. 215.

Still you walk, ever onwards, untiring, immortal. You search, you wait. You wander through the fossilised town, the intact white stones of the restored façades, the petrified dustbins, the vacant chairs where concierges once sat; you wander through the ghost town, scaffolding abandoned against gutted apartment blocks, bridges adrift in the fog and the rain.

Putrid city, vile, repulsive city. Sad city, sad lights in the sad streets, sad clowns in the sad music-halls, sad queues outside the sad cinemas, sad furniture in the sad stores. Dark stations, barracks, warehouse. The gloomy bars which line the Grands Boulevards, the ugly shopfronts. Noisy or deserted city, pallid or hysterical city, gutted, devastated, soiled city, city bristling with prohibitions, steel bars, iron fences, locks. Charnel house city: the covered markets that are rotting away, the shanty towns disguised as housing projects, the slum belt in the heart of Paris, the unbearable horror of the boulevards where the cops hang out: Haussmann, Magenta – and Charonne.[29]

Heidegger's *Being and Time* comes to mind, especially when he writes that "Even when these and still more are objectively present, Da-sein can be alone"[30]. In *A Man Asleep* the Da-Sein gives evidence of a perfect overturning of the Heideggerian concept of be-distancing. Not only the distance between himself and others, between himself and the world doesn't disappear, but he himself retreats and backs off, cutting ties with the world, building an impenetrable wall of indifference of his own. Walker without direction, he transforms the condition of him being-alone from "a deficient mode of being-with" into an armour, somnambulism, invisibility. If the crowd appears anonymous to him it's principally because he himself is, first of all, an anonymous individual, with no face nor name.

"Essentially, nothing else stands 'behind' the phenomena of phenomenology".[31] In *A Man Asleep* the stare directed to the urbanscape simply consists in recording visual stimuli: describing the urban spaces is just a matter of capturing the immediate presence of things, without programmatically pushing oneself beyond their appearance: "there is nothing for you to understand, just something to look at".[32] This programme of obser-

[29] *Ibid*., p. 203.

[30] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996, p. 113.

[31] *Ibid*., p. 31.

[32] Georges Perec, "A Man Asleep", in *Id*., *Things. A story of the sixties with A Man Asleep*, p. 153.

vation of reality renounces posing questions, trying to decipher the urban space going beyond the immediacy, looking for hidden meanings. There is nothing to understand, no meaning 'behind' the "combinations of shapes and lights".[33] Phenomena *are*, urbanscape *is* – there is nothing more to say: "All moments are equivalent, all spaces are alike".[34]

4. The Detectives of Urban Space

Whether they look at urbanscapes as pure, self-evident, factual and irreducible meanings (like in *A Man Asleep*); or as signifiers to decipher in order to reclaim individual or collective memories, the modalities through which Perec and Kracauer, these two great detectives of urban spaces, describe urbanscape, follow three main paths.

The first one is the odologic dimension: walkscaping as a practice of observation and a description of reality. The city is not only a place or a series of places where you "stay", it's also a network of crossings, of routes, of deviations. In other words, it cannot be truly known from above, as in a map or from a sedentary observation; it can only be revealed in all its variety and vastness of internal articulations through an ambulatory vision. This implies measuring the urbanscape with the feet, and, consequently, a series of actions requiring movement, restlessness, apprehension: walking, exploring, sauntering, dawdling, wandering, going, idling about, etc. (all these actions require more than just an intellectual effort; walkscaping is a *corpore praesenti* activity, which means it's primarily done with the body… to quote De Certeau, Kracauer and Perec are not 'voyeurs', but 'walkers'). As the knights-errant described by Cervantes, the flâneur is dominated by a fever, an impulse to stir out of his apartment and explore all the streets, all courtyards, all squares, one after another (true, some healthy pause at a café table is conceded; but Perec's experiment in Saint-Sulpice doesn't take more than three days). He wants to question deserted or packed squares, badly broken sidewalks, gutted building sites, scruffy down-at-heel cafés, rows of houses and slightly convex asphalt surfaces, streets where cars never pass, stinking cinemas, parks, passages, pale walls. It's important to remember

[33] *Ibid*., p. 188.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 182.

that the exploration of the urbanscape takes place in perfect solitude: the flâneur is an isolated being; his being-alone is his existential trademark; he roams the city like a ghost.

If the first path can be associated with the figures of the knights-errant and the flâneur, the second presents some affinities with the excavator and the detective, people who follow their personal investigation, looking for hints that can help them solve the enigma. They roam pointlessly, but only apparently so; they trust that their instinct will indefectibly lead them somewhere, even though they don't know exactly where. What matters the most is what they are looking for, which is never something completely unknown (familiar memories in Perec; the memories of society in Kracauer). What are the clues that the detective follows? What does the excavator expect? Surely, not big events – what is usually described, inventoried, photographed, talked about, registered – but, more modestly, *the infra-ordinary*: life that doesn't shimmer, fragments of daily memories to recognize, keep, rehearse, summon, gather. The urbanscape is a secret smugglers' path to cover with no hesitations, a land rich in treasure to excavate patiently, an archive to be explored carefully; if you walk the path correctly, avoiding the traps set out along its course, if you make the right questions, the mnemonic traces the urbanscape retains can be rescued before they are lost forever.

Rescued from whom? From what? This is the third, fascinating trajectory of walkscaping. Rescued from fascism, the incubation of which Kracauer perceives with preoccupation along the streets and behind the façades of Berlin's buildings; the same fascism that shattered Perec's childhood, brutally severing the history of his family, as *W, or the memory of Childhood* testifies. The hint here is the city in perennial transformation, constantly changing its skin, deleting, with its urbanscape, also the memories associated with it: Berlin across the '20s and the '30s, Paris in the '60s and '70s. The demolition of old houses, the widening of the streets, follow the deliberations of programmes of urban renovation, in a fast spiral of renewal, treating urbanscape as a palimpsest which can be erased and then written again, in a potentially infinite process. Rootlessness, frenzy, forgetfulness – and then oblivion. What once existed is on its way to being never seen again. In this way, from different perspectives, these two authors tell a similar story, the daily struggle between an intentional and

'official' urbanscape that swallows and deletes a resisting urbanscape, which gives body to the dreamlike images of the city (the fight is uneven and its result uncertain, but it seems more in favour of the first type of urbanscape). The flâneur fights this hurry in so promptly shaking off historic time. How? While he cannot avoid the destruction of the past, after his daily walk through the city, after collecting the traces of the perishing urbanscape, with his shoes still dirty with mud, he goes back to his newspaper's newsroom, or sits down at a café, and *writes*. His writing, configured as testimony, archive and transmission, perpetrates the memory of what is in peril of being swept away, disappearing for ever – and, in this way, writing *saves* the memory of what we were, by *checkmating Death.*

PART FOUR

ACT
For a Fulfiling Living

AGRICULTURE AND LANDSCAPE. FROM CULTIVATED FIELDS TO THE WILDERNESS, AND BACK

Paolo D'Angelo

As should be clear from the title, the subject of the present essay is not the influence of agriculture on the lie of the land. A topic of this sort could hardly be discussed in general terms, especially by a scholar of philosophy. The landscape transformations brought about by agriculture, particularly in countries home to ancient civilisations such as European countries, are so extensive, wide-reaching and firmly entrenched, that illustrating them requires painstaking investigation and in-depth competences. In Italy, moreover, as is shown by Emilio Sereni's still crucial book *Storia del paesaggio agrario italiano*, landscape and agriculture are a close-knit pair, given the extent to which agriculture has contributed to shaping, organising and transforming our landscape throughout the centuries.

The topic I will be exploring, then, is a narrower one, which concerns not the alterations made to the actual landscape but those which have taken place in our own attitude towards nature and the landscape.

I will outline a twofold movement, which has occurred at two very different moments. I will show how for a long time the kind of nature that was loved, perceived as agreeable, and hence appreciated within the landscape, was the nature developed by man, the object of agriculture or at any rate of human labour – in other words, the cultivated countryside. Broadly speaking – and leaving aside certain antecedents that I will be considering – it was only over the course of the 18th century that wild, inhospitable and hostile nature came to be appreciated. Over the last two centuries, however, this idea of the wilderness has become the dominant paradigm for natural beauty as a whole. The kinds of landscapes to be admired have been identified with those less affected by human intervention, for instance mountain or marine landscapes: in other words, the kind of landscapes that seem most distant from the domesticated agricultural landscape. Only in recent times – over the last couple of decades, I would

say – have we witnessed a reverse movement, a rediscovery of the value of the cultivated countryside even from the point of view of the landscape, so as to restore its centrality in relation to our perception of natural beauty in general. It would not be far from the truth to argue, then, that while it took us two millennia to develop a love for the wilderness, we have only been following the inverse path for a few years.

Antiquity – meaning Greek and Roman Antiquity – harboured suspicion and repulsion towards the wilderness, whilst being aware of its charm. Certainly, the issue of the perception of the landscape in Antiquity might be discussed at length, since many different opinions have been expressed on the matter, starting with J. Ritter and A. Berque's thesis that the notion of landscape is essentially a modern one and the opposite views held by G. Carchia and M. Venturi Ferriolo. Certainly, the ancients possessed a keen sense of space and of what we may describe as the *feeling* of nature, as witnessed by the always clearly perceived connection between given places and myths, or indeed by the very establishment of temples, sanctuaries and oracular sites in highly evocative places and – in Rome at least – by the arrangement of space for military or urban purposes.[1] Still, it is just as certain that the men of Antiquity detected natural beauty in nature *as a whole* or, conversely, in individual natural beings (for example, in the human body), rather than in a specific, concrete aspect of nature, as seems bound to be the case when we speak of landscape sensitivity. What is highly revealing, in this respect, is the almost complete lack of individualising representations of places either in art or in literature and poetry. What are most commonly found in these fields are stereotypical depictions of abstract places, such as rural environments in Theocritean poetry (but also, albeit not as distinctly, in Latin poetry) and the representation of ideal landscapes in Hellenistic and Roman painting.

Now, if we keep to the level of stereotyped descriptions, it is possible to identify an underlying opposition between the *locus amoenus*, on the one hand, and the *locus horridus* on the other. This amounts to a contrast between

[1] A very useful outline of the topic is provided by L. Bonesio's recent essay "Il contributo della letteratura latina alla comprensione moderna del paesaggio", in G. Baldo and E. Cazzuffi (eds.), *Regionis forma pulcherrima. Percezioni, lessico, categorie del paesaggio nella letteratura latina*, Florence: Olschki, 2013.

an environment favourable to human life, and often shaped by man, and an environment hostile to life – an inhospitable environment. A pleasant environment may take the form of a verdant meadow strewn with flowers, rich in running water and offering travellers the cool shelter of shady trees. An example would be the spot on the shores of the Ilisos where Socrates and Phaedrus meet in the Platonic dialogue named after the latter. By contrast, a *locus horridus* will be marked by a lack of vegetation, reflecting the aridness and sterility of its soil, by vastness and the lack of points of reference – as in the case of Lucan's Libyan desert.

No doubt, the *locus amoenus* is not always a cultivated place. However, it is an idyllic rural and bucolic setting inhabited by shepherds, if not farmers. In this respect, the *saltus* is not the *silva*, a threatening wood or forest perceived as something alien and dangerous. Alongside the pastoral landscape we find the cultivated field and the garden, the *ager* and the *hortus*, the ancient Romans' natural setting of choice. For the Romans, the best vantage point for the observation of nature was provided by the country villa, the rural dwelling of wealthy citizens. The perception of agricultural space is always associated with that of the concrete activities that take place within it, what we would call the agricultural industries, as in Horace's celebrated ode:

> That corner of the world smiles for me beyond all others, where the honey yields not to Himettus, and the olive vies with green Venafrum, where Jupiter vouchsafes long springs and winters mild, and where Aulon, dear to fertile Bacchus, envies not the clusters of Falernum. That place and its blessed heights summon thee and me; there shalt thou bedew with affection's tear the warm ashes by thy poet friend!

Another example might be the following epigram by Martial:

> The Baian villa, Bassus, of our friend Faustinus keeps unfruitful no spaces of wide field […] but rejoices in a farm, honest and artless. Here in every corner corn is tightly packed, and many a crock is fragrant of ancient autumns. Here, when November is past, and winter is now at hand, the unkempt pruner brings home late grapes.

An antecedent of the modern view of the landscape may be found in Pliny the Younger's description of the environs of a country villa at Tifernum

Tiberinum. The author here stresses the beauty of the place, speaking of "regionis forma pulcherrima". In the writing of agricultural theorists from Varro to Columella, considerations regarding the fertility of the soil and the high yield of agricultural estates go hand in hand with an acknowledgement of their beauty as an added value, so to speak: when having to choose between two equally productive estates, one should opt for the most beautiful one, since *utilitas* and *voluptas* must not be separated – most importantly, they should never be set in contrast. As Emilio Sereni has noted, "in Varro, aesthetic requirements coincide with rational and utilitarian ones".[2]

A typical feature of the ancients' outlook on nature is the link drawn between inhospitable areas and faraway places, particularly ones inhabited by enemy peoples: the interior of Anatolia which provides the setting for Xenophon's *Anabasis*, the German forests described by Tacitus, the wilderness of Caledonia that Hadrian chose to cut off from colonised Britain:

> Roman culture defined the contrast between wild nature and cultivated nature through a conciliating perspective that sought to drive the dangers and snares of the former to the furthest edges of the civilised world and to assign undisputed ideological supremacy to the latter, to the point of turning it into the seal of the grandeur of the Empire.[3]

Representations of open natural spaces are rare in the Middle Ages. What are relatively common, instead, especially from the 12th century onwards, are depictions of agricultural labour, particularly with the so-called cycles of the months. In these representations natural space is often reduced to a minimum and almost allegorised through the inclusion of an ear of wheat or a vine shoot, as in the sculptural calendar adorning the Porta della Pescheria of Modena Cathedral. Moving closer to the modern age, however, and directing our gaze to Northern Europe, we can almost catch a glimpse of some landscapes. For instance, the representation of the month of February in *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry*, an illuminated manuscript from the early 15th century now in the Condé Museum in Chantilly, offers a view of snow-covered hills under an overcast sky and of a valley

[2] E. Sereni, *Storia del paesaggio agrario italiano*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1996, p. 60.

[3] M. Vitta, *Paesaggio. Una storia fra natura e architettura*, Turin: Einaudi, 2005, p. 35.

dotted with village rooftops. To be sure, what stands in the foreground are agricultural tools, a sheep pen and women huddling around a fireplace, whereas the stark forest on the right is shown in relation to the woodcutter who is collecting wood for the fire. Besides, in other cases the background only consists in a single building and its walls, as in the depiction of springtime haymaking and ploughing.

In Italy, the most famous – and almost unparalleled – instance of the representation of a territory in relation to the agricultural work performed within it is no doubt the large fresco which Ambrogio Lorenzetti painted in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in 1338-1339 to illustrate the effects of Good Government. Here too we find a broad view of a hilly landscape. A procession of knights makes its way through the walls of Siena, as a country dweller moves in their direction, driving a dark-bristled pig, and other farmers carry produce into the city on mules. In the foreground, reapers are scything hay, while other men are busy harvesting wheat. In the distance, rows of vines already dot the hills. The simultaneous presence of agricultural tasks typical of different seasons clearly betrays the allegorical character of the scene which does not, after all, illustrate any identifiable stretch of the Sienese countryside.

