

Time, meaning, and crossing: Thoughts on the rhythms of experience

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationships between time and meaning as ways of inhabiting the world and being affected by it. From a phenomenological, decolonial, and critical perspective, it proposes an understanding of time beyond linear chronology and of meaning beyond the logic of direction and command. In dialogue with Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Rancière, Arendt, Isabelle Stengers, Rudolf Steiner, Ailton Krenak, and authors from Southern epistemologies, it argues that time and meaning are embodied dimensions of experience, inseparable from the body, the landscape, and the territory. The article explores the notion of crossing as a connecting category between temporality and sensitivity, highlighting the role of rhythm, memory, listening, and presence in producing plural ways of existing. It also discusses the political education of the senses as a practice of ethical, aesthetic, and political formation capable of resisting instrumental rationality, the acceleration of time, and the colonization of ways of feeling. By advocating for the right to the incompressible and recognizing the centrality of the sensible in the constitution of the common, the text proposes a reflection on experience as a field of openness, creation, and transformation, contributing to contemporary debates about landscape, education, politics, and embodiment.

RESUMO

Este artigo investiga as relações entre tempo e sentido como formas de habitar o mundo e de ser afetado por ele. Partindo de uma perspectiva fenomenológica, decolonial e crítica, propõe uma compreensão do tempo para além da cronologia linear e do sentido para além da lógica da direção e do comando. Em diálogo com Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Rancière, Arendt, Isabelle Stengers, Rudolf Steiner, Ailton Krenak e autores das epistemologias do Sul, argumenta-se que tempo e sentido constituem dimensões encarnadas da experiência, inseparáveis do corpo, da paisagem e do território. O artigo explora a noção de travessia como categoria articuladora entre temporalidade e sensibilidade, destacando o papel do ritmo, da memória, da escuta e da presença na produção de modos plurais de existir. Discute ainda a educação política dos sentidos como prática de formação ética, estética e política capaz de resistir à racionalidade instrumental, à aceleração do tempo e à colonização das formas de sentir. Ao reivindicar o direito ao incompressível e ao reconhecer a centralidade do sensível na constituição do comum, o texto propõe uma reflexão sobre a experiência como campo de abertura, criação e transformação, contribuindo para os debates contemporâneos sobre paisagem, educação, política e corporeidade.

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Introduction

Time and meaning are not fixed or universal categories, nor are they just tools for organizing events or producing meanings. On the contrary, they are ways we inhabit the world and ways the world flows through us. Time and meaning don't present themselves to reason as ready-made concepts: They reveal themselves as movement, affect, rhythm, and crossing. It's in this field of forces, where the body feels and the world resonates, that this article is situated.

The idea is to break away from the notion of time as a continuous, chronological, uniform line. The time we care about is the one that pulses in the body, that gets marked in memory, that hesitates before speaking, that stretches out in waiting, that speeds up in the urgencies of a territory. It's lived time, the time of in-between, the time that becomes flesh, as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty suggest, but also as echoed in Afro-indigenous worldviews that don't separate time from the ground, blood, and the dead.

In turn, the concept of meaning will be addressed here in its plurality. It's not just about a direction (like in military, technocratic, or bureaucratic logics), but about an openness to the world: Meaning as feeling, as affectation, as shared experience. Rancière reminds us that politics is, above all, a dispute over what can be seen, said, and felt, a sharing of the sensible. In this sense, meaning is less about order and more about tension, displacement, insubordination. Meaning as wandering, not as a destination; as a crossing, not as an arrival.

The political education of the senses, a concept we will develop further ahead, depends on how we understand this time-sense connection. Just as the landscape is not a backdrop, but an experience, time and sense are not theoretical frameworks either, but ways to go through and be affected by. Steiner, when proposing the existence of twelve senses¹, already sensed that the world only fully reveals itself to those who cultivate multiple and non-instrumental ways of perceiving. Stengers, in turn, warns us about the dangers of a science obsessed with efficiency, which drains the transformative power of feeling.

That's why it's necessary to reconfigure the very conceptual ground. Instead of basing analysis on purely epistemological categories, we propose a return to the body and the landscape, to time and gesture, to feeling and rhythm. Thinking of time and meaning as living concepts is claiming the right to an embodied, insurgent, and situated philosophy. This is the path we're moving forward on.

¹The proposal of the twelve senses, developed by Rudolf Steiner in the context of anthroposophical pedagogy, expands the classic concept of perception by including bodily and social senses, organized into three groups. The most systematic formulation appears in "Healing Pedagogy Course" (*Curso de Pedagogia Curativa*) (1924). See: STEINER, Rudolf. *Curso de pedagogia curativa*. 3. ed. São Paulo: Antroposófica, 2008.

