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ART AND GEOGRAPHY: HORIZONS OF CREATIVE PRACTICES

Arte e geografia: horizontes de práticas criativas

Arte y Geografía: horizontes de prácticas creativas

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ABSTRACT

Since its origins as a modern science, geographical knowledge has established contact with artistic practices. This process intensified after the 1960s with the diffusion of the humanistic epistemological movement and has recently gained a breath of fresh air due to the creative (re)turn in geography. By surveying these tendencies, this essay aims to unravel the contemporary articulations between Geography and Art, focusing on creative geographies. Thus, this text follows a theoretical and methodological discussion based on the bibliography of cultural geographies and phenomenological conceptions of art and presents some examples of its applications. By conceiving arts as processes that involve idea matrixes with multiple meanings, the creative (re)turn is marked by studies that highlight the (in)visible, (in)tangible, (un)speakable, and (im)possible geographical experiences. These investigations concern performances, graffiti, literature, painting, installation, and other artistic manifestations that are sensibly, intersubjectively, and intercorporeally associated with spatial dynamics. Beyond promoting the geographical studies of artworks and what they produce in the world, creative geographies also disseminate immersive, experimental, and art-inspired research practices. Thus, geopoetic, geoaesthetic, and art-geographical productions offer methodological, theoretical, and linguistic pathways for contemporary cultural geographies' investigations.

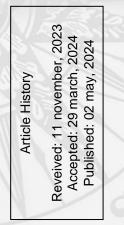
Keywords: Creative Geographies; Geography of Art; Creative (re)turn.

RESUMO

Desde suas origens como ciência moderna, o conhecimento geográfico tem estabelecido contatos com as práticas artísticas. Esse processo se intensificou após a década de 1960 com a difusão do movimento epistemológico humanista e recentemente têm ganhado um novo fôlego em razão do (re)torno criativo em geografia. Baseado nessas tendências, o ensaio almeja desvelar as articulações contemporâneas entre Geografia e Arte, com foco nas geografias criativas. Para tanto, o texto realiza uma discussão de

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cunho teórico-metodológico pautada na bibliografia das geografias culturais, em concepções fenomenológicas da arte e em alguns exemplos de aplicações. Ao conceberem as artes como processos que envolvem matrizes de ideias dotadas de múltiplos sentidos, o (re)torno criativo é marcado por estudos que destacam o caráter (in)visível, (in)tangível, (in)dizível e (im)possível das experiências geográficas. Tratam-se de investigações que articulam performances, grafite, literatura, pintura, instalação e outras manifestações artísticas que se associam de modo sensível, intersubjetivo e intercorporal às dinâmicas espaciais. Para além de promover o estudo geográfico de obras de arte e daquilo que elas provocam no mundo, as geografias criativas também difundem práticas de pesquisa imersivas, experimentais e inspiradas nas expressões artísticas. Desse modo, produções geopoéticas, geoestéticas e arte-geográficas oferecem caminhos metodológicos, teóricos e linguísticos para a renovação das investigações das geografias culturais contemporâneas.

Palavras-chave: Geografias Criativas; Geografia da Arte; (Re)torno criativo.

RESUMEN

Desde sus orígenes como ciencia moderna, el conocimiento geográfico ha establecido contactos con las prácticas artísticas. Este proceso se intensificó después de la década de 1960 con la difusión del movimiento epistemológico humanista y recientemente ha cobrado nuevo impulso debido al (re)volver creativo en geografía. Basándose en estas tendencias, el ensayo busca desvelar las articulaciones contemporáneas entre Geografía y Arte, centrándose en las geografías creativas. Para ello, el texto realiza una discusión de índole teórico-metodológica basada en la bibliografía de las geografías culturales, en concepciones fenomenológicas del arte y en algunos ejemplos de aplicaciones. Al concebir las artes como procesos que involucran matrices de ideas dotadas de múltiples sentidos, el (re)volver creativo se caracteriza por estudios que destacan el carácter (in)visible, (in)tangible, (in)decible e (im)posible de las experiencias geográficas. Se trata de investigaciones que articulan performances, grafitis, literatura, pintura, instalación y otras manifestaciones artísticas que se asocian de manera sensible, intersubjetiva e intercorporal a las dinámicas espaciales. Más allá de promover el estudio geográfico de obras de arte y de lo que provocan en el mundo, las geografías creativas también difunden prácticas de investigación inmersivas, experimentales e inspiradas en las expresiones artísticas. De este modo, las producciones geopoéticas, geoestéticas y arte-geográficas ofrecen caminos metodológicos, teóricos y lingüísticos para la renovación de investigaciones de las geografías culturales contemporáneas.

Palabras clave: Geografías Creativas; Geografía del Arte; (Re)volver Creativo.

1 INTRODUCTION

Arts are means of expression that have the potential to approach questions that involve the sensible dimensions of experiences. As a creative unfoldment with multiple manifestations (painting, installations, theatre, dance, performance, etc.), arts also have the potential to open up perspectives on the existential, intersubjective, and ephemeral characteristics of spatial dynamics.

Therefore, in the context of geographical practices, there has been a growing movement since the 2010s that has instigated closer ties with the arts. As Hawkins (2011,



2012, 2014, 2015, 2018) states, this process conforms to a creative (re)turn in which both humanities fields intertwine into the conformation of the epistemological movement of creative geographies. The denomination proposed by the author aims to highlight that these efforts go beyond a geographical analysis of works of art and incorporate artistic methodologies as ways of doing geography.