What we have, then, is not genuine landscape painting: at the earliest, this only emerged in the West two centuries later, in relation to experiences of a different sort, not primarily related to the representation of the cultivated countryside. Thus Van Eyck's famous *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin* offers the view of a river winding its way across forest and city; Antonello da Messina's *Crucifixion* in Sibiu clearly shows the gulf and harbour of Messina in the background of Mount Golgotha with the three crosses; and the imaginary landscapes by Patinier ("the fine landscape painter" praised by Dürer) are all fanciful ones made up of dense forests, crags and caves. Indeed, if the prototype of the modern perception of the landscape is to be found in Petrarch's description of his ascent of Mont Ventoux, as suggested by Burckhardt and Ritter, then what we have is the very opposite of cultivated farmland. Petrarch ascends the mountain against the advice of a shepherd, who warns him that only thorns and stones, sweat and toil await him. The emphasis is on the wild and inhospitable nature of the place, a high mountain that offers nothing agreeable to man.

What emerges, then, is the contrast between a feeling of nature that for centuries was destined to remain the prerequisite of a tiny fraction of the population and the common man's perception of nature. Petrarch does not provide the only example of the love of the mountains, which is to say of an environment not marked by human labour and indeed hostile to the presence of man. The Swiss Humanist Konrad Gessner loved the mountains and devoted a short book to the subject, *De montium admiratione*. Similarly, painted landscapes often feature, if not high mountains, at least a glimpse of semi-wild nature. Things are rather different in the case of the common man: for many centuries still, travellers and writers continued to show appreciation only of nature that had been made productive by man. In his *Journal de Voyage*, written in the late 16th century, de Montaigne warmly describes the beauty of the Po Valley: "a nos costés des plaines très fertiles, aiant, suivant l'usage du pais, parmy leurs champs de bleds, force arbres rangés par orde, d'où pendent leurs vignes".[4]

Almost two centuries later, Charles de Brosses waxes lyrical over the same landscape: "the land extending between Vicenza and Padua alone is probably worth the whole journey through Italy. No art scene is more beautiful and embellished than such a countryside".[5]

The kind of landscape that elicited admiration and was contemplated with most pleasure was the cultivated plane, not the inhospitable mountain landscape. As late as the end of the 18th century, when descending into Italy, Goethe had no eyes for the landscape at all until reaching Verona.

At the same time, the horror of the wilderness and fear of threatening places endured. These feelings gave rise to popular legends about "accursed" mountains home to monstrous creatures. A traveller such as John Evelyn, in the late 17th century, saw the Alps as nothing but a rubbish dump in which nature had piled up all the filth and horrors from the plains.[6] Particularly

[4] M. de Montaigne, *L'Italia alla fine del secolo XVI. Journal de voyage en Italie en 1580 et 1581*, Città di Castello: Lapi, 1889, p. 147

[5] *Le Président de Brosses en Italie. Lettres familières écrites d'Italie en 1739 et 1740*, Paris: Didier, 1858, Tome I, p. 153.

[6] With regard to these topics, I will refer to R. Bodei's volume *Paesaggi sublimi. Gli uomini davanti alla natura selvaggia*, Milan: Bompiani, 2005. On the endurance of a view of the landscape centred on the concrete activities which may take place within it: starting with agricultural labour, see P. Camporesi, *Le belle contrade*, Garzanti, 1992.

revealing, in this respect, is the curious geological theory developed by Thomas Burnet, the author of *Telluris theoria sacra*, who posited that the Earth was originally flat but was then corrugated, creating the mountains, as a divine punishment.

It was only in the early 18th century that this view of the mountains started changing even in the common perception. What is often mentioned as a first sign of this change is the journey across the Alps made by the Englishman John Dennis in 1686. For the first time, an author here speaks of "delightful Horror" and "terrible Joy": the feelings of fear and bewilderment caused by a threatening landscape are no longer exclusively presented in negative terms, but are also regarded as a source of pleasure, albeit of a different sort from that caused by beauty. As nature came to be perceived in a new light, the feeling of the sublime in those years passed from the rhetorical domain, to which it had been confined for two thousand years, into the broader aesthetic sphere, becoming a central element of 17th century poetics. Albrecht Haller's 1732 poem on the Alps marked the consecration of the new outlook on the wilderness, paving the way for countless literary variations, as well as – at a later stage – a new pictorial *vague*. This was given full expression and widely promoted by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who in the novel *Julie, or the New Heloise*, sang the praises of high mountains and their moral influence on man:

> On the high mountains, where the air is pure and subtle, one breathes more freely, one feels lighter in the body, more serene of mind. […] It seems that by rising above the habitation of men one leaves all base and earthly sentiments behind.[7]

The first ascent of Mont Blanc took place towards the end of the century, in 1786, a date which marks the beginning of modern mountaineering. The practice was destined to acquire increasing popularity over the course of the 19th century, to the point that in 1871 Leslie Stephen, Virginia Woolf's father, claimed that the Alps had become "the playground of Europe", a sort of vast amusement park.[8]

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[7] J.-J. Rousseau, *Julie ou la nouvelle Heloïse. Lettres de deux amans, habitan d'une petite ville au pied des Alpes*, Première Partie, Lettre XXIII.

[8] L. Stephen, *The Playground of Europe,* London 1871.

Alongside the sublime, a new aesthetic category emerged in the 18th century as a way of marking a break from "beautiful" nature, which is to say nature that is well-arranged, chiefly for cultivation. The new category was that of the *picturesque*, a term which originally meant "suited to making a fine subject in painting". In particular, it referred to rough, jagged, dark landscapes, in contrast to the smooth, regular and sunlit countryside. One example of picturesque art is provided by Salvator Rosa's *vedute*, in which a varied and irregular nature, often filled with forests, crags and caverns – a fine shelter for brigands and other villains – provides a new paradigm for the landscape. As witnessed by Kant, the sublime indicates on the one hand the boundlessness of nature – unreachable mountains and ocean expanses – and, on the other, the power of nature – storms, volcanoes and floods. The picturesque, on the other hand, does not go so far: as theorised by William Gilpin, for instance, it describes an irregular nature, a rugged, jagged land, as opposed to an orderly, flat or only slightly sloping landscape with an uneven contour. A round and gently sloping hill or a flowery meadow will be regarded as beautiful; a moor dotted with clusters of trees and streaked with gorges and ravines will be perceived as picturesque. The cultivated countryside, then, might still be considered beautiful, but not picturesque or sublime.

A neat counterpart to this change of taste may be found in the history of the garden. While the architectural, geometric, well-ordered garden to some extent represents an extension of the cultivated countryside and vice-versa, as clearly illustrated for instance by Giusto Utens' views of Medici villas, the Mannerist garden – exemplified by the Pratolino gardens and even more so those of Bomarzo – identifies a "third" nature alongside wild and cultivated nature. However, the most decisive break with the paradigm of beautiful cultivated nature was made by the picturesque garden, the English garden. Significantly known as the landscape garden, this was designed in such a way as to conceal its underlying artificiality and create the impression of pure, wild nature. The gardens surrounding villas and castles, or the country mansions of English aristocrats, were not conceived as agricultural estates – unlike French and Italian gardens, which in a way stood as an intensification or magnification of agricultural processes – but rather were intended to be perceived, as far as possible, as a disorderly and spontaneous nature.

The landscape garden anticipated by a few decades the vogue of the

Romantic garden, which was to ensure the ultimate affirmation of the predilection for wild, rugged and dark nature, along with the love of mountain vistas with Cozens as early as in the 18th century, of frozen landscapes, as in some of Caspar David Friedrich's paintings, and of stormy seas, as in Turner's seascapes. What we find here is no longer the serene nature favoured by the Classical landscape painting of Poussin, Lorrain or indeed – well into the 18th century – Hackert; rather, it is a violent, inhospitable nature. It is no longer a pleasant and charming landscape in which one would like to live, but a barren, stark or threatening landscape in which, as Heinrich von Kleist wrote in relation to Friedrich's *Monk by the Sea*, "so ist es, wenn man es betrachtet, als ob Einem die Augenlider weggeschnitten wären".[9]

The idea of conceiving the actual landscape as a projection of landscape painting onto nature started spreading precisely in the early 19th century and completed the process whereby the "aesthetic" landscape had gradually come to be separated from the agricultural one. The gap thus created between the kind of landscape to be admired, painted and described, and cultivated farmland was destined to remain open for almost two centuries. In fact, judging from the works of some contemporary environmental artists fond of hiking and dizzying heights, we might say that the gap remains open to this day.

There are many reasons for this. First of all, what contributes to the disrepute of the agrarian landscape is the still widely held assumption that the only landscapes of genuine aesthetic worth are "extraordinary" landscapes – uncommon, rare and exceptional ones. This tendency obviously runs against the perception of the agricultural landscape as an aesthetically pleasing one, since by definition it is a well-arranged landscape, shaped by everyday, common practices. If only landscapes of outstanding beauty are regarded as worthy of consideration, then what will be privileged will invariably be landscapes foreign to common transactions, landscapes of the sort we can only find by moving away not just from the city but also from the countryside – for example, by attaining great heights or venturing into dangerous areas. Unsurprisingly, Roberto Longhi, who was distrustful of natural beauty, ironically remarked that for tourist guides beauty is only to be found above 1,000 metres.

[9] H. von Kleist, "Empfindungen vor Friedrichs Seelandschaft", in F. Apel (ed.), *Romantische Kunstlehre*, Frankfurt am Mein: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1992, p. 357.

A second reason is probably to be sought in the endurance of an opposition as conventional as it is entrenched in common perception: the opposition between the useful and the beautiful. Although everyday experience teaches us that the two values, usefulness and beauty, do not necessarily stand in mutual contrast, and that an object, such as a building, may very well serve a specific function while at the same time constituting an artwork, with regard to the landscape the prejudiced assumption is still that only a landscape serving no utilitarian end can be beautiful – a landscaped not designed for human well-being, an unproductive one.

A third reason, which in a way is the counterpart of the second one, emerges from the observation that usually people who live and work within a given landscape, exploiting it for their own purposes, have no eyes for its beauty. One might recall here Cézanne's observations on Mont Sainte-Victoire: Cézanne portrayed it countless times, with boundless love and devotion, on each occasion seeking to delve a little further into his beloved landscape. Yet when speaking with local farmers, he found it impossible to elicit the faintest hint of wonder or admiration from them. That space was the space of their everyday labour, not a magnificent setting for it. Farmers, at any rate traditional farmers, do not appreciate – and never have appreciated – the landscape. Indeed, the latter was usually only discovered and valued by burghers who spent their leisure time in the countryside or by nobles who chose to leave their city palaces for their country mansions. The love of the landscape went hand in hand with the spread of an urban culture: paradoxically, it was city living that nourished the love of the countryside.

In the case of the European landscape, and the Italian one in particular, what has partially balanced these considerations, even in the past, is the awareness of the *historical* and *cultural* character of the landscape, and hence of the role played by agricultural labour with respect to its transformation and conformation (although only rarely have people grasped the full consequences of these circumstances). Elsewhere, even these scruples were missing. Let us think, for instance, of the extent to which the national conscience of the United States has been shaped by the myth of the wilderness, by the identification of the national spirit with the *natural* and *wild* roots of the environment in which it developed. While the protection of nature emerged in Europe as the protection of natural beauty, in North America it

took the form of the conservation of the pristine environment, of nature yet untouched by human labour. The first large natural parks were established in America in the latter half of the 19th century: *nature*, in a way, replaced *history* as a communal bond. Hence, it represented a nature utterly *different* from history – not the kind of nature that encompasses human labour, but the kind that rules it out or, at any rate, makes it impossible on account of its own boundless might and vastness. This is the nature of the big parks of Yellowstone and Yosemite. Curiously enough, even European national parks, including Italian ones, were initially based on this prominent environmentalist motivation, as they were established to protect high mountain areas in territories scarcely affected by human activity, if at all, and in which agricultural transformations were limited or at any rate reduced to a minimum. Thus in the aftermath of World War I Italy established the Parco del Gran Paradiso and Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo.

Even landscape laws have long borne witness to this marginalisation of the cultivated landscape. To consider once again the case of Italy, where a pervasive and indissoluble link exists between landscape and agriculture, the protection of the landscape has long revolved around the idea of *natural* landscape, rather than that of an extraordinary combination of natural elements and artificial, historical ones.

The no doubt significant Bottai law of 1939 still had *picturesque* beauty as its point of reference, since it explicitly referred to "panoramic beauties regarded as paintings". Clearly, as one would expect, this law was still based on an acknowledgement of *exceptional* beauty, since it focused its conservation efforts on "fixed features that possess *conspicuous* qualities of natural beauty or geological uniqueness." Yet even the far more recent, and equally praiseworthy, Galasso law of 1985 operates within a context in which no trace of the agrarian landscape is apparently to be found. This law protects the coastline and the shores of inland waters, particularly "mountains above 1600 metres in the Alps and above 1200 metres in the Appennines", along with "glaciers, parks, forests, volcanoes and wetlands." One might say that conservation begins where agriculture ends.

In recent decades – that is, over the last twenty-five years at most – things have taken a different turn. Farmland is no longer perceived as something opposed to the landscape from an aesthetic perspective: beauty is no longer

exclusively sought in areas where we can harbour the illusion that no visible traces are left by mankind. Of course, I am not referring to an awareness of the fact that our landscape is a *cultural* landscape and hence a *cultivated* one, as landscape theoreticians have always maintained. What I am referring to is the new *widespread* perception of the countryside, including farmland, as a landscape.

Here too, we can easily identify some of the reasons behind this change. First of all, we come across two reasons that, at face value, may seem antithetical to one another and hence irreconcilable, but which upon closer scrutiny prove to be far from incompatible. The first of these two reasons may be described as the relinquishing of the privilege formerly assigned to *exceptional* landscapes. Not just current theories but also current views of the landscape increasingly tend to assign value even to landscapes other than extraordinary ones – places of exceptional beauty. What is increasingly taking root is the belief that the landscape consists in a network, a seamless web, as opposed to the sporadic emergence of beauties as extraordinary as they are mutually unrelated. A typical example of this new way of perceiving the landscape is the underlying idea of the *European Landscape Convention*. The ELC tends to consider the landscape as being coextensive with the local territory, in such a way that by its own right it incorporates both the agricultural landscape and the wilderness. The Convention, moreover, explicitly recognises that any stretch of a given territory carries an aesthetic identity, thereby acknowledging the existence not just of excellent landscapes but also of common or degraded ones. Ultimately, this is something we experience in our everyday life: we realise that a landscape conveys an aesthetic experience not just when we are elated at the sight of landscapes of outstanding beauty and harmony, but also when we are saddened at the sight of spoiled, disfigured and desolate landscapes in which we would never want to live. By acknowledging the landscape as an essential component of peoples' living environment, the ELC delivers the agrarian landscape from its minority status, just as the Italian *Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio* does by identifying the landscape as a "territory that expresses an identity". The presence of different degrees of value within the landscape is reflected by the multiplicity of possible courses of action identified by the ELC: from the *conservation* of landscapes of exceptional significance and beauty to the

management of common landscapes to the *reclamation* of degraded ones.

The second reason, which apparently stands in contrast to the one just illustrated, is the fact that farmland has become a *rare asset*. In developed countries – and here too Italy regrettably features high up on the list – *there is less and less farmland*. The number of cultivated plots of land is constantly dwindling. The UAA (Utilised Agricultural Area) is progressively decreasing. A recent volume by Salvatore Settis provides some data for the period between 1990 and 2005: in these fifteen years, the UAA decreased by 17.6%.[10] Contrary to what people often believe or write, this drop is not only due to over-development, which is to say to the construction of new houses, roads, sports centres or other projects: in quantitative terms, the main factor is the extension of woodland, which has increased considerably in recent decades. From an environmentalist perspective, this might seem like a positive development; yet it is worth bearing in mind that these woods are often left to themselves, despite the fact that forests also require management and human labour, if we wish to avoid dangerous phenomena such as the spread of summer fires, poor water control and so on. Ultimately, the dwindling of agricultural land is due not so much to over-building, as to the depopulation of the countryside and the abandonment of marginal areas, especially mountainous zones. This is a well-established pattern by now: after the peak in cultivated land reached around the mid-20th century, the number of agricultural plots of land has steadily decreased.