Time as an embodied experience

Time is not something outside of us. It doesn't run beside us, nor does it pass by like an indifferent river. Time is a condition of dwelling, of appearing, and of being affected. When we breathe, hesitate, grow old, or fall silent, we are living time as an embodied experience. The time of experience isn't measured, but experienced, it's not something you count, but something you feel.

In "Being and Time," Heidegger warns us: Time is not a neutral container where things just happen. It is constitutive of the being that we are, of Dasein as projected existence, thrown between past, present, and future as modes of possibility. Time, in this sense, is not a sequence, but an openness: Openness to the world, to death, to others. "The being of the entity that we are is being-in-time" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 61).

Merleau-Ponty radicalizes this understanding by stating that time is not in front of the subject, but in the body. The time of the lived is the time of the body that walks, of the gesture that lingers, of the gaze that is lost. "Time is not an object of our knowledge: It is the medium in which we become" (Merleau-Ponty, 1999, p. 432). The body, when moving in the world, does not only occupy a space: It inaugurates a time. Therefore, there is no temporal experience without flesh, without ground, without relationship.

This embodied dimension of time finds a deep resonance in Afro-Indigenous worldviews, in which time is not linear, but spiral. Ailton Krenak insists: "We don't want a timeline, but a body of time" (Krenak, 2019, p. 38), where the dead and the not-yet-born walk alongside the living, and where the past doesn't close off, but takes root. Ancestry is not what has been left behind, but what continues to pulse. In this conception, time is also territory: time of the waters, time of the seeds, time of song, time of listening.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos, in dialogue with these cosmologies, proposes the notion of southern epistemologies, stemming from a plural, insurgent time that challenges the monochrome nature of Western modernity. It's the time of justice, of reparation, of incompleteness, a time that refuses to rush or submit to efficiency, and that embraces pauses and detours as legitimate ways of existing (Santos & Meneses, 2010).

At this point, it becomes possible to bring Octavio Ianni and Edward Said closer together, who, although coming from different critical traditions, also denounce the colonial production of time, time as progress, as compulsory modernization, as erasure of local temporalities. Ianni, when discussing globalization, shows how the global time of capital imposes itself like a kind of blind religion (Ianni, 1996). Said, in turn, in *Culture and Imperialism*, shows how the modern historical narrative is built on the systematic exclusion of other times and voices (Said, 2003).

There is, therefore, an ongoing struggle: Between the time of experience and the time of order, between the time that pulses and the time that commands. The time of childhood, for example, rarely matches the time of institutions. It bends, repeats, escapes, it requires a

different way of listening. The same goes for the time of the landscape: It doesn't reveal itself in a rushed glance, but gradually, in layers, as you move through it. The time of territory is not the time of the city, nor the time of the market: It's the time of crossing.

Thinking of time as an embodied experience is, therefore, a political act. It's about refusing to be tamed and making room for other ways of life. It's about decolonizing the clock, bringing back gesture, and cultivating silence. As Isabelle Stengers suggests, it's about suspending the demand for efficiency and making room for the power of slow time, dense time, fertile time, the kind that allows something to happen, not because it was planned, but because it had time to be (Stengers, 2015, p. 48).

Felt as crossing and sensitivity

The word "meaning" carries within it a semantic tension that reveals its complexity. As a noun, it points to a path, a horizon. As a verb, it refers to the act of feeling: Meaning as a journey, as something that is experienced and transformed, without a guaranteed destination. The problem arises when one of these dimensions, the one of a single path, becomes imperative at the expense of the others, turning meaning into command and feeling into obedience.

Sense, therefore, cannot be treated only as a sensory experience, but also as a synthesis of the process/project pair. Thinking of politics as a prosaic, everyday exercise is to reject its epic or lyrical definitions. It's necessary that body, prose, and territory, arguments from each side, possibilities of dissent, diversity of actors, and effective and emotional openness to this complex of variables that affect us not just through words, unfold the notion of sense: As a verb and as a noun, as a sensory experience and as a possible path. Never as an interjection.

Modern thought, heir to instrumental reason, has often reduced meaning to the logic of order: Meaning as a vector, as discipline, as a straight line. This rationality shows up both in bureaucracy and in symbolic violence, turning what is sensible into a path to be tamed. In this context, "making sense" becomes synonymous with "imposing direction."

Against this domestication, Jacques Rancière proposes a shift: Meaning is what is shared in common, what can be felt in different, even conflicting ways. Politics, he says, is the emergence of a shared sensibility that challenges the hierarchical distribution of places and voices (Rancière, 2005). What's at stake, then, isn't just what is seen or said, but what is felt, and who can feel what.

Hannah Arendt, when thinking about politics as a space of appearance, emphasizes this sensitive dimension of the common: The world becomes public when it becomes visible, when it appears to someone, when it is exposed to the sensible judgment of others (Arendt, 2001). In this case, meaning is not prior to the world, but arises from plurality, from the coexistence of different perspectives and experiences. Arendt and Rancière converge, each in their own way, in rejecting the unification of the sensible under a single regime of interpretation.