The recent volume edited by Dozena (2020a) is evidence that these debates have also been inciting Brazilian cultural geographers to engage in practical, theoretical, and analytical dialogues with the arts. Interdisciplinary contacts between Art and Geography can be fruitful for both knowledge areas, multiplying ways of understanding the diverse expressions of lived places, landscapes, regions, and territories.

Due to the rising importance of this field for geographical studies, this essay aims to unveil the contemporary connections between Geography and Art, focusing on the creative (re)turn and its developments. To do this, I discuss the theoretical and methodological implications of this movement based on the bibliography of cultural geographies, phenomenological conceptions of art, and some examples of applications of these theories.

This essay is segmented into three sections to encompass the plurality of engagements between these fields. The first focuses on the approaches that approximate Geography and Art. In the following section, I explain the meanings and potentialities of the creative return in geography. In the last section, I debate and situate how creative practices have infused contemporary ways of doing geography.

2 WHY COMBINE ART AND GEOGRAPHY?

Since its origins as a modern science, geographical knowledge has had close ties with artistic practices, particularly evident in the founding influences of Germanic romanticism on this discipline (Gomes, 2013). As Holzer (2020a) demonstrates, in its initial Kantian project, Geography was considered a field that involved the sensible, moral, and intuitive aspects of the world and its landscapes, bringing it closer to the arts.

The scientific conception behind the geographical consolidation of the Prussian precursors was based upon a wide-ranging notion of the multiple relations between different areas of knowledge. Hawkins (2014, p.28) emphasizes that "following Burke, Kant, and others, Humboldt believed in a single catalyst behind the arts and the sciences: a subjective appreciation of a universal order in nature."

This contact reflects the convergence of Geography with multiple visualities that



permeate the study of landscapes and regions. This characteristic can be evidenced by traditional geographers' construction of geographical charts (Gomes, 2013; 2017). These conceptions demonstrate that the role of vision and the scopic regimes of visibility are presented as an integral part of geographical science amongst the diverse fields of knowledge consolidated in the dawn of modernity.

Even the usual ideas about what Geography is, often associated with maps, figures from diverse countries, and other forms of visuality, reveal how the imaginary of geographical science about itself is intertwined by contact zones with the arts (Hawkins, 2014). As part of what geographers do, the image and the visual occupy central roles in disciplinary identity and the methods of its scholars.

Although approximations to artistic practices were reduced during the first half of the 20th century due to the ascension of a neopositivist epistemological movement, interest in some forms of visuality was not lost. A scopic regime concerned mathematical models of spatial distribution or cartographic systematization, both of which overshadowed the vision of totality present in the precursors.

Faced with the interdiction of imagination, the emergence of Humanistic Geography in the 1960s, alongside its phenomenological influences, infused the geographical imaginary with new ways of studying a diverse array of images involved in spatial dynamics. According to Silva (2022, p. 226), this perspective "takes into consideration the subjectivity in the knowledge of our surroundings, recognizing the proximity of Geography with art and poetry." This renewed contact resulted in the expansion of the discipline's themes that returned to the art-geographical principle inherent to the origins of this science.

Due to its emphasis on landscape perception, place representation, and body-space relations, these geographers developed new ways to approach images, especially those concerning imagination and intersubjectivity (Almeida, 2021). In contact with the arts, the humanistic movement sought pathways toward a myriad of geographical experiences.

Tuan (1978), for example, impelled geographers to get closer to artistic and literary expressions in a broader sense because it could allow us to understand sensible externalizations of geographical reality. In his words (Tuan, 1978, p.196), both art and science "segment reality and make pictures of the world. These more-or-less abstract pictures, paradoxically, enable us to grasp the concreteness of experience". This repositioning of geographical practices closer to the humanities was, and is, a fertile path for tensioning disciplinary boundaries and a better understanding of the experiential situatedness of spatiality.

Marandola Júnior (2010, p. 22) states that "Art, as Science, also sprouts from the organic relation between humans and the environment and, therefore, it is so important for Geography. Geographies are inscribed in artistic expression in the same way that geographies were necessary to conceive it". Getting closer to artists' practices potentializes this field of comprehensions that involve everything from how spatiality influences the artistic creation to the inquiry of spatial meanings generated by works of art.

In contact with the arts, we can understand that "the artists not only make art in space but with space, subjectively apprehending it" (Dozena, 2020b, p.386). Beyond the reducibility of neo-positivist geographical visualities, the approaches infused by phenomenological influences allow us to reach the intersubjective relations between being and the world at the root of spatiality. Directly or indirectly, creativity is affected by the agencies that act on or emerge in the geographical reality.

Each artistic expression is an emersion that flows out and into the world in which it is immersed. Works of art create and are created by places, landscapes, and territories that influence them and are influenced by them. As an experiential unraveling of being-in-theworld, artistic expression is indissociable by the becomings of geographical reality. In other words, they act as sensorial openings towards geographicality, the original existential horizon of spatial attachment and directionality described by Dardel (1990).

Almeida (2021, p.129) points out that "if art is the creative writing of the space, it is undeniable that it is close to geography, that aims to construe and explicate the space." By adventuring into art's geographicality, geographers might seek out spatial meanings, significations, and sensibilities that offer glimpses into the intangibility, invisibility, and unspeakability of geographical experience.

Tackling this topic is more than doing a Geography of Art because it also includes the comprehension of a myriad of affects that are consubstantiated in the artistic ways of thinking and doing. It is fundamental to recognize, following Holzer (2020b, p.144), that "artistic impression is not the 'simple intuition of the sensible' or 'pure perception,' but the emotional experience of representations, becoming aware of the values as an act superior to that of knowledge." Art's own experiential meaning must also be understood as a sensible effluent of ways of being-in-the-world that intertwines embodied geographicalities, knowledge, and practices.

