

TO DRAW BORDERS AND THE AESTHETIC MIND: Reviewing Europe with Almada Negreiros

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Abstract

At the beginning of the 20th century, Almada Negreiros considered that Portugal had urgently to step into Europe and the only way to achieve it was through cultural performing, affirming the straightness of modern thought. Almada acted in several paths of creation what might diagnose his profile as a “polychrome artist”, following Edward T. Hall in The hidden dimension (1966, 173). Let’s underline the principle of a South European polychrome person that shaped the unique (but multiple) direction of Almada’s achievement in his multidisciplinary artistic and thinking roles. Nowadays, a century after reviewing his writings concerning Europe (from his modernist period), how can we understand his obsession? Let’s analyse what involves the title “Portugal in the Map of Europa” published at SW – Sudoeste, the magazine he kept for three numbers during 1935. And, on the other hand, considering his multiple achievements as an artist and performer thinker, how did the idea of Europe – its utopia survived all those decades until the Portuguese 1970’s? And let’s add Almada’s compulsive quest for the universal language before writing – the antegrphy developed as an inner and essential thinking. How do it connect with the urge for modernity? Can it be reasoned in a two highways pursuit: the European assumption of Portuguese nationality versus that Universal visual writing which existed since the early age of humanity? Are those anthropological, philosophical and aesthetic/artistic proposals by Almada deeply linked or/and setting forth gaps, even paradoxes’ aims? And, mainly, when regarding his African ancestors, that apparently he never emphasized too much, should it be considered the link of his demand for antegrphy the universal visual language present in all continents? Maybe that concept of polychrome artist is a key for shaping Almada’s solo utopian identity with a www anthropological geography. Was he a true paradigm of a polychrome artist?

Keywords: Almada Negreiros, Polychrome artist, European (aesthetic) Utopia, Antegrphy



Figure 1 – Panel “Mapa-Mundi [Great Planisphere]” at the building of the Daily Newspaper *Diário de Notícias* – Lisbon, 1940

1. Europe < human being + collectivity > humanity

By that time in Europe arose Romanticism which was a kind of liberation for everyone, those whom had life to be lived with it legitimacy, the hour of enchained Prometheus. (Almada, 1990, p. 45)

How can we figure today the borders of European Culture compared with the authors that performed avant-garde in the beginning of the twentieth century? By that time the nucleus of cultural emancipation in Europe was located in Wien, Berlin (and Munich) and mainly in Paris for the Portuguese elite. The center of the European Map was there, a kind of imaginary point, a new geographical cosmogony.

In 1940 Almada Negreiros conceived a mural with a *Mappamundi*, painted in the walls of the building of the Newspaper *Diário de Notícias* (*Daily News*) Lisbon. The painting represents the continents reviewing the morphology and character of the ancient maps. He drew trees, persons, animals, shaped the coasts and the oceans alongside with the Zodiac's characters. It's a modern-ancient cosmogony reviewing the symbols and the visual signs that explore the definition of archaic knowledge, myths and poetry outspread towards the eternity of mankind. That's the imaginary-real way of presenting time and space, where borders and frontiers occupy a different epistemological category. Where was, in 1940, the center of a world falling apart and how did Almada deal with it? He was obsessed with the mythical terms since an early period of his career. How did he

emphasize the reality of places and countries subsumed into the seduction of a great European Metropolis?

At the beginning of the 20th century Almada Negreiros lived in Lisbon and rehearsed himself at an imaginary Paris, built upon the guidelines told by those which were living there. Nevertheless, when he travelled to Paris in 1919, he was very much disappointed. However he enjoyed a remarkable stay in Madrid, from 1926 to 1932. It was his real merge into life as he cherished for his last longing life. By then the Lisbon Portuguese Modernity was already established and the 1st *Modernism* failed apart. Nonetheless, modernist aesthetic would last along Almada's creation and life, though taking different rhumbs.

As early as 1915, Almada proclaimed that Portugal was, not only the most backward country in Europe, but from the entire world. However, he believed that *Portugal 'will open its eyes one day - if its blindness is not incurable and then it will shout with me, at my side, the need that Portugal has to be something of a clean thing!'* (Almada, 1993 b, p.23) His point of view about Portugal borders included the colonial territories. It's curious to recall that Almada descended from an Angola' Woman Slave and his mother was a *Creole* from S. Tomé. But his African Heritage was never assumed in a country living under a fascist regime.¹ So he was much more focused in Europe, trying to cope both with Iberia and afterwards with the search for the primitive forms of Humanity.