When we think about political education of the senses as a concept and perspective, we see this plurality as a pedagogical axis. It's about training not only reason but also attention, listening, and openness. Education of the senses, in this approach, is an exercise in both delicacy and defiance: Delicacy to notice what escapes discourse; defiance to not accept that the sensible world is colonized by a single way of seeing and feeling. Educating the senses is, therefore, a way of contesting the world.

This kind of education is only possible if we acknowledge the complexity of feeling. Let's mention an author who is less frequent in academic approaches, but who offers us an additional perspective. Rudolf Steiner, by proposing twelve human senses, expands the perceptual field beyond sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. He also proposes the senses of balance, temperature (heat), life (inner state of the body), self-movement, language, others' thought, and the individuality of the other (Steiner, 2008). These senses do not operate in isolation but in a network, showing that experience is always intercorporeal, situated, and permeated by an ethics of perception. For Steiner, educating the senses is about expanding the capacity for presence and connection with the world, not just decoding stimuli. His thinking resonates especially with the idea of education as cultivating attention, listening, and empathy.

For Steiner, the senses are organized into three main groups: Bodily senses or senses of the embodied self; senses of the external world; and social senses or senses of the self in relation to others. In the first group, we find the sense of touch, which gives us the experience of boundaries and physical presence; the life sense, which offers us an internal perception of vitality, pain, hunger, or well-being; the sense of self-movement, which lets us know where and how we are moving; and the sense of balance, which guides our position in space and gives us support. These seemingly basic senses are fundamental for the notion of time and navigating the world: Without balance, without movement, without the feeling of being alive, the body cannot occupy the world or take part in its flow.

In the second group, the senses focused on the outside world, are smell, taste, sight, and hearing. Although familiar, they are not limited to their biological function: For Steiner, each of them carries a moral and aesthetic quality. Taste and smell, for example, connect us directly with the world as a sensitive internal experience; meanwhile, sight and hearing open relational windows that not only inform us about the world but put us in communion with it. Finally, the higher senses, of language, of other people's thoughts, of another's individuality, and of warmth, relate to the ability to perceive the other as a living presence, not reducible to an image or speech. The sense of warmth, in this context, is not just physical but soulful: perceiving the other with affection, openness, and warmth of the soul. These senses are the ones that most explicitly touch on the political and educational dimensions of feeling: They require time, attention, listening, presence, and that's why nurturing them is also a way of pushing back against the logic of hurry and efficiency.

By making this set of twelve ways of perceiving and relating to the world visible, Steiner offers not just an expansion of the senses, but an ethics of feeling. He invites us to move beyond the impoverished view of sensoriality as an instrument or passive channel of reception, and to understand the senses as practices of the world. In line with Stengers and Merleau-Ponty, this approach points to perception as an involved gesture, as a way of being in the world and being affected by it. So educating the senses isn't about training to see better or hear more sharply, but about feeling more deeply and broadly, cultivating a field of presence where the crossing between bodies, times, and territories can happen with respect, otherness, and radical attention.

Merleau-Ponty reminds us that feeling is not just about registering stimuli, but about inhabiting the world with our bodies. Meaning emerges in the intertwining of perception and gesture, of affection and action. "Perception is always already inhabited by meaning," and this meaning is not something to grasp, but to live (Merleau-Ponty, 1999, p. 250). In this context, the body is not a neutral support for consciousness, but the very condition of experience. Feeling is, therefore, an ontological act: the body is not the bearer of meaning, it is meaning. The phenomenology of perception allows us to understand the sensible as a radical openness to the other, to time, to space, and to events.

Isabelle Stengers, in turn, calls on us to resist the "barbarism of efficiency," which erases the power of feeling in the name of performance. For her, knowledge that cannot be translated into immediate results is not useless; it is powerful (Stengers, 2015, p. 103). In her critique of the hegemonic rationality of modern science, Stengers proposes an "ecology of practices" that recognizes situated knowledge and the proper timings of each sensitive relationship with the world. The meaning that matters here is what affects and transforms, even if it escapes the logic of productivity. This conception expands the idea of meaning as a relational gesture, not aimed at clarity or control, but at the fertility of encounter.

For Stengers, scientific modernity committed a double erasure: First, by separating subject and object as fixed poles of experience; then, by reducing the production of meaning to the realm of prediction and control. By doing this, modern science became deaf to what she calls "intruders," events that resist modeling, that disrupt the order of procedures, that demand time to be felt. The ecology of practices then emerges as an active refusal of this deafness: It proposes listening to what disturbs, welcoming hesitation, making room for what cannot be immediately translated into useful knowledge. Thus, meaning stops being a function of efficiency and becomes a condition of presence. As she states in "In the Time of Catastrophes," it's not about anticipating the worst or seeking ideal solutions, but about becoming capable of responding, with responsibility, with openness, with listening (Stengers, 2015).