Ferreira and Costa (2021) reinforce that the preoccupation with images should not be restricted to the description of geographical space's extensive characteristics. Although the pragmatic-extensive description pays attention to visualities, there are gaps and geographical imaginations of invisibilities that also need to be regarded by this disciplinary field. More than working with the arts as appendices or transcriptions of reality, it is also necessary to pay attention to the experiences that are involved in its conception alongside the multiple sensibilities, ideas, and meanings inherent to artistic works.

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Immersing oneself in the arts is to go through networks of affects that involve and surpass that which is crystalized in representations and visualities. It also includes immerging into horizons of implicit space-sensorial meanings. The geographicalities of artistic creation, interaction, performance, and observation weave together intersubjective and intercorporeal ways of interaction with geographical reality that can collaborate to elaborate modes of thinking that amplify the conceptions about experiential places and landscapes.

As is incited by Bianchi's (2022) *Manifesto de lo Imposible y la Responsabilidad del Arte* (Manifesto of Impossibility and the Responsibility of Art), artistic expression entangles transformative affects that allow us to change reality and externalize other relationalities with the worlds people live in. In the words of the artist (Bianchi, 2022, p.13), "In art, the impossible actualizes in act, the unthinkable gains materiality, the unimaginable attains form. Its artifices, materials, and themes (perceptive, sensorial, visual, discursive) exceed any objectivity, rationality, morality, and logic". Thus, an art-geographical dialogue can weave confluences towards the comprehension of affective horizons that conjoin geographical experiences, emphasizing that which is (in)visible and (im)possible in the heart of the spatiality of being-in-the-world.

By attending to these other sensibilities and expressions, the artistic horizons allow geographical practices to transcend an analysis restricted to extensivity. Through the contact with art, doing geography is potentially infused by ways of knowledge-making that surpasses the subject-object division alongside the descriptivism, enabling us to construct creative geopoetics that elucidate the diverse emergences of geographicality.

This is the path that multiple geographers have been engaging with towards unveiling art-geographical interactions. As Hawkins (2014, 2018) describes, there has been a renaissance of research in a wide array of subjects, which include surrealist paintings, sculptures, contemporary installations, *artivisms*, situationist-inspired art practices, and sonic art, amongst others. In the breadth of these engagements, the researchers have been conducting interdisciplinary practices that go beyond a top-bottom overview based on the extensivity in favor of approaches centered on the affective, emotional, and experiential intensities of geographical reality.

Volvey (2007) points out that geographical approaches to art in contemporary geography, especially in the anglophone and francophone contexts, have a disposition towards multidisciplinarity and collaborative research that impels us to "question the regimes of the scientificity of contemporary geography" (Volvey, 2007, p. 6). As a result of art's long history of interdisciplinary connections, it, alongside geography, can enable us to expand our perception of the world to transcend the limits imposed by the pretense of cartesian scientific objectivity.

In line with Hawkins (2011), works of art and artistic doings can open pathways to destabilize the divisions between subject and object through the valorization of relational and affective dimensions of phenomena. Becoming immersed in the potentialities of this creative and geoaesthetic contact zone is a journey to envision the myriad of webs of intersubjectivity and intercorporeality that are imbricated into geographical experiences.

Connecting Geography and Art is an itinerary to overcome analytic pragmatism and seek out other openings for the existential dynamics permeated by the (in)tangible, the (un)sayable, and (in)visible. There are lived, sensible, and plural geographies that can be glimpsed through the creative doings that constitute the interface between these areas of knowledge. Thus, I echo Carvalho's (2021, p.155) point that:

It is in this plethora that many geographical works have recurred to art in order to comprehend reality. If we follow a strictly rational scientific route, we can lose track of the immediate appearance of phenomena until we cannot regard them face-to-face, and our pretense of objectivity loses its breath because it is not able to access things in their being, restricting them to what is mensurable and observable [...].

By opening ourselves to the existential dimension of artistic expressions, that which cannot be measured, assessed, or reduced to the traditional scopic regime can also be apprehended. By infusing itself with art's creative poetics, cultural geographies might engender renovative processes permeated by modes of attention that enable us to investigate horizons of geographicality immersed in affects, embodied practices, cohabitation assemblages, creative interventions, and spatial relations that transcend the visible and representational.

Although Geography has a long disciplinary tradition of image-making, as cartography, fieldwork sketching, and charts attest (Gomes, 2017), thinking about how other expressions and imaginative languages can be conceptually interpreted is still an imperative. Hawkins (2015) evaluates that even today, most geographers are less

theoretically habilitated to deal with images than words. Thus, the recent (re)interest in artistic practices is one route to expand the repertoire of visualities and geographical experiences beyond the scientifically traditional instrumental and measurable.

This is the challenge and the call that justifies the connection between Geography and Art. It has incited many geographers at the dawn of this century to return to the catalyzing process between art and sciences that has laid latent since Humboldt's precursor project.

3 A CREATIVE (RE)TURN IN GEOGRAPHY?

As discussed in the previous section, there are many reasons and potential for an artistic turn in cultural geographies. Moreover, the recent expansion of geographical studies in pluridisciplinary contact with the arts can be understood as a *return* to the principles of the German romanticism roots of modern Geography. It is due to this fact that Hawkins (2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2018) posits that the contemporary movement must be understood as a *creative return*.

