

PLACES & CHARACTERS



‘Brasilia Is Blood on a Tennis Court’

Julia Kristeva’s ‘Semiotic’
and the Embodied
Metaphors of Lispector

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And when I think life is strange that’s where life begins, Clarice Lispector¹

Julia Kristeva and the ‘Semiotic’ in Architecture and Literature

Phenomenology’s fundamental critique of contemporary architecture is well summarized by Juhani Pallasmaa in *The Eyes of the Skin* (1996):

The inhumanity of contemporary architecture and cities can be understood as the consequence of negligence of the body and the senses, and an imbalance in our sensory system. The growing experience of alienation, detachment and solitude in the technological world today, for instance, may be related with a certain pathology of the senses.²

In Pallasmaa's opinion, architecture should be a sensuous polyphony, creating an experience of being-at-home, even in public places. If these sensual qualities are lacking, architecture becomes pathogenic.

However, psychoanalysis has argued that there is already something fundamentally pathological and unhomely in our subjective relationship to the environment, including the environment of our own body. Through the mediation of French poststructuralism, psychoanalysis influenced architecture criticism, Anthony Vidler's *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (1992) being perhaps the most well-known example. In his introduction, Vidler writes:

Following the lead of literary and psychological criticism after Lacan and Derrida, a number of contemporary architects have seized on this domain for their own study of domesticity and its discontents in projects that attempt deliberately to provoke disquiet and unease, to reveal the hidden terrors of the house.³

I want to argue that Kristeva's concept of the 'semiotic' provides a kind of middle ground here. For her, this uncanny heterogeneity of the pulsional body is not only traumatic and violent, but can also act as a creative and necessary force in the creation and transformation of the human psyche, in its relationship to the environment.

With the notion of the 'semiotic', Kristeva refers to the way bodily affects and drives manifest themselves in meaningful structures, especially in language.⁴ While the 'semiotic' does not belong to the system it quite literally embodies, it can only manifest itself through this system. In language, the semiotic can be found in rhythm, timbre, musicality: elements that are meaningless in the strict sense of the word, but reveal the presence of affects and drives. This presence can also become a transgressive, transformative force, when, for instance, grammatical or genre laws are

challenged. For Kristeva, literature is a discourse that especially allows for such transgressions of norms and expectations. In this way, literature offers both the expression of unconscious affects and drives and a protection against a too direct confrontation with these overwhelming affects. Literature, precisely because of its ability to express a pulsional, affective surplus, changes not only the 'normal' use of language, but also the subjectivities that derive their symbolic identity from language. Literature becomes an exploration of the borderlands of our subjectivity, of the entanglement of bodily sensations and textual structures in relation to the environment. As such, literature is a discourse that can transform the fixed framework that defines not only the identity of the writer, but also of the reader.

For Kristeva, the problem with contemporary technocratic, economic and scientific discourses with which one can make sense of one's environment, is that they lack this 'semiotic' dimension. This generates not only a pathology of the senses, but also a pathology of sense. No longer 'embodied', these discourses lose their sublimating function, are no longer able to express the fantasies and affects of a pulsional, desiring body. When these unconscious and sometimes extreme affects cannot be 'sublimated' in a meaningful symbolic order, they come back to haunt the self in threatening, repulsive, limiting experiences; confronting the self with a not-me that is not clearly defined and not really separated. Julia Kristeva called this the 'abject'.⁵ Repressed on the discursive level, these desires and affects return in mute symptoms of senseless (auto)destruction.⁶

In her work, Kristeva considers literature as a discourse that is able to express these overwhelming affects of aggression, melancholy and abjection. We could relate this to the affective expressiveness of music. One might think here of commuters' earphones, providing a private emotional soundtrack to counter the grey neutrality of public transport and public buildings. But can architecture fulfil the same function as music and literature: a system to express the semiotic? And if we understand the cathartic



Brasilia, near the National Congress. Photo by Josue Martins Soares Filho, 2015.
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necessity of sad music, or sad stories, can we learn to appreciate sad architecture for the same reason?