This response requires a radical reconfiguration of time and attention. The time of the ecology of practices is a dense, slow, situated time, closer to the time of care than to the time of command. It aligns with crossing and waiting, with not knowing and with listening.

Meaning, in this perspective, is always also an ethical and political act: To feel is to welcome the world in its difference and resist immediate capture by usefulness or predictability. In deep harmony with Merleau-Ponty and Afro-Indigenous cosmologies, Stengers invites us to re-enchant the sensible, not as an aesthetic escape, but as a strategy for survival and reinvention. Educating the senses, here, is about opening oneself to the otherness of the world, including its strangeness, and accepting that the most transformative meaning can often be the one we don't know how to name.

This is where the idea of meaning as a crossing gets stronger. In Afro-Indigenous cosmologies, feeling is about crossing, time, the body, territory, the worlds. Meaning isn't an arrow, but a path made by walking, an experience woven in relation to the land, to spirits, to others. Knowledge isn't given, but lived. Here, meaning is vibration, not guidance, it's dance, not marching.

Edward Said helps us understand how this multiplicity is often silenced by colonial structures that rank ways of feeling and knowing (Said, 2003). In the name of "civilizational sense," specific epistemes, cultures, and rhythms are imposed, erasing the journey and establishing the straight line. Recovering meaning as sensitivity is, therefore, an act against colonialism.

This critique of modern colonial rationality, which turned knowledge into a tool of domination, is also shared by the epistemologies of the South. For Boaventura de Sousa Santos, modernity built a "northern epistemology" based on the monoculturalism of scientific knowledge and the monolingualism of time, the idea that there is only one valid way of knowing and a single valid direction to move in time: Linear, Eurocentric, forgetful progress (Santos, 2010). What Said calls "cultural imperialism" is, for the epistemologies of the South, a sociology of absences: Everything that escapes the canon, progress, the market, or the dominant academy is treated as nonexistent, backward, irrelevant. The refusal of multiplicity is not just a discursive operation, it is a sensitive operation, which discredits ways of feeling and perceiving.

This is where the connections with Latin American decolonial thought become fruitful. Authors like Aníbal Quijano and Walter D. Mignolo identify in the "coloniality of knowledge" a direct extension of the "coloniality of being," in other words, it's not enough to dominate territories: You have to order bodies, senses, and emotions. Colonialism imposed not only an economy and a politics but also a unique way of telling the world, organizing time, and perceiving reality (Quijano, 2005; Mignolo, 2003). Crossing boundaries was forbidden. Feeling was domesticated. Time stopped being ritualistic, cyclical, and tied to place, turning into a line, urgency, and progress.

In this context, reclaiming meaning as a journey and sensitivity is also a form of epistemic resistance. To feel, in this perspective, ceases to be a biological act and becomes a political gesture. Refusing the hegemony of meaning as a single direction, as clarity, as control,

is to refuse the very colonial logic. It is in this gesture that Edward Said, Southern epistemologies, and decolonial thought meet: In the invitation to listen to forced silences, to restore forbidden meanings, to reopen paths that have been erased, and to cultivate, in bodies and territories, a different kind of listening, rhythmic, undisciplined, plural.

Refusing meaning as a command is refusing politics as an order. It's claiming the right to feel in another way. To feel with bare feet, with ears attuned to the earth, with skin that shivers in the presence of another. To feel like someone who gets lost and, for that very reason, finds themselves.

Intersections between time and meaning

Time and meaning aren't parallel lines. They don't match up like form and content, nor do they only meet in exceptional moments. On the contrary, they continuously intertwine in experience, like rhythm and feeling, like presence and displacement, like memory and vibration. If time is the medium in which we become, as Merleau-Ponty (1999) proposed, and meaning is what we feel and make others feel, then thinking of one without the other is like drawing space without a body or narrating a path without ground. It's in the intertwining of time and meaning that the journey becomes possible.

This crossing doesn't happen in the straight line of modern reason. It pulses. It hesitates. It repeats and veers off. Time, here, isn't about productivity, but about friction. And meaning isn't direction, but disposition. It's at this point that rhythm emerges as a mediating category: Not rhythm as a predictable beat, but as an embodied event, as a measure between the body and the world, as a sharing between listening and expressing. Rhythm runs through time and meaning; it's what allows us to feel time and to give time to feeling. It's what makes us wait, insist, pause, improvise.

Isabelle Stengers (2015), when she says we need to resist the barbarity of efficiency, is talking about an ethics of rhythm. A science that listens to its subjects, a politics that gives time to dissent, a pedagogy that doesn't measure learning by speed. This resistance is also a reconfiguration of meaning: What matters isn't what fits the plan, but what creates presence and transformation. What resonates. What echoes. What interrupts.