In 1915 *Orpheu*², a privileged organ of cosmopolitan Europeanism set in Lisbon, presented itself as the magazine that would correct the Portuguese case with the chronological time of Europe, by means of the action of culture and arts.³ Fernando Pessoa wanted *a cosmopolitan art in time and space" adapted to the*

¹ Thought, as I remarked at a Conference held at the National Museum Soares dos Reis, in Porto, in April 2018, we can find several clues and even some clear underlining of the proud in his Race.

² I am referring to the Magazine, project by Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, Luís de Montalvor, Armando Cortes-Rodrigues, among others. They published only two numbers in 1915 and a third one was ready but they were not able to finance it. Almada was present since the first number, publishing a group of 15 short stories untitled *Frisos*.

³ After the episode of the magazines *Centauro* and *Exílio*, in February 1915, Fernando Pessoa intended to publish a review called *Europa*, which gave place to *Orpheu*.

time (Pessoa, 1966, P.113)... in which all countries, more materially than ever, and for the first time intellectually, all exist within each one, in which Asia, America, Africa and Oceania are Europe, and there are all in Europe. (Pessoa, 1966, P.113) After the episode of *Orpheu*, Almada engaged himself with *Portugal Futurist*, a single number published magazine, where he presented his *Ultimatum spread to the Portuguese Generations of the 20th Century* and the *Ultimatum* by Álvaro de Campos⁴. Both authors were stressed by the need of update into Europe, although under specific patterns. Suddenly with the 1st World War, the borders changed and became mental maps of desire for his individual identity and also a search for an updated collective one for Portugal.

In the twenties and the thirties, Almada's ideas proliferated in several texts, culminating in his own editorial project, whose title clearly located the Portuguese geography - as territory - in Europe: *Cadernos de SW/ SW's Notebooks* (Almada, 1982a). Almada's three notebooks confirmed his genius and intellectual consistency. The artist developed essays that corroborated his ideological-mythical convictions about Nationality, in contrast with the notions of Homeland, Europe and World / Humanity.⁵ From his verve emerged fictional and mythological figures and the circularity of his esoteric thinking arose, converging towards *Prometheus*, the hero reactivated as the symbol for Europe. On the other hand, his "Theory of Opposites" bore the key to his aesthetic paradoxes, and the significance of his doctrine concerning the condition of Humanity, Art, and the individual human person, became quite explicit. The opposites were: Portugal *versus* Europe, sometimes underlining the Iberian relationship.

⁴ Álvaro de Campos is one of Fernando Pessoa's heteronymous.

⁵ Almada's project, as it had been announced in previous texts, was that of the collectivity of Portugal, recognizing the necessity of its assumption.



Figure 2 – Covers of the 3 numbers of the Magazine SW Notebooks – 1935

Almada written presence in SW reinforced the support of his historical-philosophical view, mainly articulating social and political frames, anthropological and cultural thinking. These multiple focus were closely linked in special geography of his own, being the basis for his further speculative argumentation. He related through different artistic and literary procedures the same subjects. The main connection was his aesthetic thought.

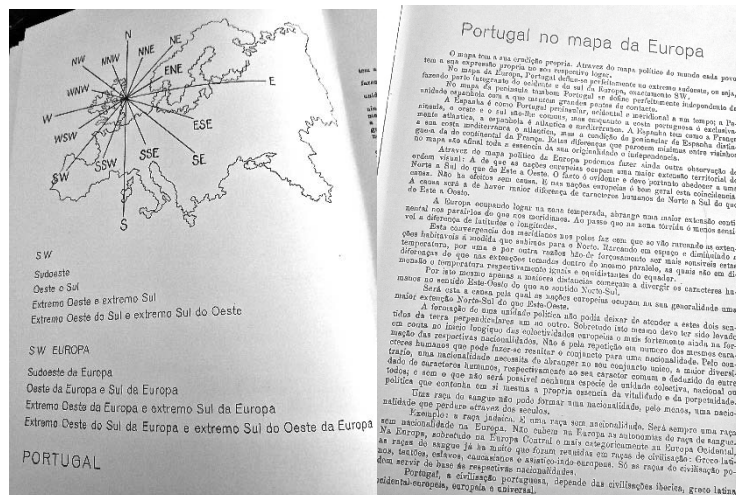


Figure 3 – Images of double page from SW 1 – “Portugal in the Map of Europe” – copyright by the author

In the diagram (fig. 3 left) the center located in UK and the lines irradiate from that point surrounding the perimeter of Europe. Portugal is placed at Europe’ extreme SW, almost escaping from the continent! Spain is also pointed as SW.