These data concerning farmland should further be combined with those pertaining to the number of agricultural workers, which is also progressively diminishing, as Italy approaches the bottom figures typical of highly developed countries. The number of people working in the agricultural sector dropped from 4.9% in 1999 to 3.9% in 2009. The crucial point is that in 1950 agricultural labourers still accounted for 30% of the overall workforce. The consequences of this decline are not always adequately taken into account: whereas two generations ago most families still had a close connection with the countryside (for instance, by having a father or mother with a rural background), today almost the whole of the population has no direct connection with the world of farming, which has therefore become an elusive one for most people. As a consequence, most people, including children (hence

[10] S. Settis, *Paesaggio Costituzione Cemento*, Turin: Einaudi, 2010.

the spread of so-called "educational farms"), perceive the cultivated countryside as a new and unusual environment worth discovering. Perceptual factors also contribute to this assimilation of the agricultural landscape to the unproductive one conventionally associated with aesthetic experiences. Silence and solitude, which are defining features of our standard view of the landscape, by now are also associated with the cultivated countryside – at any rate, with the extensive one in which agricultural labour is concentrated in a few days per hectare, with a small number of farmhands.

These are not the only reasons: other, more 'objective' ones may be found. Agriculture increasingly appears to be a crucial way of safeguarding the landscape. No matter how widespread the mistrust towards agriculture and methods of cultivation entailing the use of chemicals, one indisputable fact remains: agriculture, in all its forms, is *the only artificial use of the soil that is also reversible*. Agricultural land remains free land, whereas built-up land or land used for other purposes is lost forever, unless expensive land reclamation procedures are adopted. Moreover, precisely because the Italian landscape is almost entirely shaped by the relation between agricultural labour, broadly conceived, and nature, agriculture is crucial for the preservation of Italian landscapes. This is shown precisely by the spread of woodland: a natural landscape may be extremely *unnatural* for Italy, as it lends its territory a configuration that is utterly alien to its traditional layout. Generally speaking, within the world of agriculture an increasing awareness of this responsibility has emerged, and hence of methods of cultivation compatible with the local environment and landscape.

Once again, a range of different factors contribute to this new awareness. First of all, it is worth noting that the clear-cut contrast between city and countryside, urban dwelling and country home, has been abandoned. As regards the positive perception of the agricultural landscape, we should consider not so much the phenomenon of urban sprawl, which rather leads to a degraded "third" type of landscape, as the increase in residential mobility and new forms of rural habitation, whereby a considerable percentage of city dwellers choose the countryside as their fixed or frequent abode.

Alongside the new perception of the countryside displayed by outsiders who choose it as their place of residence essentially for its aesthetic qualities and wholesomeness, we are witnessing a marked emphasis on immaterial

values, such as those connected to the landscape, in agricultural economic activities. One example is the growing phenomenon of agritourism, where the attractiveness of the landscape clearly plays a prominent role. But let us also think of the emphasis on environmental and landscape qualities that comes with many typical food products, as a way of lending them a unique "aura". By now, even EU policies are taking into account the environmental and landscape function of agriculture (as opposed to its exclusively environmental one), by promoting traditional methods of cultivation, cross-compliance and *greening* practices.

Several indicators of this new approach to agriculture from the point of view of the landscape may be mentioned, starting from the attention towards these new phenomena within landscape theory, illustrated by the number of conferences devoted to the agricultural landscape. In 2003, Italia Nostra hosted a seminar on the subject. A few years later, the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage organised a major conference entitled *Paesaggio agrario: una questione non risolta* (*The Agricultural Landscape: An Unsolved Question*).[11] On that occasion, Italia Nostra advanced a legislative proposal for the protection of Italian farmland as a whole: an explicit acknowledgement of what I have suggested so far, namely that all farmland by now is widely perceived as carrying aesthetic values worth safeguarding.

Another important indicator is to be found in documents such as the *European Rural Heritage Observation Guide*, which explicitly associates the value of the landscape with the preservation of agricultural environments: not only the countryside and methods of cultivation, but more generally rural buildings and artefacts connected to these activities. The emergence of a new sensitivity is further reflected by the fact that many recently established parks are not merely "environmental" parks located in uncultivated areas, but also include agricultural areas. I am thinking here of the Parco delle Cinque Terre in Liguria and the Parco del Ticino between Piedmont and Lombardy.

In moving towards a conclusion, I wish to refer to the confirmation provided by a book and two films. The book is Giorgio Boatti's *Un paese ben coltivato. Viaggio nell'Italia che torna alla terra e, forse, a se stessa*: published in

[11] See the conference proceedings, published in A. Di Bene and L. D'Eusebio (eds.), *Paesaggio agrario : una questione non risolta*, Rome: Gangemi, 2007.

2014, it explores several Italian regions to identify the new kind of farmer, whom, far from indifferent to the landscape and its safeguarding, I have referred to as a new rural dweller. The two films, also released in 2014, are centred on country life. As the reader may have guessed, I am referring to Alice Rohrwacher's *The Wonders* and Jonathan Nossiter's *Natural Resistance.* In these films, the directors successfully combine an interest in particular settings with a focus on two typical agricultural productions, possibly the most ancient ones within our civilisation alongside oil production – honey and wine. These two tales, associating the most deep-rooted rural traditions in Italy with new, unexpected protagonists, provide a fitting ending for an essay on agriculture and the landscape.

COHABITING WITH THE LANDSCAPE

Jean-Marc Besse

The issue of inhabiting, a theme shared by architecture, geography and political thought, leads fundamentally towards both the definition of neighborhoods and the creation of neighborhood areas, namely the issue of cohabitation and its spaces. Plurality is, as Hannah Arendt pointed out, a fundamental "ontological" (as much as geographical) condition of humanity, along with natality (that is, spontaneity) and affiliation of humans in the world as terrestrial beings.[1] The concept of humanity should be considered in a collective, plural sense, at all levels. In other words, to exist as a human being, for both the individual and groups, is always to live with, to cohabit at all times. This claim should form the basis for any further reflection on the issue of inhabiting.

1. The space of human cohabitation

One way of addressing this question is to look to four fundamental theoretical outlooks for any analysis of the human act of inhabiting, especially within geography.

The first reference is the famous lecture given in 1984 by Ivan Illich before an audience of British architects.[2] Here, he introduced the theme of inhabiting as an "art" that goes beyond the limited horizons and construction techniques of architecture. This art is that of the inhabitants, who are not satisfied with residing or staying in their apartments like cars on a parking lot, but are developing skills and activities that are unique and which enable them to take over their living areas by giving them substance, form and

[1] H. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998 [1958].

[2] I. Illich, "Dwelling", speech to the Royal Institute of British Architects (July 1984): *In the mirror of the past*, New York: Marion Boyars Publishers, 1992, pp. 55-64.

meaning. "Dwelling", writes Illich, "is an activity that lies beyond the reach of the architect not only because it is a popular art; not only because it goes on and on in waves that escape his control; not only because it is of a tender complexity outside of the horizon of mere biologists and system analysts; but above all because no two communities dwell alike."[3] Once people have settled down and taken over their own living area, they always demonstrate, however limited these contributions may be, creativity and inventiveness in the arrangements of this space, in which they lay out their "interior", that is, their "home".

The approach pioneered by Ivan Illich meets up with the idea developed by John Brinckerhoff Jackson,[4] an important historian and theorist of American landscape and urbanism. In his work on European and American vernacular landscapes, Jackson has constantly sought to highlight the existence and the creativity of ordinary spatial practices. He has also stressed the idea that, apart from the 'big projects' and their social, spatial and political impacts, there is a range of daily activities, even routine and implicit – but certainly not 'programmatic' – matters, which have the virtue of creating space, time, and landscape. Alongside the landscape named by Jackson the 'political landscape', which is the programmatic landscape of large-scale works, that is, the landscape of heavy infrastructures with a lasting impact on the appearance of territories (in other words the landscape of political power), there is one other landscape, or more specifically another way to create a landscape, which is more local, more evasive, since its effects are not immediately perceived, even if they are undeniable: a landscape which Jackson calls *vernacular landscape*, inhabited or lived-in landscape, or ordinary landscape. Jackson, in the same way as Illich does, classifies ordinary activities as a matter of living; he emphasizes how inhabiting refers to a particular time pattern, specifically to a period characterized by uncertainty and a lack of pre-defined purpose. The ordinary landscape, or more plainly, that of 'silent transformations', to borrow the expression used by François Jullien.

One can find a similar insight on the notion of time in the work of Tim Ingold, who makes an essential distinction between two types of relationship

[3] *Ibid*., p. 56.

[4] J. B. Jackson, *Discovering the vernacular landscape*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.

to space, with the terms "to occupy" and "to inhabit",[5] respectively. To occupy is to take over a space that is claimed as empty and "blank". It means to assume a visual and practical position of externality and domination towards space, a posture that expresses a will to control this space. To occupy is, for example, the action of the colonist when he forcibly seizes a territory, which, ignoring its past, he asserts to be vacant, a. In contrast, to inhabit implies a commitment to the place, to its substance and history. The experience of inhabiting is not, according to Ingold, one of externality towards places, but is rather characterized by multiple and dynamic commitments, of all sorts, to places. In other words, places are living environments throughout which people are deeply involved; and Ingold emphasizes the entire metabolic interaction that unfolds at all levels (physical, symbolic, emotional, sensitive, etc.) between the residents and their families to build this environment as the place of their life. The inhabited space is not a Euclidean or a Newtonian space, but rather a living space. Its seemingly stable and stationary elements are powered by a barely noticeable movement, both in terms of speed and slowness, and by a rhythm or respiration. In other words, we inhabit a space of interaction, a fluid and dynamic space, an ever-temporary result of the interactions that make it the way it is.

Moreover, there are human, social, cultural and political encounters during these exchanges, in addition to the activities deployed in contact with any "foreign" materials. Here one finds our fourth reference: the American sociologist Richard Sennett.[6] In his analysis of the operating and frequenting modalities of the public space, he used the question of the human interaction setting, namely the determination of distances and proximities, as the key issue for the creation of the public space as a space of neighborhoods and communities. To inhabit is always to coexist. Public areas are also shared, either simultaneously or successively. The question regarding the act of inhabiting is therefore a political issue: the organization of cohabitation space users, simply put, the definition of the general rules of communal life.

In my view, these four authors (Ivan Illich, John Brinckerhoff Jackson, Tim Ingold, Richard Sennett) give a constellation of perspectives from which we can develop a coordinated analysis of the act of inhabiting as a precise

[5] T. Ingold, *Lines. A brief history*, London & New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 81

[6] R. Sennett, *The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities*, New York: Norton, 1992.

use of space and time, even within geographical knowledge. Specifically, I believe that we can rely on the outlooks of these key authors to implement a proposal on the issue of living as a matter of cohabitation and the definition of a space in which to live together.

We could add three more comments about a possible definition for a neighborhood area:

a) First point: to make a space habitable in order to create something like an "us" implies implementing a "metric", namely, a set of measurement rules. This art of measurement, by allowing for an organization of "the space which supports the city" and possible human relationships, is very much an art, according to Gilles Deleuze, "which establishes a fair distance between people".[7] It is a spatial art – an art of the spacing. One does not live with others, or cohabit, without a spatial rule undergoing constant redefinition, a rule which establishes the proper proximities and distances between people, that is the measure of the spacing within which the "us" arises. To inhabit is to find, define, adjust, maintain the identities and the differences between both oneself and others, or others and oneself. Too close and there is confusion or fusion, which is uninhabitable. Conversely, too far, and it is not possible for an "us" to emerge: the space becomes uninhabited. The art of living therefore requires an adjustment of proximities and distances in order to avoid these two symmetrical positions, the "uninhabitable" and the "uninhabited". In addition, we know, especially since the work of Paul Watzlawick, that the issue of the "proper distance" between ourselves and other people varies across cultures and eras. There are communities of proximity and communities of remoteness – it is a question of identifying in social practices the presence of these subtle and complex spatial relationships nurtured by human beings with one another within a same community.

When one thinks about the problem of the spacing between human beings, the challenge lies in defining a common living environment between both people and groups that do not have the same aspirations, the same desires, the same habits. Therefore, it becomes not only a technical question (although it remains one), but also an ethical and political one.

b) Second point: to inhabit cannot be seen merely as an activity that takes place only "inside" the house, in the "home", in the intimate – precisely

[7] G. Deleuze, *Périclès et Verdi*, Paris: Minuit, 1988, pp. 13-14.

because the human condition is a multifaceted condition where we are always with others and among others, even if only for a moment. To inhabit is also a way (or rather various ways) of using general space, outside the home. To inhabit is not confined merely to the habitat in a narrow sense, but to be present within the whole space and turn it into something like an "interior". The disciplines of land management, such as architecture and landscaping, are specifically responsible for both the transformation of the outside world into an interior and the opening of the interior to the outside world.

One must indeed emphasize, in a decisive way, the co-presence of both the interior and the exterior within the inhabited space, as well as the flow between those two poles – their intertwining, even – the spectacle of a collective intimacy which is not found solely inside houses but also in the streets, in parks and gardens, and in public places, namely outside, in a kind of quiet exhibition to others. The "outside" is also an "inside" and the "inside" takes the form of an "outside".

In this respect, one of the challenges of architecture, landscaping and geography concerning the issue of the spaces to inhabit, lies precisely in paying particular attention to the zones of both the exchanges and the "confrontations" between the inside and the outside. They must be understood as areas of porosity and exchange, and not as closed borders, or absolute barriers. Hence the need to develop a reflection on the thresholds, the crossing spaces, the doors and windows, etc. Herman Hertzberger, a Dutch architect, writes

> The threshold provides the key to the transition and connection between areas with divergent territorial claims and, as a place in its own right, it constitutes, essentially, the spatial condition for the meeting and dialogue between areas of different orders. The value of this concept is most explicit in the threshold 'par excellence', the entrance to a home. We are concerned here with the encounter and reconciliation between the street on the one hand and a private domain on the other.[8]

c) Finally, the third point relates to the issue of the use that is being made of the spaces and the places in question. Remember what John Brinckerhoff Jackson said about what is commonly called the "spirit of place", and which ultimately refers to the quality of habitability (in other words, the issue is

[8] H. Hertzberger, *Lessons for students in architecture*, Rotterdam: nai010 Publishers, 2005, p. 51.

how one knows what makes a place "well inhabited"). According to Jackson, what makes the "habitability" value of a place is not its objective, intrinsic, natural or historic quality, but rather, and more simply, what one experiences and feels, and indeed the good time spent in it. The spirit of a place, is

> [...] a special accent, a special way of dressing, a special form of greeting; special dances and holidays – all the picturesque idiosyncrasies that are the stuff of tourist folklore, and then some: passwords and gestures, taboos and secrets – secret places and secret events that exclude the outsider more effectively than any boundary.[9]

I want to stress the paradigmatic significance of this "playful" dimension in the act of inhabiting, including unnecessary, free, and disinterested activities, namely the elements of lost time, the standstill, slowness. To inhabit is also to know how to "waste" time and play (in the broadest sense of the word). Or, to put it another way, to use the/one's time differently, to allow the necessary time to dispose of one's time. To inhabit a place means one can linger, even temporarily, for "nothing".

