

# THE TERRITORY AND THE MAP

By Joao Motta

On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month X, Atahualpa, inspired by a dream, called the Scribe and instructed him to draw a map of the Empire.

The Scribe sent messengers to the different governors of the provinces, asking them to represent and describe their territories. The governors felt overwhelmed by this task. They asked themselves: how can one represent the mountains, the yellow of the corn, the beauty of our women?

They then sent to the Emperor the most dazzling plumes, the clearest of crystals and the most beautiful dancers of each province, hoping thus to please him and to divert his attention. They nevertheless asked the astronomers to climb

to the top of their observatories and beg the stars - for only they would be able to see the territory - to reveal to them the color and the form in which they should represent each province on the map of the Empire.

But the fortune-tellers warned that by drawing a map one would imprison the soul of the people. Even though the Emperor identifies himself with that soul and it is his duty to protect it, by trying to gain control over it, he would commit a desecration which would be disastrous for the Empire. Some fortune-tellers even hinted that the first person to look at that map would be punished by the gods with a stroke of lightning and would become blind.

This led to insurgency among the tribes who expressed their refusal to be represented on the map by roaming from province to province. Strange rainstorms fell on the desert, and at the same time lack of rain turned the gardens of the governors into barren deserts.

Later there was a rumor that some shamans had said that the taking of exact measurements would harm the quality of the vital fluids of the soil and would be an insult to the spirits that reign over it.

The sources of sacred water began to dry. Serpents attacked the priests in the temples, and there were people who saw flashes of light coming out of the pyramids.

The Emperor's cousin, Analog, secretly convened the wise men of the Empire. They declared: "We have always lived in the immemorial time of our ancestors. We wake up every morning and thus help the sun to rise. During the day we accompany it on its path along the celestial pyramid, until the moment when, at last, it is eaten by the ocean serpent.

The making of a map which will reveal the existence of things which the eye cannot see up to the horizon will lead us to a fall in Time .The time needed

for the Emperor to conquer more space, the time necessary for man to imagine what is not related to his daily life.

"If, through the map," the wise men reasoned, "we know of the precise existence of other spaces, then we shall begin to calculate beforehand the time which we will need to get there. We will thus create a future, made up of moments which we will want to model and color before their time arrives. This will collide with what life in its great wisdom, had prepared for us, and with the precise way in which we would act in such moments. By letting loose that future we would start to see our desires running forward towards it. We would then lose our ability to live peacefully in the moment. And each moment that we do not live fully brings us closer to death.

Our people live outside of time in a realm where we weave the ties which are instantaneously responsible for events. Yet, with such a map we shall become impatient wanting time to bow to our desires. For the space newly added by the map will claim added time from us causing our time to contract and increasing our desires to have more.

On the other hand, when wishing, according to the Emperor's desires, to widen and expand indefinitely the frontiers of the Empire, we shall end up forcing the walls of Space and falling into the abyss of the primeval waters which surround our Earth.

Everything in the Universe is in equilibrium. If we alter it, even a little bit, we will provoke a perpetual combat between the Masters of Time and the Masters of Space."

A Shaman from the mountains added fervently:

"In the life of our people, we never search where to go; we are always where we are supposed to be. The Earth stretches in front of us, and our feet find their path over reality. Just as the journey of men is discovered as they walk, so the voyage of the shaman needs no maps. Because for us, the horizon, when gazed upon

with intention, opens like a door. Yet, with this map, the acts of men would cease to be directed by that unchanging order of reality and would rather be inspired by revolt and by the desire to alter that which is. The world belongs to the God that created it. Only He knows his own map. Anyone who tries to copy it will surely be struck by lightning from the top of the pyramid."

Analog, strengthened by these prophecies, defied Atahualpa, and entire provinces came to show him their allegiance.

Despite this, Atahualpa, advised by extremists, was considering that even the names of the tribes, the cities and the populations should be inscribed on the map.

Hearing of this, the governors became frightened, for they knew that through the science of names, practiced by the court priests, the Emperor could get to them from afar, manipulate them or even destroy them. They sought the counsel of the village magicians. These confirmed their fears by saying that "If those words were inscribed on the map that would be fatal for the relative freedom of the provinces. The Emperor could later change the names of the provinces and cities, which would lead to changes in the nature of our peoples. He could displace us to distant regions of the empire, or hinder our movements through the construction of invisible walls around our provinces. He could even imagine, create and appoint new provinces in detriment of the existing ones."