Almada lived in these two countries from South Europe and he considered that this Continent, in each of its nationalities and as a whole, housed notable protagonists and historical circumstances that represented the heterogeneity of the collectivity. Although his preference was settled from a Mediterranean point of view, after the idea of Iberia, he intended to reach the World. He projected the real landmarks as a conceptual matter. Acts and decisions helped to emancipate the faith arising from a religious European diverse whole, constituted together. He was convinced that the various nationalities and religions assumed through human individualities, had been guarantying unity along the flow of time. Different collectivities and dissimilar persons occupied assorted geographical positions in the whole of Europe. These heterogeneity defined territorial obsessions, remaining in a shared time.

In Europe, and in each of its constituent nationalities, the individuality of each member in the collectivity was safeguarded, which was a main substance for these universal consciousness. Between the two conscious, the balance of humanity became possible: *'In the political map of Europe the same process of classification by selectivity in the interpretation of the political whole is repeated. This emancipation forms the various nationalities, and nationalities are the function of the political whole of Europe.'* (Almada, 1990, p. 100)

By that time, he underlined that all human people in the whole universe should recognize the order and scale of human values. Each of the terms - individual and collective - should be given to each one; allowing the individuals' capacity for knowledge. That would promote the encounter with newer collectivities. Almada wanted the Portuguese to assume their full nationality, before each one, before the homeland collectivity, before Europe and before the world: *'We want the Portuguese community to live up to itself, seen from all sides of the earth. That each Portuguese, inside or outside our land, is the perfect individual of our own community.'* (Almada, 1990, p. 54)

Almada believed that Art was fulfilled by creation and the enjoyment of the artist language, being able to communicate life⁶. Art was a common language for the whole Europe, insofar as it is possible for everyone to know the rules of such Art as a common heritage, if they so desire. Because Art considers the common heritage of humanity, in the plurality of creations, what would preserve individual and collective memory, serving as a dynamic impulse: '*Art is above all a universal attitude of the human person.*' (Almada, 1965, p. 14) It seeks unity encompassing diversity in its manifestations, under a common denominator: the human individual as the whole humanity. On the other hand, achieving unity supposedly in Art '*is not a mystery to some, but it is a secret that is kept in the secret of every artist.*' (Almada, 1990, p. 131)

Almada was able to reach and act in several paths of creation with almost the same emphasis and conviction, what might diagnose his profile as a 'polychrome artist', following Edward T. Hall in *The hidden dimension* (1966: 173)⁷. All that diversity, really was the quality of his excellence and unique presence in such a long Portuguese century of his. Let's underline the principle of a South European polychrome person that shaped the unique (but multiple) direction of Almada's achievement in his multidisciplinary artistic and thinking roles.

The artist must preserve coherence, performing a work that contemplates the human attitude which art represents (Almada, 1965), namely, in the ethical position consigning the act of creation; ethical responsibility is plural and does not mean restriction of freedom of act of creating or expressing, supposing the unity of the individual himself. To the cultural and artistic intervention, he added the ethical-social conscience to promote a civilizing mission, recovering the sense of national collectivity, of the ideological return to the ascending Homeland - that would be achieved if with the Portuguese would accompanied

⁶Almada's perspective approaches the personal notion, when he attributed to the Art the need to vitalize; it is related to António Mora [Fernando Pessoa heteronymous] in "Art and Nature", *Works in Prose*, p.233.

⁷"Polychrome people, possibly because they are so much involved with each other, end to keep several operations going at once, like jugglers. Therefore, the monochrome person often finds it easier to function if he can separate activities in space, whereas the polychrome person tends to collect activities. If, however, these two types are interacting with each other, much of the difficulty they experience can be overcome by the proper structuring of space."

the time of the century in the Europe of the World. Art, in his perspective, performed the recovery of national identity, the demanded maturity of its deepest symbolic incorporation in personal identity, resulting from the presence of the collective in the universal. Art belonged to a social mission that should not be puzzled with submission to other values and impositions.