To try to answer that question, we will turn to what is often dismissed as one of the failures of modernist urbanism: Brasilia, the capital of Brazil, officially inaugurated in 1960. The competition for the design of this completely new city, to be built from scratch in the inlands of Brazil, was won in 1956 by Lucio Costa. Costa's *plano piloto* consisted of a residential and a monumental axis that seen from the air looks like a bird, or an airplane. Architect Oscar Niemeyer would design the most iconic buildings of the new city, like the National Congress and the Cathedral. The city was built in line with the functionalist principles of modernist urban planning laid down by the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM) and Le Corbusier's *Athens' Charter*. But the utopia of a bureaucratic, classless, modern society quickly clashed with the actual segregation, where the lower classes lived in satellite cities, commuting to the city centre. Niemeyer's taut modernist design also ignored the dry, hot climate. The city was completely designed for motorized transport, with wide avenues and highways, but without the smaller streets and street corners so typical for the scale of pedestrian urban life. Soon, Brasilia would become a symbol of the failure of modernist urbanism.⁷ Juhani Pallasmaa in *The Eyes of the Skin* presented Brasilia as 'the modern city of sensory deprivation'.⁸

As Williams argues, the fatal blow to the image of Brasilia came after the military coup of 1964: the capital became the symbol of the bureaucracy and control of a military regime. The layout of the city, as well as its distance from cities like São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro, proved beneficial to the military dictatorship. In *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia* (1989), James Holston compared the utopian ideals with actual city life, such as the impact of this 'death of the street' as he called it.⁹ And in his influential BBC-documentary *The Shock of the New*, Robert Hughes, with

his unsurpassable sarcasm, would describe Brasilia as 'miles of jerry-built Platonic nowhere infested with Volkswagens'.¹⁰

Nonetheless, the modernist 'failure' became UNESCO World Heritage in 1987, and Niemeyer's impressive buildings are still part of every historical overview of twentieth-century modernist architecture. No doubt Brasilia is an interesting case study, both for architecture theory and anthropology. But literature, too, offers an alternative way of exploring this extraordinary urban landscape, a dream (or a nightmare) come true.

Clarice Lispector and the Metaphors of a City

In 1962, Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector visited the new capital, and in 1974, a decade after the military coup, she returned. She gave an account of both visits in a text simply called 'Brasilia'.¹¹

Clarice Lispector was the child of Jewish immigrants from the Ukraine who had (barely) survived the pogroms after the Russian revolution. During such a pogrom, her mother was raped and infected with syphilis. In his biography, Moser argues that Clarice Lispector might very well have been conceived based on the superstitious belief that a pregnancy could cure the disease, which of course it did not.¹² Clarice's mother eventually died a gruesome death when she was just a child. It is thus not surprising that the confrontation with a mysterious, overwhelming and sometimes violent universe is an important theme in her work, giving it that sense of 'magical realism' so typical of South-American literature.

Helène Cixious's remark about Lispector's writing – 'Rather than a narrative order there is an organic order'¹³– also holds true for 'Brasilia'. The short story lacks any clear narrative order or plot, and indeed works as an organic texture, structured by the recurrence of specific motives. The text is critical of Brasilia: the dominant affect in the text is fear, and Lispector, too, mentions the disturbing lack of corners ('I swear I didn't see any corners. In

Brasilia the everyday does not exist',¹⁴ and subtly refers to the dictatorship when she describes being frisked at the airport¹⁵). But overall, her opinion of Brasilia is far more ambiguous. When she calls it 'an abstract city',¹⁶ this is not meant as a reproach in line with Robert Hughes' comments. For in Lispector's poetics, 'abstract' is not negatively connotated: 'What is called abstract so often seems to me the figurative of a more delicate and difficult reality, less visible to the naked eye.'¹⁷

Precisely because of its abstract nature, Brasilia invites Lispector to try and describe this 'delicate and difficult reality' that the city evokes:

*Brasilia is risky and I love risk. It's an adventure: it brings me face to face with the unknown. I'm going to speak words. Words have nothing to do with sensations. Words are hard stones and sensations are ever so delicate, fleeting, extreme.*¹⁸

But, as Lispector remarks elsewhere, while words might have nothing to do with sensations, they are nonetheless a way to explore reality: 'Writing is the method of using the word as bait: the word fishing for whatever is not word.'¹⁹ Remarks like these reveal the influence of Jewish Kabbalistic mysticism: the belief that as the world was created by letters, the arrangement and rearrangement of words has a spiritual, cosmic dimension. It is no surprise then that throughout Lispector's text, Brasilia appears both as an artificial linguistic construction and an actual place, in an impossible, but persistent attempt to bridge language and sensation.