That's why crossing over is more than just moving from one place to another: It's a way of feeling and living time with others, in the landscape, in the body. In Afro-Indigenous cosmologies, the time of crossing is the time of the enchanted, of cycles, of returns. The point, there, isn't clarity, but presence. It's not about control, but connection. Krenak (2019) reminds us that maybe humanity needs to postpone the end of the world, and postponing the end of the world is a rhythmic gesture: It requires lingering, redoing, listening. It's insurgent time. It's meaning understood as crossing over.

This idea of crossing as an insurgent time echoes in the thinking of Nêgo Bispo (2021), a “quilombola” from Piauí, who proposes a “contemporaneity of the crossroads” as a way to reorganize the meanings of living. For him, “quilombo” time is a time against hurry, against

colonial linearity, a time that “weaves the world from the ground up,” time to plant, to talk, to mend the bonds torn by slavery and the extractivism of affections. “*Quilombola*” time, just like Indigenous time, doesn't submit to the clock but follows the rhythm of the body, the land, and the community.

Achille Mbembe, in turn, when talking about “necropolitics,” shows us how modernity not only imposed a temporality of progress and productivity, but also a geopolitics of death: Who has the right to live fast, to live intensely, to live in the future? And who is condemned to repeat the past, to dwell in backwardness, to survive in someone else's time? (Mbembe, 2018). In this scenario, reclaiming time as a crossing is also reclaiming the right to feel outside the order, to exist without rush, to live with the dead and with those who have not yet arrived.

Childhood, in turn, is where this intertwining shows itself most clearly. A child's time doesn't bend to productivity, nor can the meaning they create be reduced to predictable signs. What a child feels escapes adult grammar. What a child expresses disrupts the semantics of command. So educating the senses means relearning the rhythms of listening. Living in someone else's time. Making politics an experience of presence. As Arendt (2001) suggests, the common world only comes into being when it appears to someone, and this appearance is always sensory, shared, rhythmic.

Living through time and meaning as a passage requires an ethics of delay, a pedagogy of the in-between, a politics of incompleteness. It's not about resisting time or restoring lost meanings, but about creating spaces for attention, places where time can defy the schedule and meaning can slip away from clarity. As Said (2003) said, imperial culture defines itself by its aversion to ambiguity. Here, on the contrary, it's in ambiguity that the common is produced. It's in hesitation that listening opens up. It's in the rhythm of the world that the body learns to speak, and to listen, to what doesn't have a name yet.

Transition to the next concepts

Thinking of time and meaning as ways of inhabiting and being affected is not just a theoretical exercise. It's an ethical, political, and pedagogical gesture. It's about creating conditions so that the world is not only interpreted but also listened to, touched, lingered with, disturbed, cultivated. If time is a crossing and meaning is sensitivity, then experience is what emerges in-between, that is, between the body and the landscape, between the past and what doesn't yet have a name, between gesture and listening. So, before proposing a pedagogy of the senses or a phenomenology of the landscape, it's necessary to recognize that the conceptual ground has already been stirred: We're dealing with categories that can't be reduced to function or purpose. Time and meaning aren't “used;” they're lived.

We've crossed a path up to this point that rejected the idea of meaning as command and time as a line. Instead, we suggested thinking about rhythm, the journey, the bond, the presence. Sensitivity was put back at the center of the experience, not as decoration or fragility,

but as political strength and a condition of the world. Listening, touch, attention, silence, pacing, hesitation, all of this was rehabilitated as a pedagogical force. Time stopped being a frame and became living material. Meaning stopped being an instruction and became a relationship, so it can no longer be a compressed dimension of life.

The concept of the “right to the (in)compressible,” developed by Catharina dos Santos Lima and co-authors, refers to the claim to goods that at first glance seem superfluous, like art, free time, leisure, and the landscape, but which actually turn out to be essential to human dignity and the sensory experience of the world. Inspired by Antonio Candido and his defense of the right to literature as a fundamental human right, this concept shifts the focus from merely biological needs to a broader understanding of existence, where feeling, imagining, and inhabiting become non-negotiable dimensions of living.

This formulation connects deeply with the notion of crossing that we have been exploring: the incompressible is that which escapes the logic of productivity and urgency, opening up gaps for other rhythms, for the time of presence and relationship. As the authors state, “it’s as if the incompressible were a kind of offbeat rhythm of the city [...] where movements to denaturalize what is established become possible” (Lima et al., 2017, p. 307). Here, the politics of crossing opposes time colonized by efficiency and affirms the right to linger, to wander, to occupy space as presence and not just as function.

By recognizing the right to the incompressible, we are also recognizing the right to experiences that cannot be reduced to instrumental logic, which brings us close to Stengers, when she proposes an ecology of practices that values situated and non-efficient knowledge; and to Krenak, when he calls for postponing the end of the world as an aesthetic, ethical, and political act. The incompressible is, thus, also an insurgent rhythm.