For example, a street where one inhabits cannot be simply seen as a kind of pipe through which the most diverse fluxes must pass (electricity, gas, water, cars, people, etc.). One has to linger in order to develop a range of activities, from shopping to the occasional chit-chat, strolling or even contemplation. A person inhabits the city even while sitting on a bench among people on the go or bystanders. Hence the importance, in this respect, of conceiving the street in its width and not only by its coordinate – to take the street as a space in its own right, and not just as a line joining two points.

I therefore propose a first conclusion:

Today it is possible to build further common areas, or what I shall call the neighborhood and cohabitation spaces. The responsibility of designers, architects and politicians is rooted in the circumstances they offer to residents to look positively at the question of boundaries, thresholds, porosities, distances and proximities and, as we have seen, disinterested areas.

[9] J. B. Jackson, *Discovering the vernacular landscape*, p. 54.

2. Cohabiting with the world: landscape and maintenance

How does one give a positive content to the notion of cohabitation, "to live with"? Which mode or modality of action does such a prospect undertake? The hypothesis followed here is that the concept of landscape, and the theoretical and practical perspectives that are incurred by this notion, offer further bases for fruitful reflection.

However, in order to ensure the legitimacy of this hypothesis, we need to start from a preliminary statement, which broadens the reflections of both the geographer Eric Dardel[10] and the landscape historian John Brinckerhoff Jackson: both postulate that landscapes are not just or mainly made to be seen as panoramas or aesthetic sites, but are primarily lived-in, that is, worked on, experienced, used or consumed by communities seeking to satisfy their needs – not only physical, but also social, moral, and spiritual needs.

According to this idea, landscapes are not primarily visual and aesthetic entities, but rather correspond to an ethical and political concept, which refers to the ways human societies act on both their environments and themselves, and thereby define the conditions and spaces of their home on Earth. Landscapes are ethical and political spaces: those of the inhabiting human – but a question arises about the modalities of action that determine this type of inhabiting and give it shape.

In other words, to live is also to cohabit with the world around us, with things and natural beings that are part of it and also contribute to our living conditions. To inhabit is to be close to the world that constitutes the environment of our lives. The landscape is the expression of this vicinity with the world.

In her important book, *Les nourritures*, Corine Pelluchon uses the word "foods" to describe exactly the concept that I was trying to delineate above. She writes: "Foods are what we live on and what we need, the environment in which we place ourselves and everything we get, how we are getting it, our exchanges, the distribution channels, the techniques that influence our travel, our homes, our work, but also the ecosystem made up of biotic communities – namely, living organisms often unknown to us – and habitats defined by their physical and chemical characteristics. By surpassing the

[10] E. Dardel, *L'homme et la terre*, Paris: PUF, 1952.

dualism Nature/Culture it is a denomination that can no longer conceive Nature as a resource having no other value than an instrumental one."[11]

We can consider the question of nature and our relationship with nature by differentiating three systems or forms of human activity. There is no need to create a hierarchy among them. They are to some extent three simultaneous directions of human activity which must remain distinct.

Let's call the first of these three systems of activity *production*. It corresponds to what Hegel, and then Marx referred to as *work*. To produce is to create an object before us by processing a material according to an established plan, a concept given in advance (even if it is not always explained as such). Let us describe the situation: on one side there is a "raw", shapeless material, and on the other side there is a shape, namely an idea that will be applied to the material. The shape is first external to the substance, and it then embodies itself in the substance under the guise of an object. It is a problem related to the fabrication or the manufacture of artifacts – a demiurgic perspective.

But, as Hannah Arendt adds, the manufactured object, a product of labor, is consumed. It meets the needs of livelihoods. Once they are consumed, the manufactured objects disappear and must be replaced with new objects, in accordance with a perpetually renewed cycle. This cyclical and repetitive activity of producing objects does not yet form a world because there is no duration, no continuous time, nothing like a history, a kind of permanence of time or at the least the continuity of some objects. According to Hannah Arendt, to live in a world, in the proper sense of this word, means to be surrounded by things more permanent than the activity that produced them, even more durable than the life of their authors. To inhabit is not only to live or to survive but also to belong to a world. Therefore, we need objects that last, we need works and beings that do not disappear.

This leads to a second legitimate and efficient system of activity, that we shall call *maintenance*, meaning both to preserve and to nurture. We inhabit over an "unnatural" period of time which must be maintained, as one maintains a fire or a conversation. To inhabit a world means to support it and make it stand. To maintain means to receive, to preserve, and to share. These activities are not placed outside of the world where they develop. Instead they are embedded in it and participate in its movement. In this regard, it is

[11] C. Pelluchon, *Les nourritures*, Paris: Seuil, 2015, p. 18.

less a matter of making than of making with others, which is to say adjusting to the movements of a living matter.

As already mentioned, Tim Ingold made an important distinction in this regard between the act of occupying a place and the act of inhabiting it. Following this line of thought, we can distinguish between the act of taking over a place and the act of taking care of a place. To take care of a place is precisely what Ingold calls "the position of the inhabitant", that is the person who participates in the world in the making. To inhabit is not primarily to manufacture, to produce, to build, but rather to place oneself in a special contract of maintenance of things and places where we live. By contrast, according to Ingold, to take over a place is to contend that it is empty a priori, or at least available for any purpose. To take care of a place involves not only spending time in it but also identifying and accepting its asperities, its constraints, and the limits it sets against the human will. Ingold adds that "our actions do not change the world, they are part and parcel of the transformation of the world by itself."[12]

The activity of maintaining or caring for people, things and places, is different from a third system of human action, which we will call the *initiative* or creativity. The initiative, from the Latin *initium*, i.e. the beginning, is the ability to bring something radically new into the world. It is perhaps the most explicit form of human freedom (beyond mere independence regarding external stresses, and beyond autonomy, that is to say the ability to give oneself one's own rule). This form of freedom, which is the power of beginnings (and also the enthusiasm and the anxiety of the debut), is characterized, precisely, by its complete indeterminacy. In its most radical, Cartesian or Sartrean, expression, this freedom is characterized by indifference or rather by the lack of differentiation between the directions and the choices towards which it can be oriented.

In this respect, this form of action, creative to the extent that it brings something new into the world and can be a purely arbitrary act, is different from what we called maintenance or care of things and beings. The feats of maintaining or caring are affirmations, or claims, of a kind of continuity in being, whereas, initiative, on the contrary, means discontinuity, a break, new

[12] T. Ingold, "The temporality of the landscape", in *The perception of the environment. Essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 200.

beginnings (remember that continuity does not mean immobility, but rather another way of developing a duration and relating to history.).

These three systems of activity (to produce, to create, to maintain) are irreducible dimensions of human existence. They do not negate each other. They each have unique value and scope. We have to ensure that we differentiate them.

My claim is that the act of inhabiting tends towards maintenance, care, and training. As is known, the words maintenance and care refer also to the Latin word *colere*, which means to cultivate, to honor.

But what does the word "to cultivate" refer to? What does the act of cultivating the land mean, except to prepare it, to care for it, to maintain it so that it can give what is in it? What does the act of cultivating one's mind and body mean except to maintain them so that they can develop the faculties they hold?

It is said that for a singer to find his/her voice, he/she must first learn to listen. In his *Traité de l'efficacité*, François Jullien recalls the following anecdote concerning the Chinese philosopher Mencius: one evening, a farmer tells his children that in order to help the harvest, he spent the day pulling the plants out so that they grow faster. The next morning the children find only dried-up stems. François Jullien commented that "one cannot force the plant to grow, and one must not neglect it; but by releasing what could hinder its development, one must let it grow".[13] To maintain, or to cultivate, is to recognize the occurrence of the planted future, and learn to wait. It is an art of the indirect action.

Gardening is a possible model for this indirect action. Here, gardening is an activity generalized to all kinds of places and situations. It is a way of acting that goes beyond the strict framework of the garden. It is "a form of mind", as the French artist Jean-Luc Brisson put it.

Gardening involves a set of gestures attentive to what is here and what is becoming. The word *gesture* refers to *gerere*, meaning all at once to carry, to transport and to be transported. Gesture also refers to management and gestation. Gardening is to act in favour of gestation – to care for it.

What does the expression "to care for a person, or a place" mean? It means standing by the person's side, looking at the world in the same direction, sharing with this person or this place the same commitment, sympathizing with them. Sympathy and kindness for a person or a place are displayed by

[13] F. Jullien, *Traité de l'efficacité*, Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2002, p. 116.

all the signs of care and attention conveyed. The act of inhabiting is developed precisely in this set of gestures that I shall call maintenance gestures, that is to say cohabitation.

Conclusion

The above comments lead to an approach perceiving landscape as a "living space". The "living space" is not the "space of the living beings" or the "living-in space". We do not address the question of space on a biological level, or in the simple framework of a phenomenology of personal existence. Rather, we consider, as highlighted by the starting point of this analysis, contemporary works in anthropology and in social sciences that promote the idea of surpassing the dualism Nature / Culture, in order to draw a number of consequences about the models of action undertaken by this notion. While expressions such as "the production of space" or "the production of landscapes" have been extensively used in the past, we prefer to pick up on the observation made by the French anthropologist Philippe Descola, who began to doubt that the production model of action can now fully fit a non-dualistic reflection about space and landscape. Any action on the space is not necessarily attached to production and planning. We can look at the activities detailed above, such as "to nurture", "to garden", "to maintain", as they beckon other forms of action and temporality (the "to make with"). Indeed, they refer to another scheme of intertwining between the acting subject and the world around him, a world in which he has participated and of which he is embedded in the movement as it occurs. The landscape involves a mode of action that does not meet the conventional orientations of planned and productive activities and their temporal determinations (see the concepts of strategic action, plan, etc.). It prevails instead as a continuous conversation maintained with the site. In other words, the landscape develops a manner of care without presupposition. The concept of habitation, more than those of production or occupation, seems to be more appropriate for exploring the reflexivity of the action within the landscape and space, and for investigating the recursive nature endured in the relationship between the actor and the landscape – a landscape to which he belongs, so to speak. We have to think about a geography of the being-with, a spatiality of cohabitation with the world.

BRIDGING CITY AND LANDSCAPE

Moirika Reker

City and landscape co-exist and complement each other. But they are, nonetheless, separate entities: the result of distinct ideas and purposes. In fact, the problem arises when this distinction fades, when the extra-urban space is no longer the otherness of the city, but a spreading urbanity; when the outside of the city becomes the non-city instead of the landscape. However, the fact that the landscape is the city's otherness does not mean that there are no links between them, no elements in the city that are bridges to the landscape. Those are either 'naturally' there – a river that cuts through the city, the sea that borders it – or are interventions that transport us back to the landscape (say, places with a landscape essence), the importance of which lays in their being a counterpoint to the city. They bring a certain balance, or become an antidote, in cities that are too dense and overly man-made.

Starting from a reflection on the garden and the place it occupies in the experience of the city, this chapter will focus on a specific kind of urban garden, namely, the urban public orchard. It will be argued that it succeeds in being one of these "bridging elements", as it both enhances the urban aesthetic experience and provides clues for the betterment of city life.

1. The experience of Space

The world is becoming more and more urban, there are today more people living in urban areas than in rural ones.[1] Many of those urban areas are cit-

[1] According to the World Bank, the urban population of the European Union currently amounts to 75% of the population. http://data.worldbank.org/topic/urban-development, accessed 06/04/2016; According to the United Nation's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, globally, 54% of the world's population resided in urban areas in 2014, and the number is expected to rise to 66% by 2050. https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2014-Highlights.pdf

ies, others are megalopolises: vast extensions of land covered with all sorts of buildings, roads, vehicles and other structures. Then there are towns and villages, fields, forests, deserts, mountains, which oftentimes are joined under a broad umbrella and called *landscape*. However, and although there seems to be a growing interest in the subject and a tendency to use the word *landscape* in all sorts of topics and fields, I would start by opposing that unrestricted use of the term, addressing it instead in a rather strict sense: landscape as a category of thought, having, nonetheless, a very material presence, with its foundation deeply rooted in nature. In any case, *landscape* is certainly not an affix one can simply attach to anything in order to bind it into a mode of perception, or, worse, into something one looks at from a distance. Above all because that tends to reduce landscape to a visual thing, a way of looking, a breadth, anything that can be fitted into a wide-angle lens: a look. Yet landscape is not just something you look at, a postcard, a curtain, scenery or a background, a surface on top of which one can lay whatever construction or arrangement one desires. It is not a backdrop or just a 'scape'. Sight is involved of course (that is, for the most of us), but so are the other sense organs. Moreover, together with the sensual experience, a myriad of other factors come into play: our culture, history, memories, knowledge... and then reflection, contemplation. The experience of the landscape is thus not a mere glimpse from the window, but rather an immersion in the object of experience, as we will see in greater detail further on.

Georg Simmel taught us that in order to see a portion of nature as landscape there must be a spiritual act involved, by means of which man brings a cluster of (natural) phenomena into a self-contained perception:

> Nature, which in its deep being and meaning knows nothing of individuality, is transfigured into an individuated 'landscape' by the human gaze that divides things up and forms the separated parts into specific unities.[2]

[2] G. Simmel, "The Philosophy of Landscape", Translated by Josef Bleicher, in *Theory, Culture & Society* 2007 (SAGE, Los Angeles et al), Vol. 24 (7-8): 22. "To conceive of a piece of ground and what is on it as a landscape, this means that one now conceives of a segment of nature itself as a separate unity, which estranges it from the concept of nature. This seems to me to be happening when someone shapes a field of apperception into the category of 'landscape': a self-contained perception intuited as a self-sufficient unity, which is nevertheless intermeshed with an infinite expansiveness and a continual flux."

There is no landscape without a subject who brings those previously separate 'pieces' of nature together and who experiences that new self-contained perception. Yet, although the human being is the actor, observer and constructor of the world in which he lives, it should be borne in mind that not every human work is, builds or becomes a landscape. The city, for example, is not in itself a landscape, or at least, it is not always one. Rosario Assunto, another key reference in the Philosophy of Landscape, does not hesitate to separate or differentiate landscape and city. He claims that the city is in the landscape, in the same manner that the landscape enters the city, being two interpenetrating dimensions of human life. This does not mean, however, that they dissolve into one another. Both are space, or put better, meta-spatialities, 'more-than-spaces' as they are limited but open (what Assunto calls an open finitude).

Notwithstanding, a landscape is not only space, or merely space, or any space for that matter: simply put, a room is a space but not a landscape. The sky, which is viewed as the unlimited, is not a landscape either, but it demarcates the landscape, sets its limits, in the same manner as the bare ground, which determines it. In short: the landscape opens up to infinity and is presence, rather than representation, of the infinite.

The city is, thus, viewed here as the infinite of the landscape, with the landscape as the infinite of the city. James Corner considers the view of the landscape as the city's other, to be derived from an invocation of a cultural image of Nature mostly represented by 'softly undulating' pastoral scenes, generally associated with a benevolent, soothing, moral antidote to the city, a view that is inherited from a 19th century mindset of difference and opposition, or a black and white distinction between nature (outside the city) and the urban realm, thus buildings, technology and infrastructure would be inside the city, while nature would be in its exterior. Corner finds that this opposition does not improve the debate or the practice of planning and designing sites. Instead he proposes Landscape Urbanism not only as a way to efface class distinctions (between architects and landscape architects or designers), but also because it promises the development of an ecology that unites space and time, considering all forces and agents that intervene and creating the urban field as "continuous networks of inter-relationships".[3]

[3] James Corner, "Terra Fluxus", in Charles Waldeim (ed.), *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006, p. 30.