The stylistic figure Lispector mostly uses as 'bait' is the metaphor. While sometimes regarded as a mere ornament of communication (including architectural communication), a metaphor is more than just an implicit comparison, based on certain similarities. Metaphorical language is in fact a powerful, embodied way of engaging with the environment, connecting different domains of experience and cognition. As Lakoff and Johnson have



Brasilia's central axis. Photo by Julien Vandeburie, 2004. Licensed under CC BY-SA.

demonstrated in their *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999), metaphors are at the root of our conceptual thinking, linking concrete bodily experiences to more abstract conceptualizations.²⁰

Literary, poetic language strengthens and entangles this embodiment even more. Kristeva interprets metaphors as an example of how the semiotic operates in language: based on primary psychic processes of condensation and displacement, metaphors challenge fixed meaning, travelling not only between fields of knowledge, but also, synesthetically, between different fields of perception and affection. Metaphor is language in movement. The identification that a metaphor implicitly offers (X is defined in equation to Y); is at the same time a radical form of othering (X becomes Y, which in turn also changes). A metaphor is thus always a form of reality transformation, especially in literary metaphors, where the ground of comparison is not always obvious. This transformation not only involves the objects or people that are expressed in metaphorical language, but also the body of the one who uses them. Metaphors blur the clear distinctions between words and senses, but also between I and not-I. For Kristeva, metaphors go back to that moment of primary identification with a first non-I, a moment where the clear borders between I and not-I are not yet fully established. It is the moment the infant starts to identify with visual and auditory rhythms, patterns, borrowing from them a first structuring in the chaos of impressions, affects, drives.²¹ Because the metaphor can, simultaneously, be and not be the sign for whatever element it refers to in reality, it allows for a relationship with this very reality that is either not yet (for the child), or no longer (for the writer), understood within the strict binary oppositions of language. Fernanda Negrete argues that Lispector's work 'involve[s] non-oppositional modes of relation that blur the ego-sustaining distinction between bodies and entities in favor of an uncanny intimacy'.²² The metaphor is indeed the ideal linguistic instrument to express such an uncanny, intimate relation to the environment. This holds especially true for Lispector's description of Brasilia, for which she uses plenty of synesthetic metaphors, very often link-

ing visual to auditory sensations. Brasilia has a 'visual silence that I love',²³ or: 'It is a high-high-high-pitched violin. It needs a cello.'²⁴ Lispector not only compares Brasilia to music, but also to the sound of her typewriter going 'click-click-click',²⁵ blurring the act of writing with the act of experiencing a city. The metaphor gets even more complicated when the sound of the typewriter becomes that of a walking cane: 'Brasilia is the ghost of an old blind man with a cane going click-click-click.'²⁶

In another constellation of metaphors that organize the text and conflate writing with dwelling, Lispector compares Brasilia to a language. A strange language, at the same time incomplete – 'It has no nouns. It's all adjectives.' 'Brasilia is XPTR is. . . as many consonants as you like but not a single vowel to give you a break.'²⁷ – and rigidly structured: 'It is too grammatical for my taste. The worst thing is it demands grammar *but I don't know, sir, I do not know the rules.*'²⁸ We can relate this to the Kabbalistic influences in Lispector's poetics. The lack of written vowels is not unlike Hebrew, where these are only inserted while reading: a beautiful metaphor for the interaction of the semiotic (the body) and the symbolic structure (the city of Brasilia).

Not only the borders between the text and the real city are blurred, but also those between the narrator and the city, creating indeed a truly 'uncanny intimacy'. The narrator projects herself onto Brasilia, like when she describes the city as 'the image of my insomnia . . . my insomnia is neither pretty nor ugly, my insomnia is me myself, it is lived, it is my astonishment. It is a semicolon'.²⁹ The 'semiotic' volatility energizing the language also becomes evident in the way Lispector's metaphors evolve and resist any fixation. Like when she juxtaposes her visit to Brasilia with a banal visit to the dentist. This opens up a whole series of metaphors within the same field of reference, but from a logical point of view each metaphor excludes the others: 'Brasilia has no cavities',³⁰ 'Brasilia smells like toothpaste',³¹ 'Brasilia is a chipped tooth right in front',³² 'Brasilia is a dentist's metal tool'.³³

In another set of metaphors focusing on the mouth, the same shifting identification happens: 'Oh how I smoked and smoked in Brasilia! Brasilia is a Hollywood-brand filtered cigarette.'³⁴ This is a metaphor that at first sight seems logical. After all, we can say that we 'inhale an atmosphere' of a specific place, and the reference to Hollywood connotes the exquisite, unreal nature of Brasilia. But then she personifies Brasilia: 'Brasilia uses a diamond-studded cigarette holder.'³⁵ From the smoking woman 'inhaling' Brasilia, Brasilia itself becomes a woman who smokes (What? Her inhabitants, visitors?). The metaphor gets even more complicated, when the reader recalls earlier references to smoking in the text, where Lispector alludes to the typical lack of street corners in Brasilia: 'If there are no corners, where do the prostitutes stand smoking?'³⁶ and: 'Will smoking be banned? Will everything be banned, my God?'³⁷