In Cuzco-Tenochtitlan cracks appeared in the walls of the imperial palace. Some courtiers maintained that the Emperor's sovereignty lacked a map which would prove the extension and the dominion of his territory. Others, opposing them, claimed that if such a map fell into the hands of enemies, the Empire would run into great danger.

Strong earthquakes shook different parts of the territory. The Magicians saw this as the Earth speaking its revolt against the idea of being mapped, as though

it would be strapped and contained in a straightjacket used to imprison captive enemies.

The Emperor, was then compelled to call a meeting of the Council of Jaguar-men and Eagle-men. These took time, not to reach agreement, but to discern the exact expression of the message whose meaning would be unmistakable to Atahualpa.

First spoke Om-Tasak, Friend of the Emperor, and the one who accompanied him in ceremonies, second master of words, guardian of books: "We are men who became Jaguar-Men and Eagle-Men. The jaguar is the fastest animal and the one who best feels his instincts. Its intuition is incredible as it understands and surpasses the thoughts of men. The eagle is the animal which flies closest to the sun, and only the eagle dares to stare at the sun without burning its eyes. The Great Eagle holds the Earth in its claws; it feeds on the essence of the heart of each man, and its wings beat the shadows of the worlds. Through jaguar and eagle we know the world, horizontal and vertical.

On this world as human beings go through their day, their time rests on the space in which they dwell and they know the happiness which life can offer them. In the world of the Nahuatl Shamans dwell outside time, and space does not limit us. For we can move through the worlds in a lightning flash faster than the jaguar or the eagle. In that realm where time stops, space appears unlimited.

But through a map that would reduce the territory, the matter of the Universe would implode. The heavens would be full of black holes which would absorb the light of our sun and our stars.

Without the light, a time would then come when the observatory towers would turn against their function. They would be built to mount and conquer the heavens, and the gods would punish men by taking away the power from the word. The words would then lose the ability to create, they would become sterile.

It is through words that we give order and guidance to the world. If words could be maintained only to describe what already exists, prayers would cease to attract the kindness of the gods; the temples would no longer be consecrated; the name given to each one would cease to correspond to the essence of his soul; the animals would rebel and the mountains would hide from us their paths.

Words would no longer be linked to the inner feeling and intuition. With words devoid of life, men could begin to deceive each other and little by little, other names would be added to that which had already been given to each being and each thing. We would thus cease to speak one sole language. We would cease to be brothers. All order would be reversed."

Then spoke Lak Lagun, an ageless Jaguar-man ,who kindled a fire in the beginning of each year in the temple of the goddess of the Southern clouds, who was said to be the keeper of the Book of Dreams :

"Reality transcends the territory we try to comprehend. All the higher heavens, all the hells which are below us, cannot be represented in maps. If one wishes to reduce reality to the territory and the territory to the map, soon men will only believe in maps and their descendants will use cards to predict the future and to dominate Time. Yet our sacred quest flows outside time, and we know that ultimate reality cannot be named. Space is immense, infinite but we do not fear it. It was revealed to us by the gods so that we might know it, infuse it, and finally transform it into light.

Time is slavery and will bring about our destruction. Because there are others more advanced in time and they will enter through that gap.

Our sacred book which no one ever dared put into writing – the Wallam Ollum – tells us that other beings coming from Space, from beyond the seas, people of the map inscribed under the sign of the cross, will crucify us in the exact point where Time collides with Space."

After a silence, Silim-Tuhar spoke, a poet whose chants and flowers enthralled the court. He used red and black to make living paintings, and it was known that he spoke with animals. While he was speaking, the council's room was filled with a presence and the walls seemed to dissolve.

"Through the rituals, our people live, now and forever, in the eternal time of our ancestors. With them we recreate the World. In the time of the first creation, they gave form to the landscape. All that which surrounds us is a memory which they left us. All their tears have become lakes. When they ran, they opened a path for the riverbeds and to rest they created the mountains, upon which they sat.

With love and patience they caught the rocks that flew through space and they gave them a safe place here on Earth. Cutting a piece of the sun they distributed a few colors, so that we could remember their joy. And it was the sun of their hair, which suddenly gave color to our corn.

Dressed in clouds, they hid their dolls in precise locations, and these became our idols. Our rains are the drops from their baths, and when the Earth shakes it is them playing ball."