However, although his proposal of a unity between the several disciplines that intervene in the design and planning of spaces seems to be a good solution for handling practical issues that intertwine regional and local fabrics (mainly through the understanding of the processes and forces at stake in a dynamic environmental scale), his rejection of the city-nature opposition overlooks the importance of its alterity. It is refreshing not to equate the urban with pollution, crime, disease or other anti-urbanist takes on the maladies of the megalopolis, and by the same token, landscape is not to be confused with pristine wilderness or an idea of natural perfection. In fact, taking city and landscape as the infinite of one another entails that there is something beyond the pinpointing of mere opposites – city and landscape complete one another, becoming something more, a different reality with a larger horizon, so to speak. For Assunto, the city and the landscape do not coincide but co-exist. Again, one completes the other. It is the absence of this completion that becomes a problem.

In landscape, as well as in architecture, scale matters, and helps us to understand where city and landscape differ. In small cities landscape exists as presence and limit. A presence that can be perceived from within the city (depending on the orographic characteristics of the city, it can be seen from a church tower, from the main square or from a street on the edge of the city, from where one can gaze at, say, the mountains), and that contributes to the awareness of the city itself as a "unitary organism",[4] as it helps the observer to understand that the landscape is part and parcel of the city, despite their different characteristics and specificities. (Small) Cities are thus contiguous with the landscape, each the counterpoint and limit of the other. They don't contradict one another, but are correlatives, complementary; the city itself contributing to the very constitution of the landscape (an extra-urban space that is not just space, but that becomes a landscape), in the same way as the opposite is also true: the city is defined by its implantation in the landscape.

Nevertheless, when the extra-urban is not the alterity of the city – its infinite – city and landscape do not co-exist anymore. In fact, one could say that they are not city and landscape, but megalopolis or continuous conurbations, which, unlike small cities have no otherness as their limit.

[4] Cf. R. Assunto, "Città e Paesaggio", in *Il paesaggio e l'estetica,* 2 vols., Palermo: Edizioni Novecento, 2005, pp. 27-28.

Although in Europe, it must be acknowledged, cities with a human scale still remain. Despite the destruction of the landscape (which has been steadily devastated by an idea of landscape as territory, or blank board, severing, flattening and mischaracterizing great part of the countryside), in most European countries there are still plenty of cities permeated by landscape. Nevertheless, a large majority of the cities of today have spread in such a way that they have engulfed the rural areas that once stood on their outskirts (and which sustained them), becoming a giant urban mass. Beyond the fringe, as well, there is frequently no landscape anymore but a continuity of industrial production, as even agriculture has become industrialized.[5]

The aesthetic fruition one can experience while being immersed in a field of corn or other high crops, amidst bushes and grasses on a rocky hill by the sea, or on the top of a snowy mountain, is hardly comparable with a typical urban experience, which can undeniably rouse very powerful aesthetic experiences as well. These experiences should therefore be valued in their differences. However, the theme of this chapter is the *otherness* in the city-landscape relation – their differences – and the elements that bridge the two, while also maintaining them as separate entities – not turning one into the other, or equating them. What prevents city and landscape from being a single *sameness* is not only a matter of space or of the characteristics of the space. Time is also of great relevance, the experience of which differs greatly depending on whether we are in the city or in the landscape, or in the 'bridges' sought out here. In fact, the experience of time is of crucial importance for the proper definition of landscape as this is not only a space – a delimited open space – but one that is lived in time. Yet how does the experience of time affect contemplation?

[5] As early as the 70s, Assunto was highly concern with the industrialization of agriculture, namely in terms of the (ill) treatment of animals: "the transformation of agriculture in industry, spraying the fields with insecticides and pesticides, has made the survival of animal species that feed on insects, on larvae, on worms almost impossible […]. [it has] brought a kind of unnatural silence into the countryside". R. Assunto, "Il Giardino Perduto e i Giardini da Ritrovare" in *Ontologia e Teleologia del Giardino*, Milano: Guerini e Associati, 1999 [1988], p. 151. All translations from the Italian are of my responsibility.

2. The experience of Time

Assunto highlights the distinction between the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the experience of time: temporality and temporaneity. In a perhaps overly simplified or schematic form, temporality is time as extension; an experience of time that includes past, present and future (where the present holds and extends the past and anticipates the future); this is the persistent time of contemplation where the memory of what has been intervenes as much as the anticipation or expectation of what will be. This quality of time can be experienced in the city: the aesthetical experience of the (historic) city as "spatial image of historical temporality"[6] – or time as history – sensed in the contemplation of the city as built of layers of time juxtaposed; a memory of remote events that are nonetheless still present, and in their presence, allow us (the individual as singularity) to 'live time aesthetically'.[7] Time as quality and as duration can also be experienced in nature (temporality as nature): in the contemplation of the cyclicality of the seasons and of the three realms of nature – which are the image of permanence, of the circularity of time and of the finite that emanates from infinity. The experience of time as the temporality of nature helps us to understand that in order to have an experience of the landscape (and of the garden, as we will see) one needs nature. A presence of "free" nature (which does not mean pristine nature nor wildness), or of nature that has been worked by man (if not overly so), but that, nonetheless, accepts us, includes our work and us in it.

Temporaneity, on the other hand, is an experience of time that denies duration and continuity: there is no past and no future, just the present moment and, simultaneously, a sense of rush, the vertigo of a voracity of time that is defined negatively – past, present and future as a *not anymore* or a *not-yet,* or, as Assunto phrases it, it is a perpetual removal: "the continuous annihilation of the present in face of the inexorable emergence of the future".[8]

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[6] Rosario Assunto, *Il paesaggio e l'estetica*, Palermo: Edizione Novecento, 2005[2], p. 66.

[7] Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 60.

This finitude of time is the actual negation of infinity. The megalopolis can be taken as a major example of this primacy of function over existence, unifying urban and extra-urban in an overlapping industrial territory (total urbanization), violently devastating the landscape.

For Assunto, therefore, the way that we experience time influences the larger experience, so to speak, of the object of contemplation, which is reflected in the aesthetic contemplation as a whole: it is more through the experience of time than in the aesthetic contemplation of the landscape that we understand our symbiotic unity with nature. We contemplate a dimension of the absolute that reconciles us, finite beings, with the infinity of nature, in that we are not standing before a simple object, nor before a purely human work, but at the very base or foundation of life, since landscape always requires a natural ground which places us before something that goes beyond human order, scale and time.[9]

Certainly, there are places that, in the city, take us to the landscape; *oases* or *bridges* that within the city constitute an antidote to the otherwise too dense, overly man-made or just plain urban environments. The importance of such places resides in their ability to remind us of the otherness, or alterity, of the landscape from within the city. They also make our daily life more enjoyable[10] and present an opportunity for city dwellers to directly experience the three realms of nature – otherwise almost absent in the city – reminding us that however urban we may be, we are not made of metal, mortar and brick, we thrive in the presence of non-human life.

Consequently, these bridges with the landscape are either 'naturally' there – the river crossing the city, continuously bringing new waters; the sea that borders it; flocks of birds and clouds – or are interventions that, due to

[9] Even if modified (or built) by humans, landscapes do not need humans to be able to reproduce or maintain themselves. On the edge of abandonment, landscapes are reclaimed by nature, just as architectonic ruins are taken over by creepers, trees, insects and animals. Cf. Georg Simmel (1959), "The Ruin", in Kurt Wolff, *Georg Simmel: 1858-1918 (A Collection of Essays).* Columbus (Ohio): Ohio State University Press, 259-266 [1911].

[10] There are plenty of studies demonstrating the importance of "greenery" for our mental wellbeing and the link between nature and health. These include: Terry Hartig, (1991), "Restorative effects of natural environment experiences", *Environment and Behavior* 23, 3; Agnes Van den Berg, Terry Hartig and Henk Staats, "Preference for Nature in Urbanized Societies: Stress, Restoration, and the Pursuit of Sustainability", *Journal of Social Issues* Volume 63, Issue 1 (March 2007): 79-96, to name a few.

a certain *essence* have the capacity to transport us back to the landscape, or to arouse in us a type of experience that coincides with that of the landscape. It is this second kind of bridge that best contributes to our present reflection.

3. The Garden

The relation between gardens and landscape is manifold. One can undoubtedly say that Gardens (and Landscapes) are places for aesthetic experience, for a peculiar kind of experience that has at its base a sensorial awareness (as they are best explored when all the senses are used) but which surpasses the sensorial experience, as it involves a reflectional dimension, inviting contemplation.

Their relation also brings forth an articulation of infinity and finiteness: the garden is an enclosed or delimited space that refers to the infinity of nature, either spatially (landscape as an infinite natural space), or in the sense of a limitless continuity of production, perceived in the experience of time as temporality of nature, as seen above.

Gilles Clément, in his brief history of gardens,[11] outlines an interesting interpretation of the idea that gardens address the spirit. In occidental gardens, namely in Versailles, the focus is set on horizontal infinity, the perspective conducing the eye towards the horizon – emphasis on the material and extension – whereas in Asian gardens, namely in those created for meditation, the focus is on verticality and immateriality, all pointing towards the height above: plants, water and rocks create mental gardens, which create direct access routes to the spirit.

For Rosario Assunto, garden and landscape are totally coincident as idea and reality of one another: that which in landscape is idea and that which in it is reality. The garden is configured in the landscape as absolute reality of the idea – because the landscape always refers to an ideal garden, which becomes real in the materiality of the landscape; while landscape is configured as the "absolute ideality of the real".[12] The garden is the materialization of the (absolute) idea of landscape: in a garden one is before the coming into life of the forms which compose the idea of landscape; that which is idealized

[11] Cf. Gilles Clément, "Il Giardino Verticale", in *Breve Storia del Giardino*, trans. Maurizia Balmelli, Macerata: Quodlibet, 2012, pp. 33-40.

[12] Assunto, "Intorno al Giardino come Paesaggio Assoluto", in *Ontologia*, p. 42.

comes into being, becomes real. The landscape is the idealization of the concept of a perfect garden (and the model for the real garden, but, as Adriana Veríssimo Serrão points out, not so much as an abstract universal ideal but more as the archetype for each concrete garden, close to Kant's aesthetic idea).[13] This archetype derives from an idea and a search for an ideal nature that, for Assunto, has its roots in the myth of *Genesis*: the idea of a delightful time when we lived in a garden of pleasures and where there were no perils (an idea to which we'll come back later). From this it follows that the garden puts forth an image of untouched nature, how we imagined nature to have been, but without any trace of savagery: "domesticated but not artificial"[14], hence the idea of a perfect landscape.

Landscape and garden are thus concomitant, reflective one of the other, but, notwithstanding, not the same. The latter closes in upon itself whereas the former opens up to infinity. In the fruition of a landscape there are two distinct but complementary moments, one of (interested) vital enjoyment, and the other of (disinterested) aesthetic fruition. In the garden these two moments are one: the art of gardening creates living places where anyone can enjoy the life of the garden and take enjoyment in the fact of being alive, simultaneously: "because gardening is art that aims to build environments where life can enjoy itself at the very moment of living […]."[15]

While nature, for her part, "builds" herself as an object of "pure and disinterested contemplation"[16].

Their difference, however, is not just one of scale, but also of degree of intervention: whereas in the landscape it is as if nature brings the elements together by herself, with little or no mediation by man, in gardens the presence of the human hand is all around. Even though nature is not a passive element that can be sculpted like clay or stone, in the garden, man (the gardener) can be thought of as the artist that creates a living masterpiece. However, and this is noteworthy, since nature is *living* and spontaneous, the

[13] Cf. Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, "Da Essência do Jardim", in *Id*., *Filosofia da Paisagem. Estudos*, Lisboa: Centro de Filosofia da Universidade de Lisboa, 2013, p. 80.

[14] Assunto, "Philosophie du jardin et philosophie dans le jardin", in *Retour au jardin. Essais pour une philosophie de la nature, 1976-1987*. Textes réunis, traduits de l'italien et présentés par Hervé Brunon, Les Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 2003, pp. 49-50.

[15] Assunto, "Intorno al Giardino come Paesaggio Assoluto", pp. 41-42.

[16] *Ibid*., p. 42.

(art)work is never only human. The garden is thus a collaboration, one in which nature allows man to guide or lead her, if one can put it like this, but does not necessarily passively and totally obey. Accordingly, the *autopoiesis* of nature and man's creativity come together in the garden, and that is why it is presented as the ultimate artwork: it is built from an idea of landscape, but where nature is not the model for artistic mimesis, but rather the work of art itself.[17] Hence, echoing Kant,[18] it is "beauty of nature that resembles art and beauty of art that shapes nature according to its own ideal".[19] Perhaps most importantly, it is the place where the human being, while contemplating the life that lives in the garden, contemplates himself as part of that life, living in and from the garden, breathing life from its life and thus aesthetically enjoying life itself.

Assunto's reflection on the garden and the landscape imply that they are understood as space that constitutes an object of aesthetic experience and a theme of aesthetic judgment. However, it is important to understand that not all places admit this type of experience and herein lies his severe critique of the 'green space', which, in his reading, is built with no regard for beauty and contemplation, but as a mere utility.[20] Such a grounding of the garden in aesthetic experience and judgment, together with the understanding of

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[17] *Ibid*.

[18] Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, §80. Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos explains it as the idea of a reversible analogy between art and nature: an art or "technique" of nature (a non-mechanic mode of production, identifying with it the procedure that takes place in artistic or poetic creation) thought in analogy with human art, through which the spontaneous production of nature is as if conducted by an intentional force, whereas art is thought of as being a spontaneous production of nature acting through the faculties of the spirit. Thus for Kant, authentic art must be as if natural; in the same way, nature must be appreciated as if the product of art or with herself as artist. Cf. "A Relevância da estética da natureza" (p. 355 ff) and "Kant e o regresso da natureza como paradigma estético" (p. 386 ff), in *Id*. *Regresso a Kant*. *Ética, Estética, Filosofia Política*, Lisboa: IN-CM, 2012.

[19] Assunto, "Il Giardino come Filosofia e l'agonia della Natura", in *Ontologia*, p. 111.

[20] Cf. *Ibid*. pp. 109-142. There is no space here to delve into this debate. However, in short, Assunto is strongly opposed to green spaces because these denote a primacy of function, a utilitarian use of nature as opposed to a foundation on beauty and contemplation. Green spaces are oftentimes conceived as places for the oxygenation or sanitation of the city, as if beauty was a dispensable concept: recreational spaces that neither have place for the contemplation of the beauty of nature, nor for the unpredictability of natural shapes (and therefore not apt to bridge city and landscape).

the utter significance the experience of time plays in the contemplation of the garden, as seen above, explains why the Assuntian garden is absolutely contrary to mass industrialization and urbanization. And therein lies the reason why the garden is a bridge between the city and the landscape: due to its intrinsic interconnection with the landscape, the garden provides an interruption of the urban logic, introducing a caesura in the city's spread.