It is in this context that the notion of political education of the senses gains depth. It’s not about a method or a teaching approach, but a way of existing and living together that recognizes the senses as fields of contestation, as vulnerable and fertile territories. What is heard? What is silenced? Who has the right to feel? Who can share what they feel? In this sense, the education of the senses is a field of tension, where the body meets the world and the world demands a response from the body.

What if that answer isn’t immediate? What if it requires time, listening, hesitation? What we’re proposing is a pedagogy of slowness, presence, and connection. A way of teaching that, instead of rushing toward meaning, creates spaces where it can emerge, sometimes as a crossing, sometimes as a stumble, sometimes as a dance. But always as a situated experience.

In this horizon, the “in-between” is neither empty nor a gap, it is a field of forces, a common world, an event. Hannah Arendt (2010, p. 228) reminds us that there is no politics without recognizing an interest that sustains it. And this inter-est, in the literal sense of the Latin term *inter-est*, that which “is between,” is not private desire, greed, or calculation. It is what lies between people, what keeps them connected, what creates a shared space. This is

where political life happens: Not at the extremes, but in the in-between. Not through imposition, but through openness. Not in consensus, but in contact.

It's this in-between space, common to everyone and therefore relevant to each of us, that the political education of the senses needs to inhabit. And it's this space that the landscape, as body, as time, as gesture, can activate. Next, we will enter this landscape more deeply: The education of the senses as practice and horizon; the landscape as lived and shared body; and politics as what happens between bodies and places, between the sensible and time, between memory and gesture. What comes next isn't a conclusion, it's a fold, continuity, insistence.

Political education of the senses

Educating the senses is not just about improving perceptions, but about contesting ways of being present in the world. When we talk about political education of the senses, we mean a process that goes beyond the pedagogies of cognition and discipline. It's about cultivating the body as a place of listening, attention as a form of resistance, and feeling as a field of political struggle. It's not an alternative pedagogy, but a transformation in the very ground on which education moves: The sensible as a common field, not as a subjective residue; the body as a territory of expression, not as an instrument.

Modern pedagogy, still stuck in Enlightenment and industrializing models, treated the body as an obstacle to reason. Feeling was considered noise. Time was tamed by productivity. The school space was turned into an environment for domesticating emotions. What was lost in this process wasn't just sensory diversity, but the very possibility of educating for politics, understood here as the space where the common is contested, narrated, and felt.

This criticism of modern pedagogy resonates across different fields of thought. Rubem Alves, for example, denounced the school as a place where "the body is tamed to fit into the discourse of efficiency" (Alves, 1994), a space where feeling was downgraded to mere noise, distraction, or childishness. For him, the Enlightenment educational project sacrificed desire, listening, and wonder in the name of a sterile, productive reason. Education stopped being an exercise in enchantment and turned into a training of perception. By moving away from the body and affection, education lost the ability to create worlds: It stopped forming sensitive people and started producing functional operators.

Raymond Williams, on the other hand, offers a culturally grounded critique: When discussing the notion of a structure of feeling, he shows how ways of living, perceiving, and reacting to the world are deeply influenced by historical forms of control and silencing. Modernity didn't just shape school content; it also shaped regimes of sensitivity, pushing out of schools and literate culture undisciplined emotions, slow rhythms, and non-codified knowledge (Williams, 1977, p. 132). The repression of the body and feeling isn't an exception, it's the structural basis of a project that aimed to standardize experience under the logic of progress and efficiency.

This repression becomes historically clear in Peter Gay's analysis, especially when investigating the mechanisms of bourgeois formation in Victorian Europe. In "The Educated Imagination," Gay shows how the modern project of civilization involved an intense process of emotional and bodily domestication: Pleasure was surrounded by guilt, desire by surveillance, and sensitivity by moral rationalizations (Gay, 1999). The family, the school, and codes of conduct dictated not just what should be learned, but how one should feel while learning, with modesty, restraint, and shame. The formation of the civilized subject was also an engineering of insensitivity. Political education of the senses today needs precisely to reverse this legacy: Not as a return to spontaneity, but as an ethical reinvention of listening, presence, and the body as legitimate ways of knowing and being in the world.

This repressive legacy of modernity, which taught us to feel guilty and to learn with restraint, was unfolded with great clarity by the philosopher Marilena Chauí, especially through her reading of Spinoza's ethics. For her, oppression doesn't just act on the body; it works from within, shaping our emotions, producing fear, shame, and voluntary servitude. It's not enough to free someone from external systems of repression: We need to free them from the inside, meaning we have to acknowledge that desire can also be colonized, that feelings can also be tamed. The "cultivated sadness," as Chauí calls it, is the way we're taught to desire what makes us poorer, to obey the reason that separates us from our power (Chauí, 1995). In this view, the political education of the senses is a refusal of sadness as a way of life, and a bet on joy as a way of knowing. It's not those who are ignorant who feel joy, but those who realize their power in action, and that realization is always sensory, embodied, and physical.