Recuperating this project infused with visualities, sensibilities, and imaginations to the disciplinary agenda involves the diffusion of porous approaches to highlight the experiential complexity of geographicality. It also concerns expressing the creative convergence of spatial and existential *geo-graphies* of being-in-the-world. In the words of Hawkins and Straughan (2015, p.294), it is important to stress that:

Re-thinking the 'geo' connects us back into the longer legacy of geographical concerns with the aesthetic, and in particular to the Humboldtian geoaesthetics, wherein knowledge making about the cosmos was marked by an appreciation for the animate forces of the earth and aesthetic responses to them.

Retaking this project of composing geographical poetics and aesthetics implies a return to the creative principles that were at the heart of the original fundaments of Geography's modern consolidation without, however, being confined to its contours. We can be inspired by its geoaesthetic incitation while at the same time joining it with influences, approaches, and propositions of contemporary artistic practices.

It is also important to reiterate that the *creative return* does not aim to completely reorient geographical knowledge. Hawkins (2018) argues that it refers to an ensemble of explorative, experimental, and processual possibilities for directing Geography toward



creative practices that bring it closer to the art's know-how.

The idea of creative geographies concerns the interpolation of three key issues summarized by Hawkins (2014, p.237) in the following questions: "What 'work' does art do in the world? What are the geographies of the artwork's production and consumption? And, thirdly, how is it that we encounter art works?". Her suggestion expresses a theoretical and practical framework that clarifies that we can comprehend the special dynamics of works of art through their inspiration, creation, interaction, diffusion, and reception.

Beyond a Geography of Art, Hawkins (2014, p.1) affirms that "the idea of creative geographies more broadly encompasses a range of different approaches and forms of creativity." Thus, the creative (re)turn is composed of a multiplication of interdisciplinary contact zones that have their center on the plethora of pathways to reposition geographical doings through the incorporation of (geo)poetic, sensorial, and performative expressions. Both the creative imaginations of geographies and the creativity of the artists are valued in one fell swoop.

The creative (re)turn can collaborate with our understandings of experiential universes and other sensorial-existential worlds that cannot be reduced to the extensive description or modern science's usual interpretation (Eshun; Madge, 2016). It concerns embodied practices, ancestral worldviews, shamanic interactions, non-human animals, and myriad forms of sensibility that escape the analytical linearity of the prevailing textual and representational approaches.

The multiplication of creative geographies reflects the rising interest of cultural geographers – especially those in the anglophone and francophone contexts – in researches that concern intercorporeal and intersubjective aspects of geographical reality. This approximation with issues that transcend extensible, visible, and tangible spatialities, according to Harkins (2015, p.248), "demands the means by which to engage, research and re-present the sensory experiences, emotions, affective atmospheres and flows of life." Fertile pathways towards interacting with these dimensions of geographicality can be found by opening the pores of creative possibilities.

Gratão (2023, p.114) incites us that "multiple are the expressive languages manifested into art – *poiesis* – poetry-poetics. Lived experiences are expressed and manifested in art, revealing their geographies. Geography does not correspond to a world to be explained; it corresponds to a word to (un)veil". Creative geographies salient this capacity to unveil and open up occult and (im)possible geographicalities. Arts are dynamics of interweaving in the world that express art-geographical openings situated beyond the

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appearances of spatial phenomena because they conform to places, landscapes, and territories dense in universal superpositions of affective assemblages.

An example that reflects this investigative thread can be found in Engelmann (2021). She engaged in experiments on emotional and meteorological atmospheres through immersion in embodied practices of ephemeral aerial installations made by the *Aerocene Community* Collective. Her participative research in the artistic project led by Tomás Saraceno demonstrates that the attention to "fluctuation" as an aerostatic and, simultaneously, socio-affective movement in the relations with the group of participants and spectators can create situations of ecological artivism against fossil fuels and atmospheric pollution.

As is evidenced, more than being an expression to be analyzed, art can inform research methods that involve another creative sensibility. Therefore, the lived experience of research can become an embodied practice in which the trajectories of engagements multiply *affects* that enable access to the (in)visible, (in)tangible, and (un)sayable layers of geographical reality.

Dozena (2020b, p.391) synthesizes this line of thought by pointing out that "art is fundamental to the creation of other realities through the creative inspirations that spring from it, and allows that geography reorganizes itself theoretical and methodologically in its proximal relation with and in the world." In contrast to a passive and descriptive position, this situation evokes the necessity to problematize geographical practice to approximate it towards other expressions of the world.

The geo-graphies from these interactions emphasize that creative practices are more than representations of extensivity. Arts and their performances create effects, affects, and intersubjectivities that reach the transcorporeal dimensions of geographical experience. In transcendence to static things that have ready to be interpreted significations, works of art *create* dynamic realities that are transformed by the contact with those who interact with it, multiplying horizons of meanings.

Creative geographies incite that "we need to move towards a sense of art as 'productive of', attending to the doings of art, rather than focusing on questions that centralize the idea of art 'produced by'." (Hawkins, 2014, p.10). Beyond searching for representational meanings that would have been sedimented by the artists into the works of art or attempting to trace a correlation between the sociospatial trajectories of those that create it, it is possible to direct attention to the worlds and affects generated by the arts. Even when ephemeral, the concretization of performances and artistic objects reveals

creative processes and practices that surpass the originary intentionality of their genesis.

According to Hawkins (2014), art cannot be reduced to a reproduction or translation of spatial reality in the form of representations. It also circulates and acts in the world independently of its creators. There are assemblages of agencies and affects that are enveloped in how the works of art connect with the spatialities where they are, continually resignified by the interaction with the public and the environment. Works of art are also creators of spatial experiences.