Examples of gardens are not scarce. Although there are many different types of gardens and parks, some of them are very clear images of the bridge-like qualities we have been discussing. I shall keep to two examples. Firstly a great park, in size and in splendour: Łazienki Park in Warsaw, a Landscape garden that occupies 76 hectares right in the middle of the city. Here one can experience the unfolding of the seasons, the presence of all realms of nature, not only with multiple trees of various sorts and heights, but also a variety of birds, squirrels, peacocks, foxes and deer; water in ponds, lakes and cascades, rocks and stones. There are spaces where one feels as if one is in the depths of the woods, where the sounds of the city are muffled and one can stroll for hours along the park's paths in a rich immersive contemplation. But then again, it is a man-made space; one walks over *paths* (and is not really allowed to step outside of them). Then there are parts that open up to clearings, and there are – as it is a landscape garden – grottos, 'ancient' temples, statues and so forth. As a result, the park brings together 'free' nature with human art (both displayed in sculpture and architecture, but also in gardening), inviting immersive and active contemplation.

There are other gardens, smaller or more contained, that nevertheless trigger a similar immersive perception, although more confined and less walled off from the city. An example of this is the garden of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon. Occupying about 9 hectares, it is smaller in scale but not in beauty or diversity (it has 86 different species of shrubs, 60 varieties of trees and 57 kinds of herbaceous plants). Although it is a place where one can hardly imagine oneself to be outside of a man-made space, as it is a quite modernist garden – a prime example of the movement of modern architecture in Portugal and a reference to landscape architecture –, nevertheless, it is a place where nature erupts from the concrete, having become a residence or a temporary home for numerous birds. It is a garden that introduces a hiatus in the daily experience of time, a discontinuity in the pace of the city.

Here it might be useful to return the identification of the idea of the garden with that of Paradise, as pointed out above. In fact, not only the creation stories of Christian, Jewish and Arab traditions but also Greco-Roman myths revolve around a garden where nature provides. Jean Delumeau, in *A History of Paradise,*[21] gives a thorough account of the deep connections between paradise and the several descriptions of the myth of the golden age – a blissful time before the Fall, where mankind was not only virtuous without the need of laws, but also lived in abundance, Earth giving her fruits without the need for cultivation or hard work all year round. One such description is that of the house of Alcinous, in Homer's *Odyssey*, which gives a detailed image of the bounty from which the king and his people benefited:

> Outside the gate of the outer court there is a large garden of about four acres with a wall all around it. It is full of beautiful trees – pears, pomegranates, and the most delicious apples. There are luscious figs also, and olives in full growth. The fruits never rot nor fail all the year round, neither winter nor summer, for the air is so soft that a new crop ripens before the old has dropped. Pear grown on pear, apple on apple, fig on fig, and so also with the grapes, for there is an excellent vineyard.[22]

Hesiod's *Works and Days* also provides an image of easiness and happiness that has Earth's abundance as its central topic:

> the fruitful earth unforced bare [people] fruit abundantly and without stint. They dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things, rich in flocks and loved by the blessed gods. [23]

Another similar bounty can be found in the account of time under Cronos provided by the stranger in Plato's *Politicus*:

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[21] Jean Delumeau, *Une Histoire du Paradis. Le jardin des délices*, Paris : Fayard, 1992.

[22] Homer, *Odyssey*, Book VII, v. 110-113, translated by Samuel Butler, The Internet Classics Archive, http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.7.vii.html (accessed 16/03/2016).

[23] Hesiod, *Works and days*, v. 109-120. Translated with Notes by Evelyn-White, Hesiod home page, http://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/greek-texts/ancient-greece/hesiod/works-days.asp?pg=4 (accessed 22/03/2016).

> the earth gave them fruits in abundance, which grew on trees and shrubs unbidden, and were not planted by the hand of man.[24]

Likewise, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, one reads:

> This was the Golden Age that, without coercion, without laws, spontaneously nurtured the good and the true. […] Without the use of armies, people passed their lives in gentle peace and security. The earth herself also, freely, without the scars of ploughs, untouched by hoes, produced everything from herself. Contented with food that grew without cultivation, they collected mountain strawberries and the fruit of the strawberry tree, wild cherries, blackberries clinging to the tough brambles, and acorns fallen from Jupiter's spreading oak-tree. Spring was eternal, and gentle breezes caressed with warm air the flowers that grew without being seeded. Then the untilled earth gave of its produce and, without needing renewal, the fields whitened with heavy ears of corn. Sometimes rivers of milk flowed, sometimes streams of nectar, and golden honey trickled from the green holm oak.[25]

This is not the place to debate whether the myths of the Golden Age are reflections of the garden of Adam and Eve, or if the narrative of the Paradise is built upon even older foundations. What is of interest here is the depiction of a generosity of the Earth, if you will, that is common both to classical Greco-Roman and Christian authors, who elect as an image of bliss the continuous production of fruits and flowers and a readiness of the land to provide man with food. What is also interesting is the idea that the earth produces food without ever being hurt or maltreated by agriculture, 'without the scars of ploughs', traces of which can be found in contemporary sustainable agricultural methods such as in Permaculture's attempt to disturb the earth as little as possible (its first goal being to care for the land, and its focus being set on producing soil), and where, after an initial great effort, plants keep growing, multiplying by themselves (seedlings are propagated naturally, and the idea is that plants that sprout from seeds that drop on the soil next to their 'mother plant,' or are dispersed by the wind, grow stronger

[24] Plato, *Statesman*, http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/statesman.html (accessed 22/03/2016).

[25] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bk I: 89-112 "The Golden Age", translated by A. S. Kline, *The Ovid Collection*, University of Virginia Library, http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Metamorph.htm#488381093 (accessed 22/03/2016).

and healthier than those planted by an horticulturist); growing fruit trees alongside herbs, vegetables, roots, shrubs and vines, creating edible landscapes that in some way resemble the image of paradise described above.

Rosario Assunto also looks back to the Garden of Eden and its similarities with the classical Greco-Roman myths, noting that in both traditions beauty and utility were one: beauty was useful and utility was beautiful. In fact, the only tree in Eden that would give it the sense of garden as we understand the term today was the one in its centre: the tree of life that should be *contemplated* but whose fruits should not be *eaten*. In fact, Assunto sees in the descriptions of Eden the foundation of the experience of pleasure in the contemplation of the garden as the beauty of nature which has its aim in itself, together with its benefit for nutrition, which is ever sought by man. If one is to read the Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Garden of Eden or the above-mentioned Greco-Roman versions of a garden of pleasures literally, neither Adam nor the people of the Golden Age in Ovid's account tended their gardens, as nature provided fruits by herself, as we have seen. Aesthetic contemplation was very much part of this experience – or at least one can easily picture Adam and Eve in pure delight, walking about their garden, observing it, smelling it (as would be expected from the lengthy descriptions of marvellous perfumes in *Genesis*) and tasting its various fruits.

As often happens, an etymological journey proves enlightening: according to José Tito, it was due to a series of misunderstandings that the Garden of Eden gained this ornamental connotation, since the Hebrew word used in *Genesis* was *gan,* which means vegetable garden, cultivation. It was the Greek Septuagint version that used *Paradeisos* for the first time, a word derived from the Persian *paradeiza* (a place enclosed by walls). In fact, as Tito holds, Eden was an orchard, not an ornamental garden.[26] Gilles Clément, for his part, has no doubt that the first garden was a food garden: a place for nourishment and survival, not an ornamental space.[27]

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[26] Cf. José Tito Rojo, "El Paraíso es un jardín", in Juan Calatrava/José Tito (eds.), *Jardín y paisaje. Miradas cruzadas*, Madrid: Abada editores, 2011, p. 72 ff.

[27] Gilles Clément, "Il Primo Giardino", in *Breve Storia del Giardino*, trans. Maurizia Balmelli, Macerata: Quodlibet, 2012, p. 17.

After this long tour through Paradise and blissful gardens and in light of the emphasis placed on the centrality of fruits in both, it should come as no surprise that the garden I intend to propose as possessing a strong capacity to establish a bridge with landscape is the urban orchard – particularly, the public orchard in a square or within a city park that invites citizens to become 'orchardists' and care for the trees throughout the year. It is certainly not a new concept, for it existed in cities in ancient times and still exists in many cities today, despite the state of abandonment that many of them have fallen into and their frequent substitution for other sorts of gardens, if not 'green spaces.'

4. The orchard: its aesthetic and ethical experience

As briefly pointed out here when we were first discussing landscape as not being restricted to sight, when we move about, say, a garden (or a city) we engage all of our corporeal senses: we aesthetically experience it while strolling, pausing, looking, and also smelling, say, the fragrances from the grasses crushed by our walking. Touching, hearing, feeling the breeze around us and the texture of the soil beneath our feet also complement the aesthetic experience. In short, we experience the garden by living it.

In this regard, Arnold Berleant stresses the importance of the proprioceptive awareness of internal sensations as muscular and visceral ones as well as the kinaesthetic sense of movement:[28] in the appreciation of an environment we are rarely standing still or detached from the 'scene'. On the contrary, we are totally immersed, engaged in intense awareness by actively involving all of our sensory modalities synaesthetically. Berleant adds: "Even when an environment does not demand physical engagement, part of its appeal lies in the magnetic forces that seem to emanate from it."[29]

As we can see, sensation and sensibility come together in the aesthetic experience of the environment as it involves both the perceptual and cognitive realms. Drawing on Berleant, Nathalie Blanc summarises: "the aesthetic experience is a mode of learning and a mode of knowledge that

[28] Arnold Berleant, "An Emerging Aesthetics of Environment", in *Living in the Landscape. Towards an Aesthetics of Environment*, Kansas: University Press, 1997, p. 35.

[29] *Ibid*.

challenge body and mind in a single movement".[30]

Departing from the body-mind engagement with the object of fruition, as seen above, the urban orchard, by its very nature, provides an example of the role 'otherness' can play in the experience of the city. Either by the manner in which it invites aesthetic contemplation (with taste, touch and smell as paramount as sight), or by its invitation to experience time differently, as it requires patience and a disposition to a rhythm that is foreign to the city dweller, as will be seen below.

If you have ever been to a number of southern European cities, you might have seen orange trees around. However, if you have attempted to taste one of its fruits I'm afraid that you may have been disappointed. Those trees are planted as decoration, they are of sour varieties: edible, but not tasty. Like those orange trees, many other fruit trees are planted with ornamental purposes: cherries (wild or sour), pomegranates that produce beautiful flowers but no fruits and even bananas. Yet, this is puzzling, why would anyone plant fruits that are not intended to be eaten?

There are some reasons, although not very convincing ones in my view, for choosing ornamentals in rather than edibles. Below I will expose some of them and attempt to refute each of them briefly:

i) The existence of edible fruits would litter streets and make them slippery – Yet, if the fruits were tasty they would be harvested. It is because they are not edible that they fall on the ground, litter it, and lead to accidents;

ii) If there were tasty fruits around, they would be gleaned away and soon there would be no beautiful fruits to look at – Probably. Notwithstanding, the whole point of planting edible fruits is for them to be eaten. In what concerns beauty, eating fresh fruits should be part of the aesthetic experience of a tree and, for that matter, of the city;

iii) One would be spending (public) money to plant fruit and then someone would harvest it all and sell it – This could be taken as an opportunity to discuss and develop citizenship;

[30] Nathalie Blanc, "Éthique et Esthétique de L'Environnement.", EspacesTemps.net, Travaux, 31.01.2008 http://www.espacestemps.net/articles/Ethique-et-esthetique-de-environnement/, accessed 20/06/2015.

iv) The maintenance of fruit trees would be costly for local authorities – Not if the trees are cared for by the neighbouring community;

v) Gardens and parks are ornamental spaces, to be looked at, places for visual fruition not places for food production – As we have seen above, aesthetic fruition is very much beyond visual. Furthermore, on this matter Assunto comes to our rescue once again: Life is conditioned by the useful:

> The beautiful is useful, therefore, neither more nor less than the useful is beautiful: for life. Because life needs nature, it needs not to submit to its own mortality: not to die prematurely.[31]

Once more, Assunto takes *Genesis* as an example of the union of the beautiful and the useful, where beauty is inherent to utility; an attribute of the useful object, which is present in aesthetic delight – enjoyable in its contemplation, which does not rule out production and consumption.[32] Moreover:

> the beauty for which vineyards and fruit plantations […] are beautiful in their utility and become ornaments like the statues in a garden […]. Those statues, in their turn, in their *ornamentallity* and by their *ornamentality* have proved useful to life which needs their presence like bread, oil and wine, albeit differently.[33]

Regarding the aesthetic experience of the useful, it is worth distinguishing the utility or usefulness of plants from a utilitarian view of nature. The difference lies in the value attributed to that which is beautiful, as opposed to that which is considered merely for its usefulness. Beauty has value even if it is not yet useful or not useful anymore. On the contrary, that which is

[31] Assunto, "Il Giardino come Filosofia e l'agonia della Natura", in *Ontologia*, p. 119. "Il bello è utile, dunque, né più né meno di come è bello l'utile: per la vita. Perché la vita ha bisogno della natura, ne ha bisogno per non soggiacere alla propria mortalità: per non morire anzi tempo".

[32] Cf. Assunto, "Il Giardino perduto e i giardini da ritrovare (con alcune variazioni intorno ai consigli del Serpente)", in *Ontologia*, p. 149.

[33] Assunto, "Il Giardino come Filosofia", p. 119. "Da qui la bellezza per cui vigneti e piantagioni da frutto, in modi diversi secondo la diversità delle regioni sono belli nella loro utilità, e diventano ornato al pari delle statue nei giardini Cornaro encomiasticamente poetati dal Bettinelli. Le quali statue, a lor volta, nella loro ornamentalità, e per loro ornamentalità, si rivelano utili alla vita che della presenza di esse há besogno come del pano e dell'olio e del vino, sebbene in modo diverso".

merely useful has no other *raison d'être* once its purpose is gone, becoming useless. The aesthetic category is predicable in nature, it can include utility but there is not a perfect identification with it, that is to say, the landscape and the garden (and the orchard for that matter) are objects of aesthetic fruition, and not of mere consumption. Furthermore, utilitarian points of view tend to be overly anthropocentric. Fruits are inherently utile – not only for humans – and planting them in parks embraces the fact that we need to nourish both our bodies and our minds. The useful becomes a manifestation of infinity: in the fruition of the beauty of trees and fruits, life itself (which, as such, needs the useful to continue living, even as finiteness) becomes present to us. Nature becomes aesthetically alive.

This much is clear in the orchard. The experience of time in it and how it differs from the daily urban rhythm, further help us to understand why the orchard constitutes a bridge with the landscape: the time of the orchard is slow when compared to that of the city. After planting young trees one has to wait. The first fruits must be removed so that the young tree focuses on establishing roots and becoming strong. Hence, for the first 3-4 years there will be no fruits, just leaves and flowers (though some experts recommend even the flowers should be taken away at first). Then, once the tree is firmly rooted and growing healthily, the whole fruit cycle takes around a year. In the winter most fruit trees are dormant, nothing really happens. Then comes spring and suddenly, out of the blue, it seems, there is a burst of life, branches that were bare and dark are suddenly covered with flowers, which attract hundreds of insects, pollinators that buzz around and indicate that soon there will be fruit. Indeed, after a few weeks, all the flowers are gone and leaves start to fill the trees. And, as the tree canopy grows, tiny fruits 'erupt', small and difficult to spot at first, then growing, gradually developing to maturity. Finally ripe, they present a feast (and a busy time) for animals and humans. Then, approaching the end of the season, un-harvested fruits fall and so do leaves, preparing the tree for the long winter. As winter approaches its end, it's time for pruning and then grafting and planting new trees.