Rancière (2005) gives us an important key: Politics begins when the sensible is reconfigured, when dissent is produced, when new voices become audible, when the world appears in a different way. The political education of the senses, in this context, is a practice of dissent: It makes visible what has been made invisible, sensible what has been silenced, tangible what has been abstracted. It doesn't teach the world, it reopens it. And this reopening requires time, care, affection, vulnerability.

Merleau-Ponty (1999), in turn, as we've seen, argues that there is no pure perception: The body is already thrown into the world as sensible flesh. Listening, touching, and looking are not passive windows but embodied gestures. The education of the senses, then, doesn't shape perception; it shapes the gesture that perceives. The body, here, is both subject and world: It doesn't represent, it witnesses. Educating the senses is letting the body relearn how to see, to listen, to hesitate, and in doing so, shake up the ready-made ways of inhabiting the common.

Hannah Arendt (2001) reminds us that political space is born when people come into each other's presence, when they expose what is most personal to the judgment of others. Politics is the space of appearing, and appearing is perceptible, it's gesture, it's form. In this sense, the education of the senses is inseparable from the making of the common world.

Without listening, without sensitive sharing, there is no politics, only management. And without time, without pause, without attention, listening is impossible.

Rudolf Steiner (2008), by proposing an integral pedagogy of the twelve senses, radically expands this field. He teaches us that listening is not just hearing sounds, but perceiving the other person's language as a field of relationship; that seeing is not just capturing images, but meeting the other person with your gaze; that feeling warmth is not just detecting temperature, but sensing someone's vital presence. His social senses, like the sense of the other's self, the other's thought, and the word, teach us that educating is about creating bonds, not just transmitting content. The education of the senses, then, is a deeply relational practice.

In Afro-indigenous cosmologies, this gesture is already ancient. Listening is not a tool, it's a way of being. The body is not a means, it's a world. Time is not a resource, it's a relationship. Education, in this horizon, is made of stories, cycles, waiting, songs, and rituals. As Nêgo Bispo and Ailton Krenak affirm, the formative experience is a journey between times, between worlds, between bodies. Knowledge is not imposed, it is offered. And meaning is not taught, it is shared, through silence, through smell, through image, through gesture, through the drum.

To politically educate the senses, then, is to open listening to forms of knowledge that don't fit into school grammar, that can't be translated into goals, skills, and indicators. It's about creating spaces where dissent is welcomed not as a mistake, but as an event. Where a child's time isn't seen as delay, but as another kind of rhythm. Where a body that doesn't conform is recognized as a body that announces. Where feeling isn't pathology, but a territory of existence.

It's also about recognizing that not all bodies have the same right to feel. In a society structured by coloniality, whiteness, ableism, and productivity-focused rationality, certain bodies are trained to numb themselves, while others are exposed to too much feeling, hunger, fear, humiliation. Political education of the senses, then, requires a commitment to sensible justice: It's not enough to include bodies in school or in the city; we need to recognize and challenge the systems of sensitivity that shape them.

The pedagogy of feeling requires different tools. It requires silence. It requires attention. It requires rituals. It requires affection. It requires that the time of education reconcile with the time of life. The school, but also the street, the dance, the square, the "*quilombo*," the "*terreiro*," becomes a place of listening. A place of suspension. A place where the world can appear again, with different colors, different smells, different names. A place where the world can, finally, be felt in another way.

Landscape experience as a political crossing

Landscape is not a setting. It's not a background, frame, or contemplative image. Landscape is body, it's presence, it's the way the world presents itself to the senses, and how

the senses give it back to the world. There is no landscape where there is no sensitive body to inhabit it, nor experience to cross it. That's why talking about the experience of landscape is talking about a way of being in the world in relation, in rhythm, in passage. And like everything discussed so far, landscape is also political, not because speeches are made or platforms are raised in it, but because it's a sharing of the sensible: A struggle over what is seen, what is heard, what is felt, who has the right to be, to inhabit, to tell stories.

This way of understanding the landscape challenges the dualisms that separate subject and world. It points to a view in which space is not a geometric structure or a passive surface, but a relational event, a field of presence constantly forming. It's a kind of thinking about connection, interdependence, the vibration between things. The landscape shows up not as an image to be observed, but as a way of inhabiting time and the world, as a sensitive writing inscribed in lived experience. It exists in an in-between: Between body and territory, between gesture and ground, between past and presence.

It's worth bringing into the conversation some reflections by Jean-Marc Besse, when he proposes understanding landscape as an "event of space and time in the sensible," where the moment and duration intertwine (Besse, 2006). This conception, which breaks with the idea of landscape as a fixed image and suggests an approach closer to bodily experience and existential rhythm, also connects with Adriana Serrão, when she proposes landscape as a thinking of connections, a place of articulation between the visible and the invisible, between the aesthetic and the ethical, between the passing time and the vibrating time (Serrão, 2012). She shifts landscape from the realm of passive contemplation to that of a living relationship, a space where the sensible becomes political through the density of the bonds it brings together.