The same disorientation occurs in another set of strange metaphors that return throughout the text, in which she compares Brasilia to a tennis court.³⁸ Again, the poetic metaphor makes sense, as we understand the ground for comparison: the grid, the lines, the neatness, the flatness of the area can all indeed be associated with a tennis court. But then the metaphor becomes surreal: 'Didn't I say that Brasilia is a tennis court? Because Brasilia is blood on a tennis court.'³⁹ A bit further: 'Remember how I mentioned the tennis court with blood? Well the blood was mine, the scarlet, the clotting was mine.'⁴⁰ Underneath all these metaphors, from the dentist ('drilling'), to the smoking ('burning'), to the tennis court ('bleeding'), intrusive violent actions are suggested. And it cannot be distinguished whether this violence comes from the narrator or the city. At one point, Brasilia is the place 'where my ice-cold crimes find space',⁴¹ inducing a sense of guilt: 'Why do I feel so guilty there? What did I do wrong?'⁴²

Some pages later, the adjective of 'ice-cold' is used again, but now to describe not the crimes of the guilty writer, but those of the guilty city: 'I'm going to get you, Brasilia! And you'll suffer terrible torture at my hands! You annoy me, o ice-cold Brasilia, pearl among swine. Oh apocalyptic one.'⁴³

'Above all you are the guilty one, Brasilia. However, I pardon you. It's not your fault you're so lovely and beautiful and poignant and mad.'⁴⁴ It is these elusive metaphorical fields that make 'Brasilia' such an extraordinary reading experience: both the subject (the writer) and the object (the city) are in a constant flux of identification and alienation. The borders between I and not-I, between inner and outer, become permeable. Is Brasilia outside or inside Lispector? 'So here is everything I vomited up',⁴⁵ she bluntly begins the account of her visit in 1974.

This uncertainty provokes a sense of abjection, of fear, which runs as an affective refrain throughout Lispector's text: 'It was built with no place for rats. A whole part of us, the worst, precisely the one horrified by rats, that part has no place in Brasilia.'⁴⁶ 'I am drawn here by whatever frightens me in myself.'⁴⁷ 'I have a panicked fear of it.'⁴⁸ Until the very last sentence, which simply reads: 'I'm utterly afraid.'⁴⁹

As Kristeva argues, a sense of abjection and anxiety appears whenever the subject feels his identity as a separate being threatened, and the risk of disappearing in an amorphous reality emerges: 'If they took my picture standing in Brasilia, when they developed the photograph only the landscape would appear.'⁵⁰ In the same way the narrator feels like she's dissolving into the landscape, she seems to disintegrate into language: 'I am no more than phrases overheard by chance.'⁵¹ In the trajectory of this text, the writing subject loses its fixed, delineated position from which to approach reality: meaning becomes fluid and the binary oppositions are deconstructed, especially the opposition between life and death. At one moment, Brasilia is even suggested to be the afterlife: 'I died, one day I opened my eyes and there was Brasilia.'⁵² But in another part of the text, Brasilia stands for the exact opposite, the impossibility to die: 'In Brasilia there is practically nowhere to drop dead',⁵³ and later, Brasilia is suddenly a murderer: 'I died. I died murdered by Brasilia.'⁵⁴

What Kristeva writes about the poetry of Baudelaire can *a fortiori* be used for Lispector's prose: 'The atomized Self can only be centered or written as *metaphor*. Conveyance. *Metaphorein*. Not a transfer toward an object but "levitation", lifting the self toward an invisible Other.'⁵⁵ And just like with Baudelaire, in Lispector's work this 'invisible Other' is given religious overtones. For Kristeva, literature indeed becomes a substitute for a religion that is able to welcome these affects of aggression and desire, providing them with an imagination, an expression in a secular society. Precisely because of the sense of self-loss both experiences evoke, the sense of abjection is similar to the sublime ecstasy of a mystic experience. For Lispector, this mystic experience is not grounded in some kind of transcendental realm, but immanent to life itself. It is the same ambiguous religious sentiment that is also present in her text on Brasilia. The topic of destructive aggression and death, which is implicitly and explicitly present in the text, is only one part of a very ancient mythological topic, where death often implies rebirth: the self needs to be destroyed in order to transform into another mode of existence. In Lispector's Brasilia we find a cryptic remark about God in which the grammatical transgression echoes this mystical transgression: 'Oh how I love you and I love so much that I die you.'⁵⁶