At last spoke Taruman, one of the four princes, a man with vast knowledge who said he no longer had a name:

"When looking at this map, the Emperor will see in it what he wishes and whatever surfaces in his spirit. In order to make space greater through the use of time, the map, like a magic mirror, will tell him things which no longer exist or will advise him to change reality. The Emperor may even elaborate purely imaginary maps, thus losing interest in the governing of the known. He will isolate himself from his country, no longer being in this world, and will look at it from the outside. He will thus cease to be in touch with the symbols which the gods have left us and which, like him, still link us to the other parts and levels of reality and to our essence in the Whole.

Through the exclusion of that which is unknown, the map will introduce denial of what surrounds our borders. War will thus become inevitable against those not inscribed in it.

Like the rivers and paths through which life flows in our land, our nerves assure already the happy functioning of our body and its movements in space. To fix and paralyze the rivers and the paths on a map would hinder the functions of our nerves. Thus numbed to feeling, the body would begin to wither, as the nerves would start feeding the fantasies of the mind. As the mind would become stronger, it would posit itself as the center. A point not satisfied any more by the task of recognizing and giving names to what surrounds us, but which would demand that everything should be brought to it for decision. Tranquility would be lost as our feelings and organs would become ruled by impulses from that new center. Each man would slide into a belief that he is the property of himself. From this false belief the solidarity of our people would be destroyed, the communion with the ancestors would stop and the gods would suspend their protection."

Atahualpa, distressed, summoned a meeting of the seven governors of the provinces. In the open court of the Palace, each one built a small magical garden. They used sand and earth, bushes and amulets, leaves and small statues, pieces of metal, rocks, crystals, flowers, clay and wooden objects, which they placed according to how they felt.

Through sounding the Earth, the oldest of the Snake-women, silent until this summit of governors, indicated one of the gardens as being the closest representation of the territory in case the map was ever drawn. It had been made by the governor of Sonora and represented a desert, a treeless land, where the animals would feel lost. In such a place, men and women would err with no direction in an eternal search for meaning. It would be the "waste land," for there would be no fertility; the amethyst would cease to be able to magically activate the jade and to be fertilized by it, and this would take away the life from the soil's emanations. The Emperor, himself, would lose his lucidity, the women would cease to bear children, and the race would extinguish itself."



At this time. Atahualpa threw his ring into the fire. Bringing his left hand towards his heart, he raised his right arm to the sun and proclaimed to all:

"The map shall not be drawn! But the spirit of this map, which we have invoked, is already on its way! Now it is important that we fulfill the prophecies. I, Atahualpa, saw that a day is drawing near in which an Empire more vast and powerful than ours will reduce us into slavery. Alas, it is too late for us to enter on our own into the kingdom of Time.

The ropes of the bridge which links Heaven and Earth have already been cut! The four directions have refused to intervene! Surrounded and trespassed, the center has just given way!

But with the arrival of those beings, who believe they dominate Time, but in fact suffer it, our form of life will end. The Sun our father will abandon us and we will then be made to moan in the shadows, seeing our soul being raped and our people made inferior and destroyed. And the new rulers will draw the map of the Empire and thereby concentrate their power.

We enter now into the time of sacrifice. It is through sacrifices that we make sacred what was not. We sacrifice what matters the least to us in order to achieve the highest good. Our lives and our bodies will thus suffer, but from them a new breath will one day free itself and nothing will be able to stop its expansion. The breathing of all those who through time have been sacrificed by war and famine will then become fire. And that fire running across the Earth, like an immense dream of love, will fire with surprise the slumbering heart of all men.

Through the destruction of the center, its essence will be scattered and will find an invisible residence in each one of you. Hence will future generations arise who will retain within a living memory of our Empire. These will become seeds of a universal Empire, where the Emperor will be like a diamond, through which each one, according to his facet, may instantly see a clear answer, traverse the fog of his fears and transcend his illusions.

But with the arrival of those beings, who believe they dominate Time, but in fact suffer it, our form of life will end. The Sun our father will abandon us and we will then be made to moan in the shadows, seeing our soul being raped and our people made inferior and destroyed. And it will be them who will draw the map of the Empire and thereby concentrate their power.

As the world we dwell in will cease to be supported, we shall witness the destruction of our cities and the collapse of our houses. With the disorder of the winds, we will see the spread of unknown diseases. We will be subjected to a life dominated by gold, the god to which they daily sacrifice.

Later, the time will come when the Earth, our Mother, will be disrespected and trampled upon, the forests destroyed, the seasons altered. The air will become black and thick, and the water poisoned. An impure and viscous liquid will be forcibly extracted from the Earth, burned and used to sustain the lives of men, and even the sea, which surrounds us, will one day be ablaze with flames.