From this perspective, landscape is also language, but a non-discursive language, made up of pauses, intensities, atmospheres, and rhythms. It's at this point that the phenomenological field opens up: Understanding landscape as something that can be seen and felt, but that also affects us and shapes us. Landscape is the way the world appears to the sensitive body, and the body, in turn, inscribes itself in the world. Before being an external fact, it is a passage.

This approach seems to us rooted in the phenomenological tradition, especially in Merleau-Ponty, as it allows us to understand the landscape as something that not only presents itself to perception but also surrounds us and shapes us. Space is not neutral, nor external: It is lived, embodied. "Space is the medium where the body becomes sensitive to the world," writes the author (Merleau-Ponty, 1999, p. 255). This means there is no experience of landscape without the body, nor a body without spatial and temporal inscription. The landscape is not an objective given but a dynamic relationship between the visible and the invisible, between gesture and presence, between time and the ground.

This relationship gains political depth when we incorporate the teachings of Afro-Indigenous worldviews, for which territory is never just geography, but memory, care,

ancestral presence, and a way of experiencing time. In these cosmologies, the landscape is filled with presences: Enchanted beings, the dead, spirits, seeds, waters. It doesn't present itself to the eye as a surface, but calls for listening, pausing, reciprocity. Walking through the landscape here is a way of learning, of educating oneself, of listening to the time of others, of the non-human, of those who came before, and of those who are yet to come.

So, landscape politics isn't made through laws, but through connections. It's political because it contests meanings, because it contests the very right to the sensible. Destroyed landscapes are also destroyed meanings. There's no ecological devastation without sensitive devastation. Destroying a forest is breaking relationships, silencing rhythms, erasing voices that don't speak the dominant language. Experiencing a landscape, in this context, is a field of rebellion: It allows us to rehabilitate the body as a sensor of the world, and the land as a place of crossing, not just use.

For Jacques Rancière, politics happens when the distribution of the sensible is interrupted, redistributed, or disorganized. The landscape, experienced as an experience, is one of the places of this redistribution. It can disrupt the geography of power, reveal absent bodies, and announce silenced presences. Not by chance, territories of political resistance, "*quilombos*," villages, settlements, urban occupations, create other landscapes: Not just other physical spaces, but other ways of feeling and telling the world. In this sense, the landscape is pedagogical: It teaches, but only to those who walk with bare feet.

This journey requires a pedagogy of crossing: It's necessary to go through the time of performance, the space of control, the language of efficiency. We need to relearn how to listen with our eyes, see with our feet, and touch with our hearing. It's in this crossing that the body becomes politicized, not by ideological adherence, but by a sensitive exposure to the world. The landscape, as the political education of the senses, requires patience, repetition, and a body in a state of attention.

As Raymond Williams states, "culture is the place where the structure of feeling is formed and transformed" (Williams, 1977, p. 132). The landscape is one of these places. It's not just culture: It's culture embodied, emotional, territorialized. Feeling the landscape is, therefore, feeling time in its multiple layers, the time of the body, the time of the earth, the time of waiting, the time of struggle.

Crossing through the landscape, just like crossing through the senses, is a way of saying that living in the world is always a political experience. And maybe the most radical gesture is this: Listening to what the territory says, even when the territory doesn't speak, but vibrates.

Final considerations: The world still to feel

There's no full stop when it comes to crossing. What you can do, in the end, is just fold the path, gather the threads you've woven, and give them back to the world like someone

spreading out a net, not to catch, but to hold. To hold the time lived, the meaning shared, the listening that opened up, the gesture that was offered.

This article didn't aim to define, but to experiment. It wasn't meant to explain time, but to inhabit it as embodied thickness. It wasn't about capturing meaning, but about following its traces, its deviations, its hesitations. What we tried to assert is that feeling is a way of doing politics. And that listening to time is a gesture of resistance, against acceleration, against indifference, against the noise that separates us from the world.

Time and meaning here were not technical categories, but ways of existing. The time of crossing. Meaning as relationship. The body as a place in the world. The landscape as a living experience, not a dead image. What was proposed was a political education of the senses, not as a subject, but as a radical opening to the common, to plurality, to the sharing of the sensible. An education that doesn't teach you to adapt, but to listen; that doesn't reproduce the world, but enchants it again; that doesn't show the way, but invites you to cross.

Maybe this is, deep down, the most political task: To make space for the world to be felt in another way. And for this other way not to belong to anyone, but to belong to all the bodies that walk, listen, linger, hesitate, and relearn to inhabit time with delicacy.

Because the world, if it still exists, is also what invites us to feel it and go through it.

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