Creative geographies concerned with these issues open up ways to access a myriad of affective, imaginative, and (im)possible relations on the geographicality of the worlds of works of art. Carlotti (2014) coincides with this perspective by pointing towards the reciprocity of significations generated by artistic works in their convergence to place and with those that interact with them. Each installation, painting, or performance is a potential sensible experience of landscape that evoke polysemic and pluriversal geoaesthetic nexuses (Carlotti, 2014).

Works of art have a transformative capacity because they create disruptive events that have meanings emergent from their own spatial dynamic of worldly interaction. Kaushik (2013) explains that in the phenomenological conception, works of art are considered realities that exist beyond their creators and cannot be reduced to any representational logic. What art makes in the world are affective irruptions in a constant process of becoming, which is irreducible to description or mensuration.

From the perspective of creative geographies, as Hakwins and Straughan (2015) assert, arts and aesthetics are not only concerned with representational objects created by artists but also with ways of becoming in the world. In their multitude of manifestations, works of art are expressions of existential engagements that also create their own realities and geographicalities.

Bianchi's manifesto (2022, p.13) reinforces this dimension by impelling that "art disposes of elements to mobilize worlds that (however) do not exist." The artistic expressions addressed in the context of the creative (re)turn in Geography aim to amplify this potential of immersion and (re)creation of not-yet-created worlds and, as such, to evoke counter-hegemonic possibilities of expression. To mobilize the (im)possible is a way to construct new geographical imaginaries of conviviality and confrontation with everyday conditions in order to raise awareness of an ample specter of issues.

Deus, Paiva, and Parreiras (2023) exemplify this potential by analyzing the *Circuito Urbano de Arte* (Urban Circuit of Art) in Belo Horizonte/MG, a graffiti festival in Minas Gerais

state capital. They situate that this artistic manifestation creates emergent urban landscapes with anti-hegemonic themes and symbols aligned with the insurgences of political ecology, constituting an effort towards decolonization.

Works of art can create intertwinements of spatial confrontations and disruptions through the mobilization of affects by changing landscapes, as evidenced by the previous example. Artistic interventions have a sweeping power of interaction that enables creative performances to supersede representations and generate imaginative streams capable of provoking those who encounter them. The creative (re)turn suggests the multiplication of our geographical interactions with these practices.

This effort converges with the phenomenological comprehension that works of art are unfinished realities centered on relationality. As Wood (2019) states, arts are phenomenal laboratories of imagination that enable experimentation into other (im)possible worlds. Works of art incite people to project existences and experiences that have not (yet) been manifested to contemplate other points of view or to potentialize alternative events.

The meanings of works of art are not crystalized as frozen totalities ready to be apprehended and deciphered because they are creative variations of possible worlds. Merleau-Ponty (1973, p.90) explains that:

What is irreplaceable in the work of art—what makes it not just a pleasant occasion but a voice of the spirit whose analogue is found in all productive philosophical or political thought—is that it contains, better than ideas, *matrices of ideas*. A work of art provides us with symbols whose meaning we shall never finish developing. Precisely because it comes to dwell in the world in which it makes us at home though we do not have the key to it, the work of art teaches us to see and makes us think as no analytic work can because in the analysis of an object we cannot find anything other than what we have put into it.

The phenomenologist's perspective elucidates that to immerse in an artwork is an incorporeal and intersubjective effort in which the active circuit of perception of the one that interacts with the work also deposits meaning into it. Beyond what was represented by the artist's original intent, what is situated in a painting, installation, or urban intervention conforms to a durable or ephemeral spatiality where body consciousness relationally interacts.

A creative work continues to operate in the varied interpretations made about, on, and inspired by the work of art (Kaushik, 2013). By this principle, meanings are never finished because the matrices of ideas consubstantiated by the works of art conform to immersive existential horizons that provoke perception to be installed in that world. Kaushik (2013) further elaborates that this Merleau-Pontian conception collaborates to elucidate that each artistic practice produces an infinitude of sensible nexuses of meanings, presentations, and interactions.

Merleau-Ponty (1960) problematizes that the work only acquires meaning in its intercorporal relation with other entities. When immersed in the world of a piece of work, in the space created by its own material constitution, the perceptive bodies follow the lines, paths, and logic mobilized by the artist; however, simultaneously, they overcome them and deposit the meanings of their own lifeworld.

In the creative (re)turn in Geography, these matrices of ideas are fertile grounds for understanding the porous flows of geographicality. Works of art compose expressions and, at the same time, consubstantiate realities that exist independently of an identifiable meaning.

According to Merleau-Ponty's (1973, 1964) phenomenological reflections, when erecting their works, artists crystalize forms of existence that transcend any distinction between subject and object. This means that the works become creators of affective atmospheres that transcend their creators, for, in the words of the phenomenologist, "the meaning of what the artist is going to say *does not exist* anywhere – not in things, which as yet have no meaning, nor in the artist himself, in his unformulated life" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p.19). Artistic creative practice surpasses the possibility of any given objective meaning and defies the cartesian scientific gaze that seeks out something measurable and describable.

Creative geography requires understanding that it is insufficient to search for traces of the artist's socio-spatial trajectories. It is also pivotal to look for the signification produced by the artistic expression in itself. By going further than the representational gaze and towards affective nexuses of relationality generated by the internal or diegetic spatiality of the arts, geographers might attune themselves to the manifold dimensions of geographicality inherent to their worlds.