There are moments when everything looks as if nothing has changed at all, everything seems the same, however, if one is actually immersed in long-term contemplation, one notices that the ground cover has changed, that there are more birds around, or different ones, that the size and colour of the leaves is different from a few days ago, or that the fruits are ripe, that there is something different about the colour of one particular tree which is not like the others of the same variety, and so one approaches and examines it to see if there are bugs or a lack of nutrients, water or sun. One takes interest in the tree, in its wellbeing. This attention, this care, is born out of what David E. Cooper calls the epiphany of co-dependency, which he presents as a result of the virtues that the practice of gardening develops in us: "this co-dependence itself embodies or refers us to the co-dependence of human existence and the 'deep ground' of the world and ourselves".[34]

In the (participation in and) aesthetic contemplation of the orchard there unfolds the understanding of the co-dependence of man and the natural world, as well as the awareness of our shared destiny. As explained by Assunto, it is specifically through the aesthetic contemplation of nature that we gain consciousness of the solidarity between the destiny of humans and that of nature, "from which we cannot depart, not even aesthetically, without offending ourselves, exposing ourselves to a malady that affects both our souls and our body".[35]

The orchard in the city presents itself as a place of otherness, as its essence seems so foreign to the city, notwithstanding the above-mentioned fact that fruit trees have long been present in the city, some as ornaments but many for food. The difference is that the public orchard, conceived as a place for active participation in the city, emerges as an interruption of the urban logic and rhythm, not only establishing a bridge to the landscape outside the city but to an infinity of nature, bridging contemplation, engagement and nutrition, or, better put, bringing together the beauty of autotelic nature and the beauty inherent to nourishing our bodies and feeding our souls: a body-mind synthesis of the beauty of nature within the city.

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[34] David E. Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 145.

[35] Assunto, "Il Giardino come Filosofia", p. 142.

This much is experienceable in the project *Fruta à mão* (which literally means Fruits at hand) proposed to the participatory budget for the city of Lisbon to be built within a public park. It was conceived as a collaborative artwork, hoping to involve the community in the design, planning, creation, maintenance and enjoyment of a fruit garden.[36] Still in the early stages of development, one can already perceive the possibility it presents for experiencing the landscape from inside the city. It constitutes a bridge not only because one feels catapulted into a landscape experience, but also because it reconnects us with the possibility of actively engaging with one's own feeding. What is more, the orchard feeds us a special kind of nourishment, not plain vegetables, but fruits – which, as seen above, have always been an image of bliss. Maybe because one purely grabs them and eats them without further ado (at least most fruits): no need to prepare, cook, and plate up, but simple and spontaneous fruition, while strolling, thinking and actively engaging with the city.

[36] The project was awarded with an R&D grant from the European Cultural Foundation (under the title "Urban Orchards – Pick Your (city) Fruits") for the development of a theoretical and practical research on how to involve the community in the design process, while reflecting on the aesthetic implications of planting edible trees in the city. It is upon the preliminary results of this study that the argument here presented was built. http://pickyourcityfruits.weebly.com

LANDSCAPES AS GARDENS. AESTHETICS AND ETHICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Mateusz Salwa

Landscapes were not infrequently compared to gardens in the past, but such comparisons were usually conventional in character as they served to underline the prosperity of a place or its beauty. Hardly ever has this simile been treated as offering a real insight into landscapes. Nonetheless, it is inspiring, especially when we take into consideration that a number of contemporary scholars and essayists specialized in environmental issues conceive of gardening as a practice which embodies various values and virtues that can be crucial for our relationship with the world conceived of as our dwelling place. Even though it may appear that gardening may serve only as a model for how we should ecologically approach nature, it can be used as a point of reference whenever planning, managing or even using a landscape is concerned. The aim of this article is, thus, to show that it is useful to think of landscapes in terms of gardens. The reason is that it makes us more sensitive to an aesthetic and ethical dimension of landscapes. The article starts with a historical analysis of the relationship between landscape architecture and gardening, and then shows what it means to treat landscapes as gardens.

1. Introduction

Landscapes were not infrequently compared to gardens in the past, but such comparisons usually served to underline the prosperity of places or their beauty. Hardly ever has this simile been treated as offering a real insight into landscapes. Nonetheless, it is inspiring, especially when we take into consideration that a number of contemporary scholars and essayists specialized in environmental issues think of gardening as a practice which embodies various values and virtues that can be crucial for our relationship with the world conceived of as our dwelling place.

Even though it may appear that gardening may serve only as a model for how we should ecologically approach nature, it can be used as a point of reference whenever planning, managing or even using a landscape is concerned. A. W. Spirn is, then, right when she states that "the garden is a powerful, instructive metaphor for reimagining cities and metropolitan areas".[1] The aim of this article is, thus, to show in what sense it is useful to think of landscapes in terms of gardens. The general reason is that it makes us more sensitive to the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of our surroundings.

It is well known that landscape architecture as a separate field of theory and practice evolved from gardening in the late 19th century (it is then that the term was coined); nevertheless today this direct lineage seems to be only of historical interest, as these two areas are regarded as having little in common except for certain practical concerns. This is due to the fact that gardening is seen solely as a material practice aimed at cultivating living nature. Gardening is, thus, reduced to a mere technique significant only in so far as the shaping and maintenance of natural elements of a landscape design are at stake. Consequently, a curious weave of identity and difference between gardens and landscapes has emerged. On the one hand gardens are defined as 'condensed' landscapes but, on the other, landscapes are thought to be so different from them that it is unthinkable to treat them as 'expanded' gardens in a non-metaphorical manner or to suggest that gardening practices may be of any help as far as designing landscapes or – more importantly – living in landscapes is concerned.

2. Landscape gardening

The halfway split between the idea of landscape and that of garden is all the more intriguing if we take into consideration that landscape is defined as "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors".[2] Indeed, we can readily see that this definition can be directly applied to gardens, as it corresponds

[1] Anne Whiston Spirn, "'One with Nature': Landscape, Language, Empathy, and Imagination", in R. Ziadu deLue and J. Elkins (eds.), *Landscape Theory*, New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 45.

[2] European Landscape Convention (2000), quoted after: http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/176 [access: 10/04/16].

to how gardens have usually been thought of and defined in the past, as well as today. Indeed, they have been considered as places 'between culture and nature' or places where 'culture meets nature' or where 'art shapes nature'. What, then, makes landscapes different from gardens is not their essence but their dimensions. Nevertheless, nowadays it is the supposed essential difference between landscapes and gardens which is highlighted and not their similarity, which seems to be generally forgotten.

There are historical reasons behind this oblivion. From the Renaissance onwards, the art of gardening tended to gradually lose its practical character. On the one hand, garden designers were like architects or painters whose work was mainly intellectual, which meant that they would plan and supervise the execution of their garden projects but would not, strictly speaking, garden themselves. On the other hand, the division between purely utilitarian spaces (kitchen gardens or orchards), where gardening meant the practical cultivation of plants, and representational or pleasure areas, where gardening amounted to the designing of the environment, became stricter and stricter until finally in the 18th century these two sorts of gardens were separated. As a result, the two aspects of gardening were set apart. For example, A.-Ch. Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849) wrote in his *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, in the volume on architecture, that:

> The art of creating and cultivating gardens may be of two different sorts, depending whether we consider gardens in terms of utility or pleasure. Gardens of the first sort are not subject of this work, hence it is clear that *gardening* analyzed in this article refers to gardens of the other type. However, even though this type of gardening is different from the first one, it has a lot in common with it: all the earthworks, cultivation, planting, trimming trees […]. This is why the art of creating pleasure gardens (*jardins d'agrément*) consists of two parts: one is linked to cultivation, the other solely to composition and to the taste which defines the results. Thus, *gardening* as we understand it is an art of composing and distributing gardens for the sake of the pleasure of walking as well as for the eye's pleasure.[3]

[3] Antoine-Chrystosome Quatremère de Quincy, *Jardinage"*, in *Id., Encyclopédie Méthodique. Architecture*, vol. 2, Paris: Agasse, 1801-1820, p. 592.

In the quoted passage gardening is in fact taken to mean what half a century later was termed "landscape architecture".[4] Obviously, Quatremère includes material, down-to-earth practices in gardening as he understands it, yet his approach to them is somewhat nonchalant for he sees them only as indispensable means for realizing a landscape design. He treats nature, or, more generally, environment in a similar way, i.e. as a passive medium which can be freely shaped in such a way as to express a designer's ideas.

Despite the fact that Quatremère expresses a fairly commonly shared attitude, instances of a more moderate approach may be given. One such example is found in the gardening theory of J. C. Loudon (1783-1843), who wrote in 1840:

> I have adopted the term *Landscape Gardening*, as most proper, because the art can only be advanced and perfected by the united powers of the *landscape painter* and the *practical gardener*. The former must conceive a plan, which the latter may be able to execute; for though a painter may represent a beautiful landscape on his canvas, and even surpass Nature by the combination of her choicest materials, yet the luxuriant imagination of the *painter* must be subjected to the *gardener's* practical knowledge in planting, digging, and moving the earth; that the simplest and readiest means of accomplishing each design may be suggested; since it is not by vast labour, or great expense, that Nature is generally to be improved; on the contrary […] But of this art, painting and gardening are not the only foundations: the artist must possess a competent knowledge of *surveying, mechanics, hydraulics, agriculture, botany* and the general principles of *architecture.* It can hardly be expected that a men bred, and constantly living, in the kitchen garden, should possess all these requisites.[5]

The above lines are worthy of attention for two reasons. First, despite the fact that Loudon thinks of landscape gardening in terms of designing agreeable sceneries, the practical side of gardening turns out to be decisive as it defines what can or cannot be achieved. Thus, the difference between landscape architecture and practical gardening is a difference of degree and not of kind.

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[4] James Stevens Curl, "Landscape Architecture", in *Id.*, *Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 482.

[5] John Claudius Loudon, *The landscape gardening and landscape architecture of the late Humphrey Repton*, London: Longman & Co., 1840, pp. 29-30.

In other words, Loudon, unlike Quatremère, treats landscape architecture as a much more sophisticated version of practical gardening. What is more, his statement that a landscape architect must not engage in 'vast labours and great expense' can be interpreted as meaning that gardening practices and a garden design should be adjusted to the natural conditions of the place. Two sources of such an approach may be given. One is the knowledge of every gardener cultivating a kitchen garden, as practical gardening amounts as much to making nature serve one's needs as to following its rules and even experiencing its resistance. The other is A. Pope's famous advice that a landscape architect should 'consult the genius of the place in all', which means that a garden design should correspond to the physical (as well as cultural) characteristics of the garden location.[6] In other words, when Loudon underlines the significance of the practical side of landscape architecture, he stresses the significance of the environment which has to be respected and is not a neutral sphere that awaits an architect's arbitrary intervention.

Second, commenting on the works of H. Repton, one of the eminent English garden designers, Loudon remains faithful to the 18th century English tradition. He uses the term "landscape gardening" (adopted from Repton, as he admits) by which he likens gardening to landscape painting, as was done for the first time by A. Pope. Thus, to garden is to shape the environment in such a way as to make it offer to the viewer agreeable views that resemble landscape pictures. Crucial to this conception of gardening is the idea that a garden and the landscape around it should form a visual continuum, which means that on the one hand a garden is supposed to be designed in such a way as to imitate a natural landscape, and on the other, that the landscape around a garden is to be seen as its extension and not as its surroundings, cut off from it by the fence. Obviously, there is a huge difference between acting *in situ*, i.e. the arranging of the environment in accordance with the taste for the picturesque, and acting only *in visu*, i.e. looking around with a "picturesque" eye.[7] Nevertheless, what this approach suggests is that one can look at and think of landscapes as if they

[6] John Dixon Hunt, Peter Willis (eds.), *The Genius of the Place; the English landscape Garden 1620-1820*, Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 204-214.

[7] The distinction *in situ/in visu* was suggested by Alain Roger, *Court traité du paysage*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997.

were gardens, following in the footsteps of W. Kent, one of the fathers of landscape gardening, who – in the famous words of H. Walpole – 'leaped the fence, and saw that all nature was a garden'.[8]

Summing up, Loudon's theory together with its background are noteworthy not only because they are the historical basis for contemporary landscape architecture, but also because they show what has, in the meantime, been forgotten, namely that landscapes can be perceived as gardens in a manner other than the metaphorical and, accordingly, that gardening conceived of as a material practice aimed at cultivating plants may be a useful point of reference in landscape architecture, landscape management, or everyday life.

The path opened by the idea of landscape gardening is worth pursuing, especially if it is reinterpreted in such a way that the term 'landscape' does not refer to painting but to "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors". Thus, landscape gardening consists of not so much creating scenic vistas as of turning landscapes into gardens both *in visu* and *in situ*, or – in other words – of gardening them.

Such an idea is expressed by A. W. Spirn, already quoted at the beginning of this article. Being interested in the natural conditions of cities, she finds the garden to be a powerful metaphor because:

> successful gardens are expressions of harmonious relationships between human culture and the natural world. In the garden, there is both an attitude of beneficial management and an acknowledgment of natural phenomena that are beyond human control.[9]

The idea of gardening a landscape may, however, apply to the city's cultural conditions, as well. For example, A. Berleant writes in his text *Cultivating an Urban Aesthetics* that:

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[8] Horace Walpole, *The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening (1771/1780)*, quoted in *The Genius of the Place*, p. 313.

[9] Ann Whiston Spirn, "'One with Nature': Landscape, Language, Empathy, and Imagination", p. 45.

> [Urban] Planning […] demands a gardener who is talented and sensitive, one who nurtures a balance among the components of environment by being responsive to their distinctive qualities, to their interrelations, and to the unpredictability inherent in a complex, temporal process. […] The capacity to cultivate the functional and the aesthetic as inseparable objects of the same urban process is what makes planning an art and the planner an artist.[10]

Despite the fact that it is debatable whether gardens are, indeed, harmonious environments as Loudon, Berleant, Spirn and many others think, it is undeniable that gardens as places where nature is cultivated in a particular way may serve as models for how we should approach our environments, both natural and cultural, not only when designing them or managing them, but also when dwelling in them on a daily basis. The reason is that gardens may teach us how to approach our environments aesthetically and ethically. It does not mean that gardens – or a particular type of garden – may offer us ready-made solutions, rather that gardens may play a hermeneutical role in the sense that they may make us more sensitive to aesthetic and ethical aspects of landscapes and thus make us reflect on what it means to approach them in aesthetic and ethical terms. As a result, gardens may make us better understand landscapes and ourselves as beings living in them.

3. The Garden and the Aesthetic

Gardens may serve so many different purposes and look so different to one another that it is impossible to give one conclusive answer to the question 'what is a garden?'[11] Nevertheless, it is possible to point out one, as it were, common denominator of gardens (which, however, should not be treated as their essence). What a garden cannot lack is its aesthetic dimension – this is what distinguishes a crop field from a vegetable garden and a green space from a pleasure garden. In other words, gardens are places where the environment – no matter what other function it has – acquires an aesthetic dimension, in the sense that, on the one hand, it is cultivated in such a way

[10] Arnold Berleant, "Cultivating an Urban Aesthetics," in *Id.*, *The Aesthetics of Environment*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992, p. 98.

[11] See e.g.: Mara Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993; Stephanie Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

as to bring to the fore its aesthetic properties and, on the other hand, is appreciated aesthetically. In order to explain this, I would like to briefly refer first to R. Assunto's philosophy and second to environmental aesthetics.

The author of *Ontologia e teleologia del giardino* draws heavily on Kantian aesthetics, even if he reinterprets it.[12] Given that gardens are made by art, he treats them as artworks, which means that they are to be contemplated or, to put it more precisely, that nature in them is to be the object of contemplation. Contemplation is defined by Assunto as a disinterested, non-consumer approach revealing the beauty of an object and, as such, is focused solely on the contemplated object and its aesthetic properties. As a result, the object is appreciated as a goal in itself and not as something which has only instrumental values. Thus, he defines gardens as places where nature is aesthetically cultivated in order to be contemplated.