And, in spite of all this, I saw too in the distant horizon the day of our liberation. Our descendants, Analog, shall rediscover with infinite humility the secret relations which link all beings of the Universe. They too shall feel again that this land of ours is magic and awaits only the fullness of being to reveal its treasure. While linking those elements of the Universe to the emanations from the magic of the Earth, an irresistible force shall arise. Its exact and pondered use will allow the great soul of our people to free itself from the forms alien to it. And having thus re-encountered the secret of its soul, our people shall become the first destroyers of the wicked structures, spread over the Earth.

People will then free themselves from the false map of the world, based on the accumulation of gold, the obligation of daily work and the dependence on utensils. They will be freed from a life lived dominated by a heavy and continuous form of thinking. Gold will emerge as a powerful force, but one which burns the souls of those who hoard it, preventing it from flowing in the right direction. The tools of our world, imbued with meaning once again, will thank us for returning them to their original nature and function thus entering their own paradise. Once again we will see through the veil of the illusion of wanting to own this Earth. For the

Earth gives herself to those who worship her, and like all else in this world, is a loan from the gods to those who give it its best use.

And when men so wish, another time will come when by opening completely to the current of life, humans will finally become themselves and thus change the world.

After the day of the most tearing initiation of matter, when the great mushroom gets angry and twice irradiates its warning exploding in a thousand somber colors, new generations will be born. In that time, neither races, gods, gold or language will have the power to divide them again.

Then it is, that we shall begin to free ourselves from the reign of Time. In those days we shall begin to overcome the line of time, the attachment to a time constantly projected forwards. We shall begin to live in real time, where all events of the daily life of each man are connected with each other, where there are no dead moments or pauses and everything makes sense.

Tearing up old maps, one will understand again that everything in a man's life is sacred, that if his labor is not the fruit of love, all other parts of his life will be affected. It will also become clear that any order received without inner agreement distances him from his real nature and prevents him from getting closer to the gods.

We shall see, with surprise, that the body, when freed, is also wind and fire. Beyond the frames that mark the territory, we shall see how unlimited is the canvas on which every one paints, sublime, his own mirage. For each sound we make echoes in the higher octaves. For each action we take creates a distant world. For every opportunity we seize, frees a faraway dormant force.

We shall feel that maps cannot force the gates of the divine, that thought cannot understand the unspeakable territory. We shall see that only poetry,

# POST SCRIPTUM

The map, which Atahualpa envisioned, was the Universe. He turned backwards and said, "That God which hides itself beyond the sphere"  
And the craftsmen included it too.

His movements men already called constellations.

He saw within himself many little red lights, which they called suns.

He felt each man was a god, and that god felt itself within each one.

Allowing duality to be the scenario,

He made the Milky Way dance from the right hand to the left foot.

And he used it like a form across the Universe through wavy planes.

And when it became wings, he embraced other Universes.

On arriving at the center, he integrated the small galaxy, which was blocking the wheel of destiny.

He blew... and the Universe glowed once again.

Coming down to Earth, his foot carelessly crushed a mountain.

He saw the ranges spreading and, far away, the ocean drew near and opened itself in front of him.

He pointed his people a way out.

He felt the wings of the eagle become arms.

Human, in his cells he kept the memory of the constellations.

But without God, what would become of him?

He left the roles to the moment's chance: god, man, star...

The Universe was shining and no memory remained.

music and dance can glimpse it and only the tranquil attention of silence can unexpectedly receive it.

We shall come to understand that the map is not the territory. For the maps that society imposes, only mention what is known and only refer to trodden roads. While beauty is wild and free. and truth is a land without paths or meanders.

Having understood that maps hide the territory and are no more than signs which lose us, we shall finally see that we ourselves are the path and all routes are just a form which our desires use to cover themselves.

Men will be able to free themselves from destiny, to which they were forever unknowingly tied. Released from the maps of the heavens, which still rule the lives of those for whom the heavens are not within them, they will feel that the first and only freedom is that of becoming themselves . This will be the beginning of their entry into the divine territory of total freedom .

Then, an irrepressible feeling will sweep through like a wave, erasing the last barriers which separate men. Our territories, the whole Earth, will become vibrant and free. We shall once again commune with our brothers and sisters, the animals, the plants, the rocks, the waters and the stars. For we shall finally know that, in spite of appearances, we are ourselves the territory."