This way of conducting the creative (re)turn requires putting the unfinished character of works of art's matrices of ideas at the forefront as a virtue for infusing the analysis of cultural geography. Over and above its visualities, artistic creations are plural affective assemblages with multiple possibilities of contributing to understanding (in)tangible and (un)sayable geographicalities.

If, as Mendes (2022, p.50) reiterates, "the untranslatability of a work of art makes every discourse about it partial; no interpretation will contain an absolute kind of truth, but



can contribute to its comprehension," the creative (re) turn takes shape through the consideration of the plethora of potential significations. The renewed focus on these matrices of ideas enables us to grasp dynamic meanings on the (in)visible or (im)possible geographies that are crystalized by the artists.

An effort towards this approach can be seen in Freitas and Almeida's (2020) research. The geographers aimed to construct relational encounters with Albert Gleizes cubist paintings in order to question the meaning of landscape representation. Thus, they analyzed the essays written by the painter alongside their own immersion in the world of each painting in search of what could be (un)veiled in the works. In their interpretation, the painted canvases transcend mimetic reproductions of reality and imply an artistic way of creating non-Euclidean spatialities that evoke a fourth dimension. Beyond their visualities and appearances, they argue that the paintings have a performative and immaterial character from the relational ambiguity between being and landscape.

Similarly, Castro (2023) analyzed the artistic practices that compose an "affective body-stratigraphy" through the textile works by the Peruvian artist Ana Teresa Barbosa and the installations of the Argentinian artist Mariana Pellegera. The examination of the creations of these artists enabled the author to highlight how both show imaginaries create connections between human bodies and geological entities. These works are inspired by Latin American cosmologies that recognize the agency and autonomy of geological beings. She points out that these creations express how attachments with lithic strata and the rocks can constitute decolonization processes of territories. Castro (2023) argues that these creative sensibilities defy hegemonic spatial perceptions that legitimize capitalist extraction and expropriation by reducing geology to resources that must be extracted from the Earth.

The examples demonstrate that the artistic polysemy collaborates to problematize geographical concepts and their theoretical-practical comprehensions. By considering the matrices of ideas inherent to works of art as experimental laboratories to immerse into imaginations of (im)possible worlds, the creative (re)turn of cultural geographies puts forward interdisciplinary dialogues that incite kaleidoscopic reflections on the multiplicity of geographical reality.

The matrices of ideas of works of art are openings to many meanings and provocations that allow the emergence of geographicality. As Hawkins (2011, p.472) writes, "what becomes clear is the need, as geographers, to explore not only art as a 'finished' object, but also to think about art works as ensembles of practices, artefacts, performances and experiences." Thus, creative geographies aim to conduct studies that also embark on



the processual characteristics of the arts.

Understanding that artistic practices are not finished crystallization with preestablished meanings created in their conception can expand the scope of geographical analysis of this subject. Creative geography and its propositions also have the merits of going beyond the consideration of arts as expressions about a given place, region, territory, or landscape, comprehending how works create worlds and affect spatialities. This expanded field of conceptions, especially concerning the transformative potential of art, makes the creative (re)turn an opportunity to also put into question the methodologies, concepts, and theories of cultural geographies as a whole.

4 HOW TO DO CREATIVE GEOGRAPHIES?

Due to the expanded notion of the arts, the creative (re)turn in geography inspires its researchers to surpass the representational and mensurable descriptions and observations. This movement makes geographers rethink their practices towards art-geographical engagements. According to Hawkins (2012, p. 66), "creative geographies are often celebrated for challenging the spaces, strictures, and structures of geographical knowledge making."

Sketching the sensibilities expressed by art's geographicalities demands that the researcher maintain an active posture open to experimentation. The challenge taken up by creative geography and by the (re)turn of the dialogue between geographical and artistic doings lies in how to conduct the investigations in ways that articulate both fields of knowledge.

Hawkins and Straughan (2015) point out that beyond returning to the arts as a research subject or object, many geographers are drawing to these practices due to their expressive potential to communicate, execute, and diffuse their research. Thus, we seek to find contact zones where artistic doings can inspire immersive investigations that bring out art's relational and affective capacities.

Ferreira and Costa (2021, p. 7) consider that "to believe in the poetic activity intrinsic to science is also a way to create tensions towards the creation of another world through language. A language that, in its essence, does not escape art, because it is art". Thus, reconnecting with the arts is also a way to reanimate the linguistic possibilities for geographical expressions. Being inspired by the arts can infuse poetics with the forms of doing and describing the worlds encompassed by geographicality.

This cross-pollination can benefit cultural geographies by offering other (creative) ways of thinking and expressing the meanings of places, landscapes, and territories. Berger (2023, p.95) states that "the aesthetic languages, methodologies, skills, and strategies endemic to the arts facilitate modes of representing and interacting with the dynamically interconnected materiality of the world." These doings conduct modes of understanding and producing effects that can unveil the (in)visible, (in)tangible, and (im)possible nexuses of geographical reality that can be expressed by art's matrices of ideas.

Artistic contexts are affective assemblages that involve multiple components. Due to this aspect, methodologies developed by creative geographies do not follow closed prescriptions and usually are (re)elaborated in the artistic encounter and interaction process (Hawkins, 2014). The creative (re)turn convokes geographers to conduct new modes of research and of expressing the results of investigations, often constituting geoaesthetic or geopoetic languages.