Almada clarified the basis of his own performance, enunciated the terms of his relationship with the community, imposed the civic and virtuous conscience that *paideia* had implemented as a guideline essential to valorization of man in the *polis*. Expanded and withdrawn circles - systole and diastole - between the projection for all and the return to each-self in demand for the genuine person - through the aesthetic acting that generated a work, able to concentrate a unanimous effort of creation. Moreover, Art would regained consciousness of universal dominion as in cosmogony. By the demand of Creation as a Whole, Order and Number consigned the principles for the present time, modernity vivified in the archaic.

Art possessed the genuine sense of the individuated in the collective, thus assuming an aesthetic meaning perpetuated in the visual communion - the visible and the invisible; holder of universal meaning, based on the principle of continuity of the human - allowing the understanding for everyone.

The unity of Europe was in the consciousness of its approximation, in the consciousness of the common force, especially of a spiritual order. From this spiritual force came the impulse to define nationalities: '*The union of Europe is in the bond of all by the same geographical and telluric faith.*' (Almada, 1990, p. 116) At the origin of the nationalities in Europe, it was a question of conceiving the different nationalities; of forming the particular civilizations from the general civilization of Europe, recovering the idea, then to maintain the fragmentary unity of the separation; to keep the profile of each individual national case on the borders and borders of Europe. And Europe was obliged, throughout its territory and time, to maintain the root of faith and strength, progressively handed over to self-responsibility. Without a single head to keep it together,

Europe was united by the diversity of nationalities, at the hands of the heads of all its nationalities.

Europe's tragedy, like personal tragedy, would be the loss of its unity: each nationality thinks only of its own way, disengaging itself from all - collectivities and individuals. To preserve the unity of Europe as a whole, the unity of collectivities and the unity of each individual human person, people should collaborate without betrayal, not annihilating their peers. The fundamental condition would be collective education, reigning over the savagery of civilization. The secret to achieve it was a joint effort and a pre-conscious awareness of the whole, in order to overcome the community and affirm nationality in Europe: *'We, the Portuguese, may already begin to be aware of our collaboration in Europe as a whole. And it is fatal, because the general movement of the world sends much more at home than some think and want.'* (Almada, 1990, p. 109)

The Portuguese artist considered the avant-garde movements, a sort of drivers towards a universal language surpassing time and providing free thought to all. The primordial meaning of modern art consisted in a universal language able to surpass personal languages, spaces and times; to generalize communication among all and the acceptance by each one. Abstractionism responded to the demands of all, and of one, the collective and the individual, all elements in nationality, in Europe, in the Universe, following their mythical and utopian projections.

In Almada Negreiros' concept of Europe, the modern European citizen which had been progressively isolated from their personal unity and from their collectivities, were facing the aggravating traits of a crashed Humanity. The dialogue between nations might be achieved through culture and art: *'Nations do not touch only the exchange of commodities, but especially that of their special affinities in the common mental and sensuous, which will be the foundation of the social whole.'* (Almada, 1965, p. 14)

2. Prometheus - Synthesis of humanity, synthesis of European culture

The mythical figure of Prometheus was doubly evoked by Almada as the universal symbol for man and mythological synthesis of Europe. Prometheus in a retaken myth in the history of European culture, due to the circumstances that condemned him. He was a paradigm for human emancipation through knowledge and will. He was Almada's myth of reference in the sense of Lévi-Strauss, as an increased transposition of other myths, either proceeding from the same culture, or from distant ones. Almada studied several versions of the myth, drawing his doctrine on a Prometheus adjusted to his thought. The poetic remitologization of Prometheus, admitted by Almada comes from: Goethe's *Prometheus (Dramatic Fragment of Youth)*, the historical reference of Aeschylus⁸ — *Prometheus Chained* and the first literary manifestation by Hesiod two centuries earlier (Trousson, n/d).