In order to clarify his approach Assunto draws an analogy between gardens and poems. As he notes, poetry differs from prose in that, contrary to the latter, not only does it convey meanings, but it also turns the reader's attention to its aesthetic aspect. The ordinary language does not do this as it has to be transparent in order to be fully communicative. The same holds true for gardens – as far as their functions (food production, political representation, ecology etc.) are concerned, they are identical to 'prosaic' landscapes in the sense that they are fully functional, but at the same time they are 'other spaces' for they make people realize the aesthetic value of nature.

Despite the fact that environmental aesthetics is, generally speaking, little interested in gardens, its main issue is crucial to the idea of the garden as conceived by Assunto. The main question raised by environmental aestheticians is what it means to aesthetically appreciate nature?[13] What is questioned (if not totally rejected) is the traditional 'art-centered' approach, according to which, whenever we aesthetically appreciate nature we treat it as art, i.e. we value it according to criteria relevant to art, forgetting that nature is not art. Environmental aestheticians suggest different ways of how to appropriately appreciate nature, although they unanimously claim

[12] Rosario Assunto, *Ontologia e teleologia del giardino*, Milano: Guerini Associati, 1988.

[13] See e.g. Arnold Berleant, Allen Carlson (eds.), *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004.

that the aesthetic appreciation of nature amounts to its appreciation *as* nature. As M. Budd writes:

> an aesthetic response to something natural constitutes aesthetic appreciation of nature only if the response is a response to nature *as* nature, and what this requires is that it must be integral to the rewarding (or displeasing) character of the experience offered by nature that its object is experienced *as* natural."[14]

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the idea of appreciating nature 'on its own terms',[15] but what is to be underlined is the general assumption behind it, namely, that one's aesthetic appreciation of nature has to conform with nature in the sense that it cannot be based on an arbitrary imposition of categories alien to nature. Sometimes the idea of disinterestedness is added to such a view and it is claimed that one aesthetically appreciates nature when one leaves aside one's 'desires that the world should be a certain way.'[16] E. Brady, in turn, describes it as follows:

> Disinterestedness […] defines a standpoint that backgrounds the concern of self-interest and utility in relation to nature and foregrounds its aesthetic qualities as valuable in their own right.[17]

Although environmental aesthetics is mainly focused on wild nature, the idea of appreciating nature as nature may also apply to "nature affected by humanity".[18] This is shown by Assunto, whose idea of contemplation of nature corresponds to the above theory. At the same time (and here he differs from most environmental aestheticians) he shows that it is possible to intentionally affect nature in such a way as to make it an object of such an appreciation.

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[14] Malcolm Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature: Essays on the Aesthetics of Nature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005, p. 5.

[15] Yuriko Saito, "Appreciating Nature on Its Own Terms", in *The Aesthetics of Natural* Environments, cit., pp. 141-155.

[16] Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature: Essays on the Aesthetics of Nature*, p. 15.

[17] Emily Brady, *Aesthetics of the Natural Environment*, Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2003, p. 141.

[18] Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature: Essays on the Aesthetics of Nature*, p. 7.

Summing up, we may think of gardens as places which make people embody a particular approach toward nature which informs how they perceive it. If we now follow in the footsteps of Assunto, who believes that gardens – just like poetry, which makes people notice the aesthetic dimension of prose – 'diffuse' their aesthetic dimension onto landscapes, we can state that, indeed, they do it in a double manner. Firstly, the "garden approach" to nature may also inform people's attitude to nature outside of gardens and secondly, the "garden approach" may be applied not only to natural landscapes but to cultural ones, as well. If this is the case, then landscapes are experienced as gardens, i.e. as having "aesthetic qualities […] valuable in their own right", which are as important as any instrumental qualities they may have.

4. A Garden Ethic

It is a widely held view that the aesthetic appreciation of nature is closely related to an ethical approach toward it.[19] On the one hand, it can be argued that even if there is no causal relationship between them and aesthetic appreciation does not necessarily lead to ethical attitude, without doubt the former favours the latter, if for no other reason than because we are simply more likely to respect what we find pleasing. On the other hand, it may be claimed that aesthetic appreciation implies an ethical attitude, which means that anyone aesthetically appreciating nature approaches it in an ethical way:

> The appropriate aesthetic appreciation of nature – Y. Saito writes – […] must embody a moral capacity for recognizing and respecting nature as having its own reality apart from our presence, with its own story to tell.[20]

[19] See e.g. Emily Brady, "Aesthetics, Ethics and the Natural Environment", in Arnold Berleant (ed.), *Environment and the Arts*, Ashgate: Aldershot 2002, pp. 113-126; Holmes Rolston III, "From Beauty to Duty: Aesthetics of Nature and Environmental Ethics," in *Environment and the Arts*, pp. 127-142; Martin Seel, "Aesthetics of Nature and Ethics", in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics,* vol. 1, Oxford University Press: New York 1998, pp. 341-3; Nathalie Blanc, *Éthique et esthétique de l'environnement*, EspacesTemps.net, Travaux, 31.01.2008 (http://www.espacestemps.net/articles/Ethique-et-esthetique-de-environnement/ [accessed 10/04/16]

[20] Saito, "Appreciating Nature on Its Own Terms", p. 151.

Appreciating nature on its own terms, then, amounts to recognizing that nature's terms exist independently from human beings, even if these terms are defined by people. Consequently, if nature is to be appreciated *qua* nature, it cannot be robbed of its naturalness or – in other words – its naturalness must not be damaged or weakened in any way, which is not so much a theoretical imperative as a practical one.

This is how the intertwining of the aesthetic and the ethical is understood by Assunto, too, who claims that thanks to contemplation, nature is turned into a goal in itself, which makes it an object of moral concern. Contemplation understood as a particular approach may, however, accompany practice. Gardening, for Assunto, is a contemplative cultivation, i.e. cultivation which fulfils human needs, but at the same time it follows natural cycles and thus it acts upon nature on nature's own terms. Hence, even if nature in a garden is subjected to human needs, it is never forced or violated, as is the case when people treat it as a raw material, the only value of which stems from the fact that it can be freely used.

In other words, gardening is an aesthetics-based ethical practice, which on the one hand responds to human interests and on the other takes into account nature's interests as it treats them as at least as valuable as human ones. Gardening, then, stems from what can be called a "garden ethic", which M. Pollan describes in his book *Second Nature. A Gardener's Education* as follows:

> An ethic based on a garden would give local answers. […] A garden ethic would be frankly anthropocentric. [...] That said, though, the gardener's conception of his self-interest is broad and enlightened. Anthropocentric as he may be, he recognizes that he is dependent for his health and survival on many other forms of life, so he is careful to take their interests into account in whatever he does. [...] The gardener feels he has a legitimate quarrel with nature – with her weeds and storms and plagues, her rot and death. [...] The gardener doesn't take it for granted that man's impact on nature will always be negative. [...] The gardener firmly believes it is possible to make distinctions between kinds and degrees of human intervention in nature. [...] The good gardener commonly borrows his methods, if not his goals, from nature herself.[21]

[21] Michael Pollan, *Second Nature. A Gardener's Education*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991, pp. 190-192.

Seen in this way, gardening is a practice which consists of imposing one's design on nature, as well as of respecting its order, i.e. caring for it, nurturing it, and acting on its behalf. As such it requires emotional engagement, good will, even mercy, which are accompanied by a feeling that nature is vulnerable and can be harmed, even involuntarily.[22] In other words, nature in a garden is recognized as kin and a gardener is its steward. Garden stewardship should not, however, be understood as 'divide and rule' management conceived of as either conquering nature or as dominating it for the sake of its supposed good. A gardener as a steward is someone who guarantees that nature is not extensively used or abused.[23] Thus, gardening is a practice which treats nature as human's partner (another name for "garden ethic" could be "partnership ethic").[24]

The garden ethic as proposed by Pollan may be interpreted as a contemporary response to Pope's incentive to 'consult the genius of the place'. If we take into consideration that the idea of genius of the place understood as the character of the place corresponds to one of the meanings of the term *ethos*, and that *ethos* means also the character of people living in a certain place, then the garden ethic turns out to be, in fact, an ethic of place, a particular way of acting in and upon a place in accordance with its character.[25] In order to put an ethic of place into practice the *ethos* has to be recognized and identified, namely, it has to be aesthetically appreciated (contemplated).

If, then, a landscape is experienced as a garden, it is experienced as having its own *ethos*, and is approached not as a passive environment awaiting unconstrained human intervention, but as an environment full of qualities

[22] Isis Brook, "The Virtues of Gardening", in Dan O'Brien, *Gardening. Philosophy for Everyone*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell 2010, 13-25; Matthew Hall, "Escaping Eden: Plant Ethics in a Gardener's World," in *Gardening. Philosophy for Everyone*, pp. 38-47; see also: Christopher Freiman, "Good Will toward Nature", *Environmental Values* 18 (2009): 343-359; Matt Ferkany, "Mercy as an Environmental Value", *Environmental Values* 20 (2011): 265-283.

[23] Jennifer Welchman, "A Defence of Environmental Stewardship," *Environmental Values*, (21) 2012, 297-316; Marcello di Paola, "Environmental Stewardship, Moral Psychology and Gardens", *Environmental Values* 22 (2014):,503-521.

[24] Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden. The Fate of Nature in Western Culture*, New York: Routledge 2003, pp. 210-228.

[25] Val Plumwood, "Decolonising Australian gardens: gardening and the ethics of place", *Australian Humanities Review* 36 (2005); Jim Nollman, *Why We Garden. Cultivating a Sense of Place*, Boulder: Sentient Publications, 2005.

that should be taken into account in every human action, especially when it is to be redesigned. In other words, just as gardens may be said to "diffuse" garden aesthetics onto natural and cultural landscapes, they may be thought to do the same as far as garden ethic is concerned.

5. Gardening and hermeneutics

As tempting as it may look, the idea of appreciating and acting upon nature on its own terms may be criticized for its implicit objectivist stance. Indeed, such an approach is a sort of essentialism in that it is based on the assumption that the naturalness of nature is a given and thus that it is possible to decide what it consists of and to act accordingly. However, a criticism of such an approach does not necessarily have to lead to the total rejection of the idea of "nature's terms" and to some sort of a constructionist theory, according to which nature itself is only a social construct. A middle way is offered by a hermeneutical approach to the environment.

According to M. Drenthen, one of the exponents of environmental hermeneutics:

> a good understanding of nature would amount to an understanding of the meaning that nature itself expresses. This does not mean that we have a direct access to the meaning of nature [...], but it does presuppose that there is such a thing as a true or original interpretation of nature that is more appropriate than others. [...] It makes no sense to talk about the "real" meaning of nature apart from our articulations in a specific cultural form. [...] But this does *not* imply, of course, that the meanings we encounter are made by us, the world outside exists, and throws its questions at us.[26]

What is claimed here is that even if we may not know what nature is in itself, as we are limited to our interpretations of it, which are necessarily historical and ever-changing, we should not stop our efforts to understand it, as it 'throws its questions at us'. What is more, were we not limited by our historical standpoint, we could not even attempt to understand nature

[26] Michael Drenthen, "New Nature Narratives: Landscape Hermeneutics and Environmental Ethics", in Forrest Clingerman, Brian Treanor, Martin Drenthen, David Utsler (eds.), *Interpreting Nature, The Emerging Field of Environmental Hermeneutics*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2014, p. 240.

as we would have no conceptual instruments or schemes with which to do so. We should not, therefore, treat the fact that our interpretations will not arrive at the 'real' meaning of nature as a hindrance but as an epistemological and ontological fact. However, we should be aware of two things: that our interpretations are never universally valid, objective or final and that they cannot, nonetheless, be arbitrary, as they have to be aimed at grasping the meaning of nature, for otherwise they do not let us understand nature which – as Saito writes – tells us its own story. In this sense, an attempt at interpreting nature resembles entering into a dialogue with someone: even if we are unable to reconstruct the original meaning of the words of our interlocutor, we are trying to understand as best as we can what he or she is telling us. In order to do so, we have to assume that such a person has something to say to us and that we are interested in it and not solely in our own views, as is the case when we are conducting a monologue.

A hermeneutical approach to nature claims, then, that on the one hand it does make sense to think of approaching nature, in theory and in practice, on its own terms and that, on the other hand, what we take to be nature's own terms is nothing more than our interpretation of nature. This, in turn, means that we should be careful as to how we interpret nature and aware of the limited and contingent character of our interpretations and should therefore be ready to constantly adjust them to nature and its terms.[27]

Seen in this way, environmental hermeneutics is embodied in gardening. Gardening as an aesthetic and ethical cultivation in the above sense involves decisions as to what conforms to nature's own terms, which means that these are to be interpreted first. At the same time, if it is to be successful, it has to be responsive to nature, namely, it has to be open to revisions of how nature's own terms are interpreted. Yet, the very idea of appreciating nature *qua* nature or of acting respectfully toward it is never renounced. Therefore, to garden is to enter into a dialogue with a nature which throws its questions at a gardener, who answers them by cultivating it. A gardener, too, throws his or her own questions at nature which, in turn, responds by subjecting itself to his or her actions or not.

[27] W. Scott K. Cameron, "Conceiving the Earth Itself as Our Garden", in Michael Drenthen, Jozef Keulartz (eds.), *Old World and New World Perspectives in Environmental*, Dordrecht: Springer, 2014, pp. 53-71.

There is yet another aspect to gardening which makes it a hermeneutical practice. Given that gardening is an intentional action and requires making decisions and modifying them in such a way as to adapt them to nature, it makes people realize how they interpret nature. At the same time they become aware that – unless they want to eliminate either themselves or nature, which, in both cases, would be absurd – the most rewarding way to approach nature is to do so in a dialogical manner. The reason is that if we enter into a dialogue with nature, we are not supposed to give up our interests but we have to stop treating them as the only legitimate ones, which means that we acknowledge that nature has its own interests, too (even if, again, it is up to us to interpret them). A dialogue is, then, a process of negotiating between them, which is the best way to guarantee that neither human interests nor those of nature will prevail.

One of the assumptions of environmental hermeneutics is that living in a landscape amounts to interpreting it. Any action taken up by people in a landscape is, therefore, some kind of its interpretation. If so, then gardening itself is an interpretation of landscape. In light of what has been said above, it may be suggested as a model for how we should interpret landscapes in general. Gardening teaches us that we must not arbitrarily assign meanings to landscapes as our interpretations should follow the stories that they tell us, even if we know that we will never understand them once and for all.

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Without denying that it is inspiring to treat gardens as condensed landscapes, it is equally – if not even more – inspiring to think of landscapes as expanded gardens. This conceptual shift results in an approach that amounts to treating landscapes as having their inherent aesthetic qualities and meanings, which are to be taken into account by anyone who considers them or acts on them in any way. Such an approach is also self-critical and open to self-revision. As a result, if a paraphrase of the European Landscape Convention definition is allowed, landscapes are perceived as areas the character of which is the result of the dialogue between natural and human factors.

It may be true that in order to approach landscapes in the manner described above, we do not have to treat them as gardens. Nevertheless, if we were to do so, we would no doubt treat them in this way. What is more, there are few places where we can better realize that landscapes may be – and in fact need to be – experienced in aesthetic and ethical terms and where we can critically – in theory and in practice – reassess what it means to experience landscapes aesthetically and ethically. So, even if we do not have to, let's follow W. Kent and leap the fence. Let's see that landscapes are gardens and all become gardeners.

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INDEX

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

Z