Lorimer and Parr (2014) reiterate this issue by explaining that contemporary cultural geographies have been experimenting with multiple ways of telling stories, constructing narratives, and employing visibilities. In their words, these investigations explore "the art of description, not simply for the pleasures this can bring (and these are great pleasures), but also to open up alternative routes to the sort of conceptual thinking that has generally come to be expected as an intellectual return from cultural research" (Lorimer; Parr, 2014, p.544). The emergence of these geographical doings demonstrates a rising interest in constructing a scientific regime that surpasses disciplinary barriers.

Hawkins (2015) argues that the recent valorization of geopoetics and open kinds of research practices influenced by the arts have updated the approaches of humanistic geographers. Although they do not always follow a phenomenological style, the investigative pathways of creative geographies also search for ways to attune to affective assemblages, intersubjectivity, and intercorporeality that are close to fieldwork notes or ways of writing that evoke pluriversal and diverse spatial imaginaries.

Such art-geographical research strategies often result in direct collaboration with artists, writers, and poets or even in the composition of artworks by the researcher (Hawkins, 2015). As Magrane (2015) incites, the creative (re)turn has the potential to resituate cultural geographies in the humanities and towards forms of expression permeated by propositions beyond the limits between academic and literary/poetic writing.

This type of approach can be evidenced in the paper written by Dickens and Edensor (2022), in which they tell stories of the journey they undertook to find Keith Albarn's

interactive architectural installation, *The Fifth Dimension*. Even though the work is not exhibited anymore, they returned to the place and, through conversations, were able to search for other works by the architect. The essay is written in the form of vignettes that compose a narrative of happenstances, memories, and (dis)encounters. They expose the incertitude and the contingent experiences of investigation. In order to do so, they employ a geopoetic language that contributes towards the comprehension of the ephemeral and affective dynamics of places that are artistically influenced and resignified.

As they point out in the text, the research became a performative process that involved openings to curiosity, enchantment, and the creativity to follow divergent pathways. Due to their receptivity to the transformation of their geographical doings and the immersion in the places of serendipity, these geographers were able to comprehend the assemblages of spatial affects concerning the installations.

They conclude that, by doing creative geographies, "research can be draining, frustrating and tedious. It can also be extraordinarily enchanting and a great deal of fun. Such experiences, we propose, need to be recognised and celebrated as integral to the process of geographical research" (Dickens; Edensor, 2022, p. 40). Putting into evidence the unexpected paths of research and situating them as integral parts of the results, as the geographers did, is also one of the potentials of the creative (re)turn.

According to Hawkins (2018), these practices cultivate geographical imaginaries that can both be an exercise for expanding the public impact of science and also a way to expand the methodological repertoire of geographers. Allowing ourselves to express the difficulties of the research and its paths, recurring to artistic forms of expression, or immersing ourselves in pluriverse artworks can create sensible ways to approach the geographical spaces that appear in different ways in many investigative contexts.

One possibility of this process can be glimpsed in an essay by Kelly, Lally, and Nicholson (2023). They situate three reflections on how the arts inform and influence their geographical practices/experimentations with diverse research interests. Nicholson presents how an interdisciplinary creative geovisualization that joins arts and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) can collaborate in the research processes and results; Kelly explains how her feminist creative practice directs teaching-learning dynamics by using drawings to map the war frontier in Syria; and Lally describes the inspirations and logic that guided his project of creating a historical geography of the computational spatialities through cycling events-performances in USA's Silicon Valley.

Another case of interaction with the arts is Berger's (2023) research, in which she

created an installation guided by the aesthetic observation of the water flowing in her residence. Through the work *Oikos*¹, she sought to highlight the intimate spaces of everyday life in art-geographical assemblages on the multiplicities of experiences in and of the Mitta Mitta River water basin in Australia. By employing creative practices to integrate her home, her ancestral roots, and the aquatic spaces, the artist-geographer incorporated (geo)aesthetic languages of materials that positioned the water as an active body over the passive matter assumed by the hegemonic occidental thought.

During COVID-19's confinement, Berger (2023) also created a greater assemblage of works of art in the installation titled *The River Flowing through my Kitchen seen through the Corner of my Mind's Eye*, which was composed of materials found in her home that were mixed with paintings and photographs inspired by the water that supplies homes, alongside what is present in the imaginaries of Australian original peoples. Each work formed a kind of affective assemblage that evoked other places, practices, memories, and bodies combined to give tangibility to the emotional senses of the geographicality of the interaction with the rivers.

Concerning research actions with experimental fieldwork similar to Dickens and Edensor (2022), it is also possible to position the autobiographical reflections on the spatial imaginations and experiences of walking conducted by Ukan and Torres (2022). Their methodology (Ukan; Torres, 2022) centered on walks by the first author, an artist-geographer, during the pandemic in which she lost herself in the city, photographed the sidewalks of the routes and later correlated them with clay objects that she built with the marks left by her feet.

This artistic process of creation collaborated for the construction of a geopoetic perspective about the role of feet in bodily materiality as a process of the spatial dynamics of walking. As they summarize: "Waking is a possibility of transformation and a movement that recognizes space as a sphere of relations and interactions that, though routes, enables encounters: creates trajectories" (Ukan; Torres, 2022, p. 3). The relation between the ground, the walks, and the geographical dynamics incited by the works of art generated in the geoaesthetic contact with clay stresses this creative dimension of urban pathways and places.