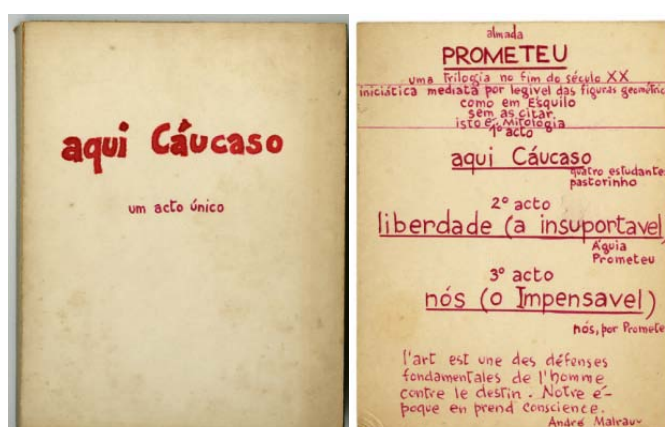


Figure 4 – Cover of the play *Here Caucasus*;
Manuscript of the play *Here Caucasus*;
Project board for a possible trilogy of Prometheus composed
of plays: 'Here *Caucasus*

In "Prometheus - Spiritual Essay of Europe" Almada reestablished the narrative of the myth, resumed in later texts, namely in "Here Caucasus".⁹ He emphasized the common version, considering that *'If at any time the gods were stolen by*

⁸ Aeschylus, poet of the fifth century, his activity is known after 475 BC.

⁹ "Why? Prometheus? Why you here? Why in the Caucasus you, the friend of Man? Why not beyond in the East? Why not beyond in the West? Why not beyond in the North? Why not beyond in the South? Why here that is not the East, which is not the West, which is not the North, which is not the South? Were you Prometheus, the friend of Man, who chose this place for you? Or were the immortal gods who chose you for your perpetual punishment?"

Prometheus, it was in his pride of divine as if there were no other natures other than his.' (Almada, 1993b, p.247)

Fixing a topography of punishment (rather than on its mythical geography), Almada settled a kind of atopy - a location for the individual human being, nowhere situated - relative to the divine *proxemia*: *'Only here could you keep the which thou hast taken from the immortal gods: Out of the east, out of the west, out of the north, out of the south. Out of every one of the peoples of the four parts of the earth. Out of the immortal gods.'* (Almada, 1993b, p.245)¹⁰ The circular reference to the determination of the space itself, as belonging, legacy or appropriation - besides the coordinates - is also found in the poem 'Wind Rose', being the first condition for the human, in a mythical-autobiographical sense, analogical to the figure of Prometeu-Almada:

It was not by chance that my blood came from the south crossed with my blood that came from the north. It was not by chance that my blood came from the east it crossed my blood that came from the west. It was no chance that I am now. (Almada, 1984, p. 216)

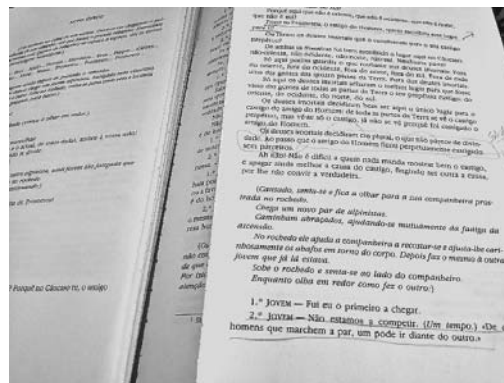


Figure 5 – Pages of "Here Caucasus" [1965] – copyright by the author

Prometheus was chained in a place, beyond human conception of survival. Almada, by fiction and analogy, decide to locate his birth place in "Wind Rose", the space to where the reminiscences of all civilizations and peoples gather. Almada/Prometheus was "chained" in Portugal, despite the mental journeys held

¹⁰ And he continued: "Because the idea of Man is not born soon with man, but it is this one who has it later in relation to the different natures of his." Let's remark that the four young characters in the play signify the sign of the human Quaternary.

by avant-garde - experience the mythical, symbolic-psyche time as a polychromatic figure, located in a place that was out of contemporary time/space. Symbolically, Almada recognized in Prometheus the example of his personal case, transposed to the Portuguese "world"; the principle of human condition. According to Prometheus' achievement, the responsibility of each one would decide destiny on Earth, following the challenge that provoked the wrath of Zeus. *Prometheus*, according to the latest speculations of his dramaturgy, was not a man: *It was an idea before the idea. A deity of Olympus.* (Almada, 1984, 247) Through his divine condition he acted upon the nature of man without interfering in it, inasmuch as *on the contrary he warned the divinity of man's own powers, which seemed not to pass through the heads of gods. Prometheus is the friend of the humans, for the love of the gods.* (Almada, 1993a, p. 247)

Some years before writing/publishing the Theater piece - end of the fifties and early sixties - Almada collaborated with the Architect Pardal Monteiro in the project of the once new buildings for University City of Lisbon. He conceived engraving and painted panels for buildings of the Law Faculty, the Letters Faculty and the Main building of Lisbon University, representing both historic, literary, philosophical, artistic and mythological characters, such as for the case of *Prometeus* [Letters Faculty].



