

I must refer to the search of a perfect language when looking at the work of Rosana Ricalde. This research occupied grammarians and linguistics at least until the dawn of the XIX century, when the project of a *Língua Internacional Auxiliar* (*International Auxiliary Language*) gains strength for reflecting the inevitable phenomenon of globalization in a more pragmatic way, which insinuated itself since that time (Eco, 2001)¹. However, before going into this subject, I would firstly like to summarily establish a conceptual difference between form and image which will be useful to us in order to find a view point about the poetics of the artist.

I understand by form the structure which allows an image to configure itself in an area (and whilst an area), whether it be real (paper surface, screen or the environment), virtual (digital matrix) or simply mental (our interior or subjective dimensionless spaces); for image, the projection of an object (real or ideal) over any rampart, whether it is, in this way, material, virtual or just a project of our minds. It becomes evident that every image, in order to initiate itself, must assume the form, and in revenge, every form reveals an image. Since now, form and image are inseparable whilst they constitute the same instance of contents.

It is a notable fact that the source of inspiration of the artist has been almost always books – and more particularly the text which they contain. For this reason, in a great part of the works of Rosana, one can notice a passage of literary form to visual form. Appropriating herself of poetic or theoretical texts, the artist destroys their grammatical structure in order to transform it into another, mainly visual. With effect, one can also notice certain intentional crossings between poetic and visual image. The word or the segment of phrases which still persist gain new context in a new architecture, in a new sense, now epidermis. It seems to me that form and image are in a direct connection with the idea in the surface where the sign emerges.

It is in this way, for example in “The Voyages of Marco Polo”, where the artist, appropriating herself of the text of the Venetian navigator, extracts from it the printed lines in order to tangle them in innumerable imaginary routes. From the most imponderable wishes of this adventurer there seems to emerge aleatoric forms which enable us to see the insane picture of his search. This procedure can be observed in the same manner in the piece “The Cities and the Wish” inspired by the tales of Ítalo Calvino in the book *Invisible Cities*. In this case, Rosana takes the words from it and places them along the streets which are shown in the urban maps of various cities. An intersection of disconnected words are born, which compose an urban map. Couldn’t this work stand for a possible metaphor of our day-to-day adversities? Of the city as a place of disappointment and at the same time of fortunate encounters? In “The Order of Things” (*A Palavra e as Coisas*), created from the homonymous text by Michel Foucault, the operation is similar. The text in itself being a complex plot of meanings, is cut in stripes, folded and locked by the artist, structuring small cubes. Now, before affirming the word like a thing, the artist, in the most frank manner, seems to want to approximate the sign of the thing, coinciding the object she creates with the mental representation which it generates. In this case the idea is not separated from the act which rectifies it: locking, folding and cubing.

This intention seems clearer to me when I look to the “Seas” series, or to “I Persist”. Even though maintaining the same passage of literary form to the visual and the same crossing between legible image and the visible one, already observed in former works, the artist apprehends a slight displacement in procedure. In “Seas”, for example, picking up their names from the global planisphere, she rewrites them in a very capricious manner over large surfaces, sometimes discontinuous, in rice paper. The observed attitude is that of giving and abandonment. Everything occurs as, in a state of profound concentration, her body was subtly taken by an instance autonomy which makes it reencounter the frankness of nature. Conducted by the flux of natural events, her body can let go, and in this way set aside its individuality, all the particularity which singularizes it in order to join a sort of total consciousness. In this state, Rosana allows her mind to decide, in an almost involuntary form, the route that her hand will take to configure the sea that she is searching for. Sliding over the surface of the paper, her hand allows itself to be sweetly taken by the idea which there engraves her furrows. One can observe the same posture of abandonment in “I Persist” (“Persisto”), where the artist writes this word repetitively until the limit of exhaustion, stopping only when the lead of the pencil finishes. The hand of the artist, acting as an extension of her mind, the drawing will firstly be a mark, real traces of idea on paper. Body and spirit seem to me, in these works, to have finally been given their integrity.

To Rosana, the written word is first of all calligraphy instead of sign, its meaning resides more on the epidermis than on the convention of the sign. It is not by chance that works of the artist have constant resource to the calligramme, poetic artifice related to the ideogram because, like him, refers to ideas and concepts. However, contrary to this last one, the calligramme escapes every linguistic contract in order to affirm itself in the view that it constructs. It is above all in this sense that the works of Rosana make me report to certain aspects of the research of the perfect language.

¹ A certain language was thought to serve as an intermediary between the different languages spoken by different people. Several projects for auxiliary languages were proposed, amongst them the most well known is Esperanto.

² *A busca da língua perfeita*. Bauru: EDUSC.

This is not, in any way, the language which everyone could speak and comprehend, but the one which would reflect in its substance the essence of the own thing which it designates, says or conceptualizes (Eco, 2001)³. In this case, it would be the language whose forms and images would be in perfect connection with the ideas which it expresses. Where the perfect language would also be capable of eliminating all types of irregularities that the imperfect languages bring in their structure, for example: these that are circumscribed by the idiom and therefore, inscribed in a singular culture. The perfect language would aspire universality without proposing to be a universal language, but first of all the language of total conscious. Amongst the perfect languages, a soundless language is proposed, though purely visual. The belief in a perfect language of images is rooted in the conviction that the image, being itself a carrier of the qualities of that which it represents, would extrapolate in its meaning all cultural circumstances. The fact is, as observes Eco³, the visual language can express several meanings at the same time and in this sense it encounters its limit, because it would be ambiguous and imperfect as a code.

If we could, in contrary, think of the visual sign not as a code or a language, but firstly for its epidermis instance, we would see that its own view (form + image) would be its perfect concept, for being unsociable to its aesthetic idea. Therefore, in the place of a perfect language we would have the total sign. Before meaning it makes us see above all and primarily, its qualities. When I look at the work of Rosana Ricalde, this is how I see it: exteriorized over the surface which supports it, it is for me pure appearance, the own consciousness of its view which, emerging over the same surface makes the image. Before the total sign, I cannot help but be surprised by its beauty, showing the truth of a form of total conscious beyond all meaning. Its sense is aesthetic.

3 *Idem* (p. 215-216)