Similarly, Boğaç (2019) employed autoethnographic diaries alongside cognitive artistic-geographic maps composed of photographic montages to approach the multiple

¹ Artistic installation composed by tubes in her house that echoes audios with the water soundscapes of the residential plumbing and the washing machine of the artist-geographer.

changes resulting from the conflict in the Republic of Cyprus. Literary and visual works composed by the geographer tell the story of her emotional engagement with the place, emphasizing her puerile experiences in Varosha's neighborhood in the city of Famagusta and her (re)encounter with the *prohibited and uncanny geographies* caused by the interdiction of access to this space. Changes in the landscape are added up with the emotions, affects, and empathic attachments to place described by her geopoetic narrative that allows the readers to immerse themselves in the geographical reality.

Another relevant project is a photographicessay that exposes multiple scenes of misattunement in the ethnogeographical fieldwork conducted by Zhang (2020) during the elaboration of her thesis on the lands of the Ngunnawal, Ngambri, and Ngarigu peoples in Australia. Each short photographic vignette that composes the text demonstrates geopoetically how she felt in the limits of her capacities and multiple situations of inadequacy/discomfort in contact with her research partners before she managed to get attuned to the place. She tells and situates these (dis)encounters in the field and how they collaborated with her reflection on the spatial affects and senses studied.

In the sense of art as a form of university extension, Velasco, Faria, and Walenta (2020) conducted participative research on poisoning and pollution in the East Cesar Chavez neighborhood in Austin/TX, a predominantly black population. Through a (eco)feminist and decolonial proposal, they constructed critical-creative visual materials that collaborated with the engagement of the community in the struggle against this dynamic of environmental racism. To do so, they created zines and comic books that aimed to amplify the outreach towards students of public schools and make the denounce reach a large audience, making them aware of the everyday difficulties of the residents.

The many examples in this section and the previous ones demonstrate the creative return in geography, which concerns a diversity of practices that seek to create art-geographical connections through diverse methodological openings. This plethora of possibilities reinforces Rycroft's (2019) diagnosis of a rising tendency of cultural geographies to engage visual and representational focuses with more visceral and multisensorial research strategies. The (dis)encounters created by these processes involve open, relational, and embodied practices that can hardly be translated into objective academic prose.

Geopoetic and geoaesthetic practices, alongside sensible, autobiographical, imagecentric, or performative narratives seem to get closer to the geographical experiences created by the creative (re)turn. I believe, as Cavancante (2021, p.104), that it is imperative to "(re)discover geographies all around, geographies with more poetry to the conformation of new feelings of the world; poetic geographies, thus, because creativity is insurgent and political by its nature." Transcending the analysis of content or of representations that aim to reduce the reality to one or another dimension, doing geography as an art and performance requires that we evoke insurgences of (dis)enchantment that recognizes other *geo-graphies*.

Despite the potential of this creative (re)turn, I think it is important to emphasize, as Hawkins (2018) and Volvey (2007), that the support for this turn is not universal, be it on the anglophone, francophone or lusophone context. Articles filiated to this tendency are often refused outright by editors who reply that the journal only accepts papers on Geography or by referees that question the objectivity of the analysis face the "serious work" of science.

At the same time, the plethora of research indicated here demonstrates that there are fissures that can be expanded. The rising crop of geopoetic styles of creative geographies have been reaching new spaces, and if they bother some researchers, maybe it is a sign that we are on the right path towards creating insurgencies. Faced with the challenges of a science that partly maintains itself in a (neo)positivistic approach, the performative and affective practices influenced by the arts are imperative to uncloud their complacent and/or resigned gaze.

Given that the historical place of cultural geographies has been one of expanding the borders and breaches of geographical doing, demonstrating that there is no "ready-made" formula for this science, I have confidence that the creative (re)turn can collaborate in this undertaking. The plurality of approaches exemplified in this essay is evidence that creative practice can help us to struggle against reductionism and to understand the pluriverse of meanings intrinsic to the *geo-graphies* experienced in diverse contexts.

Building other analytic horizons centered on collective, creative, and poetic creations influenced by insurgent aesthetics that involve autobiography, (geo)literary narratives, photographic vignettes, artistic visualities, bodily performances, and multiple other expressions can collaborate to immerse in the existential sense of geographical reality. Not losing sight of the sensitive, affective, and embodied nature of geographicality requires that cultural geographers be open to these geoaesthetic and geopoetic experimentations.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The contact zones between Geography and Art can be fertile paths toward the

cross-pollination of ideas, practices, and doings that surpass disciplinary barriers. Creative geographies present a plethora of opportunities to create contexts that interweave affect, intersubjectivity, and intercorporeality, emphasizing the (in)visible, (in)tangible, and (un)sayable dimensions of geographical realities expressed by/in the arts.

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Geopoetical writing, geoaesthetic investigation, or imaginative practices have the potential to reanimate the field of cultural geographies towards varied perspectives on places, landscapes, regions, and territories. The performative focuses of creative geographies exemplified in this essay attest to the potential of trajectories that can enable transgressions of hegemonic scientific discourse to involve and transcend a simply representational gaze.

More than making the creative (re)turn in Geography an expansion of the thematic scope of studies in the Geography of Art, we have to situate it as a call to pluralize the practices of cultural geographers as a whole. The assemblages of practices shown by the contemporary research in this field provide an important incitation to continue contributing with insurgences of new arts of doing geography infused with creativity and interdisciplinarity.

It is all about practicing the arts of geography to seed new (im)possible worlds beyond the capacities of the languages that many geographers are used to. Immersing oneself in the assemblages of creative practices is an opportunity to open geographical science to new transformative imaginaries that expand the breaches that are imposed onto us and are able to stand up to the instrumental logics of objectivity and measurability that still haunt this field of knowledge.

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