Fig. 18 – Prometeu agrilhoado, gravura incisa, 1961.
Fotografia: A. M. Pascoal, 2009.



Fig. 19 – Prometeu agrilhoado, desenho, sem data.
Fotografia: Horácio Novais, sem data. Secretaria Geral do Ministério da Educação, Núcleo do Arquivo Técnico das Construções Escolares, Saco 2 «Faculdade de Letras».

Figure 6 – Images of an engraving and a drawing, both representing *Prometheus enchained* at the Faculdade de Letras - Universidade de Lisboa, Ana Mehnert Pascoal (2011) "As Figuras Greco-Romanas de Almada Negreiros na Cidade Universitária de Lisboa". *Boletim de Estudos Clássicos* — 55. Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Clássicos. URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10316.2/30359>

The angle, under which Almada faces the figure of the hero, recalls the terms in which the other Prometheus - Goethe's - affirmed in his rebellion, faces the gods, faces the stars: *Prometheus: The circle that fills my activity! / Nothing more, nothing less!* (Almada, 1993a, p. 248)

The reckless wonder of the hero, projected in all geographies of time/space, embodies the true "discovery" of the semi-human by the human, interfering in other Mythology narratives: *'The sacred fire it is not exclusive to the immortal gods. The sacred is not exclusive to the Divinity, and on the contrary, the sacred is the only one truly common to the different natures, such as the divine and human.'* (Almada, 1993a, p. 248) The fire is subsumed to concatenated meanings, an obsessive image that affirms the life-generating condition, capable of annihilating it: a clear manifestation of the dual convention that frequently pervades Almada's work, concluding in the formula $1 + 1 = 1$ as he explained in *Unique Direction*.

For Gaston Bachelard (1992), fire is the sexual symbol for excellence, it dynamizes primordial drives, recovering the sense of the promised complex: daring to steal the fire of the senses, of those who inhibit it. To do what is more important than the promulgated, according to the psychoanalytic way: *'To know and to manufacture are needs that can be characterized in themselves, without necessarily relating them to the will to power. There is in man a real will of intellectuality.'* (Bachelard, 1992, p. 26) According to the philosopher, Prometheus' complex was the Oedipus complex of the intellectual path. So, it was legitimate that Prometheus is sometimes associated with the Myth of Creation, and not only in Greek Mythology, for he decided on the irrevocability of the qualities and conditions for the human. *'Prometheus realized a utopia. He attained an unprecedented achievement, when he realized human power surprised by the universal at the hands of the gods of Olympus and, after the surprise, it is impossible for him to agree.'* (Almada, 1982b, p. 130) It was the main interpretation of Prometheus for Almada: his act of civilization, the effectiveness of utopia, the individual force that constitutes culture: *'Now this dream of Prometheus is European, and, today is Europe's dream at least in the West.'* (Almada, 1990, p.94)

Prometheus' dream did not fade away when the tragedy overcame him, nor did he fade away with the impregnable punishment. He knew how to mock¹¹ the situation, for in the final instance both men and God were part of the same chain: they were bound to violence, to illusions of victory, to inevitable defeat. When Prometheus perceived the wars among the gods, he recognized the provocations of the men: he could endure his fate, for there were no cases of exception in the Cosmos. His daydreaming is eternal, since it persists in the Universe by knowledge as by number. A secret that contained in itself the tragic and fatalism of the human: *'Not a tragedy that unfolds fatally forever without solution, but the eternal tragedy of Man to conquer the World, the tragic action of this heroic conquest.'* (Almada, 1990, p.94)

Considering the intimate and primordial terms of the Human-sacred, Almada underline the antithetical terms symbolized in Prometheus and Io. It's a sort of *Coniunctio Oppositorium* as he wrote in "Heraclitus weeps and Democritus laughs" (Almada, 1950). He established the distinction between what *'would be the half-blood of divine and human'* and Prometheus, which would separate the divine from the human, and only with this would open the way, against the divinity if it were necessary...¹² *'Prometheus confers the universal unity, through this finding which he gave to men: the Number. This is a quotation taken from Prometheus Chained of Aeschylus quoted by Almada: I gave [men] the beautiful find of arithmetic.'* (Almada, 1982, p. 179) The Number is the supreme knowledge.

Longing to redeem Portuguese from atavism, he cried out for the force of Myth and its polychromic understanding. He was able to produce knowledge in art and

¹¹ In the literary twentieth century, consider the version of André Gide, *Prométhée Mal Enchaîné*, an exercise in sarcasm, whose end culminates in a feast in which Prometheus delights in savoring the flesh of those who, in time almost without end, devoured his liver.

¹² Also see Almada Negreiros, "Heraclitus weeps, Democritus laughs".

established a peculiar thought, being able to use several expressions, strategies and achievements *viso-verbico-performatic*. Capable of a greater conceptual agility, he circumvented conventions, stereotypes, counteracting the tragic in his present, exercising elusive and assertive simultaneously, crossing chronology and space. Through his capacity and impulse he conceived the inclusive binomial, without dissolution of the terms: LIFE-ART. Almada was demanded in Art (and in Life) as a worthy individual case. Using exemplary ideas and acting's, maybe Almada wanted to reach the level of that perfect individuality he recognized in Goethe: *'the first individual among all individuals in Europe.'*(Almada, 1993b, p.82) He synthesized "his" literary and philosophic references gathering Platonic aesthetics and Neoplatonic revisions in which he incorporated the aesthetics of number (Pythagoreanism); concealed the aesthetics of light (aesthetic theophany) and the aesthetics of symbology (structured mythification). Almada verified that each one of those sides had an inclusive circumstance, capable of autonomy due to the overcoming of symbols, in time to accede to the simple and universal visual sign, which was a guarantee and constant presence in humanity.

The obsession of Almada thought obliged him to wonder largely in circular convictions, almost paradoxes or at least extreme riddles. His ultimate goal concerned the harmonic dialogue between human individuality and collective authority. During his lifetime a fatal disruption was present: an apathetic and mute obedience between the individual and the collective. His mission consisted in alerting each one and the collectivity in order to admit the crisis. The crisis was caused by the failure of collectivity. People no longer were able to encourage or valuing the collective condition for individuality and alienated human personality. The resolution would only be possible for the individual who rushes to fight because *'he does not resign himself to die in life, nor to live in blank.'* (Almada, 1993b, p.100) One cannot be dissolved by the passiveness of others in the collectivity. To each one is destined the effort and the wisdom undertaken, aware of its capacities. The gifted individual is surpassed by the reinvigorated understanding, by the conscious force of its social dimension in the collective. Here is the answer to proceeding one by one: *'The individual of the*

community fully informed about the individual of nature, is up to you to prepare your new place and arm yourself with your best sense.' (Almada, 1993b, p.73)

Almada's demand fixed the matrix of humanity in the sacred terrain bordered without borders, but keeping up with the reason of the location, the geography of his country in the Map of Europe. He followed the argumentative clues of conciliation that the Myths strangely imply. Almada felt he should point out Prometheus as a European synthesis. In Homer's personality and in the effectiveness of Greek civilization, he recovered the collective [inspiring] source for Europe: *'Civilization is a collective phenomenon. Culture is an individual phenomenon.'* (Almada, 1990, p. 77) Homer, founder of civilization according to Almada, was the Poet that respected positive values both in Tradition and in *'the individual initiative of the present ones of the same civilization'* (Almada, 1990, p. 77). That union of times/spaces was the condition for strengthen the future civilization. And secondly, because *'The whole act of civilization is closely linked to an advance of the order of culture and its continuation.'* (Almada, 1982, p. 129)

His pursuit for a utopian Europe overwhelmed the real frontiers and countries. As an artist from the SW, and remembering his African roots, Almada spent his lifetime searching for Humanity. He was able to reduce his points of view into the essential one, which was the ultimate belief in those simple geometrical shapes that exist since the beginning of Mankind. Almada's final abstract-geometrical black and white paintings (1957) can be understood as the fusion of all his research and still are one of his greatest landmarks of heritage for the future generations. Which achieved the late conquest in the large seminal mural for the main building of the Gulbenkian Foundation – *Beginning (Começar)* his last work.

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