This mythical archetype of death and rebirth helps to better understand some obscure sentences: 'Why haven't they erected right in the city center a great white Egg? It is because there is no center. But it needs the egg.'⁵⁷ Or other references to fertility and (re)birth: 'Pure protein, you are. You have fertilized me.'⁵⁸ 'Warning: there is sperm in the air.'⁵⁹ A bit further in the text, this theme gets its most explicit formulation: 'Brasilia is an orange construction crane fishing out something very delicate: a small white egg. Is that white egg me or a little child born today?'⁶⁰

So, while there is a sense of mutual aggression in Lispector's relationship with Brasilia, the city offers at the same time a chance for existential transformation, like when she identifies herself with the interior light in Niemeyer's famous cathedral: 'I am completely magical and my aura is bright blue

just like the sweet stained glass in the church I mentioned. Everything I touch, is born.⁶¹

Literature as 'Liminal Phenomenology' in Architecture Criticism

Of course, at first sight, Lispector's surreal and bizarre imagination seems to reveal more about the obsessions of the writer – both the theme of motherhood (linked to a sense of guilt and crime) and that of the egg frequently appear in her work⁶² – than about Brasilia. By mixing private obsessions into her account of Brasilia, it is clear that she deforms the actual city. But giving an objective, neutral analysis of a specific place is of course not what literary discourse has to contribute to architecture criticism. Using literature as a supplementary form of epistemology reveals less obviously aspects, because it allows personal affects, emotions and associations to fully resonate. So when Lispector writes about a 'religious atmosphere I felt from the first instant, and that I denied',⁶³ this is more than just creative freedom, it is rather, perhaps, a thematic counterpoint to the rationalist, secular worldview generally associated with Brasilia. For the religious atmosphere she detects was actually there from the beginning. James Holston mentions a new spiritist cult emerged during the construction of Brasilia, the *Valley of the Dawn*.⁶⁴ While the design of Brasilia celebrates modern and fast forms of actual transportation (cars, of course, but also – given the form of the *plano piloto* – the airplane), it is fascinating to see that a very ancient form of spiritual transportation – the soul flight during an altered state of consciousness – was also performed in contemporary animistic rituals. But as Holston makes clear, these new forms of animistic practices used the contemporary scientific, technological and bureaucratic discourses of the modern state. As a case study, Holston discusses the ritual of a trial that 'mimicked the juridical system', staging a performance of guilt and redemption. It is fascinating to notice that this topic of judgement also runs as a thematic thread through Lispector's text, for example in the following, paradoxical sentence: 'I treat the Judge well, a judge is Brasilia. But I won't sue Brasilia. It hasn't wronged me.'⁶⁵

For Holston 'secularisation does not exclude sacralisation'.⁶⁶ He compares the spiritist cult to the messianistic aspirations of Brasilia itself, its modernist desire to renew the order to change society and create a better future. In a similar vein, Jonas Staal argues that the dream of social engineering that led to Brasilia resonated with earlier, more religious, visions. Most notably by Don Bosco, who had a 'holy dream' about a Promised Land in the inlands of Brazil.⁶⁷ Staal compares the urban design of Brasilia with another spiritist movement, *Nosso Lar*, and just like Holston, points out the remarkable similarities between the design philosophy of the actual city and the virtual spiritual city. Sometimes, the actual and the spiritual space coincide, even. This is most remarkable in Niemeyer's Congress building, which for some believers started to function like a contemporary Stonehenge: 'to the moment every year when the sun rises between the twin towers of the Congress building, a moment now freighted with alleged mystical significance.'⁶⁸

For Holston, this kind of religious imagination is far from a backlash, a reactionary response to the secular modernity of which Brasilia seems to be the urban incarnation. For him, both Brasilia and the spiritist movement developed in Brasilia are 'versions of the same paradigm of modernity.'⁶⁹ As he argues, these religious movements 'on the margins of the modern state can articulate a critical imagination for their members. They can open people's minds to fundamental conflicts at the heart of modern society and offer languages, concepts, techniques, intellectual passion, and confidence to engage them.'⁷⁰ They help their followers 'to acquire a new sense of self, a new structure of thought, feeling, and practice.'⁷¹ Holston's remarks could also be used to describe the role of literature as a modern, secular religion, especially in regard to Lispector's work. Her modernist writings can be seen as another 'version of the same paradigm' to which Brasilia also belongs, an experimental search for 'a new sense of self, a new structure of thought, feeling, and practice'. And while religious dis-

course runs the risk of becoming sectarian and bigoted, literature remains always explicitly fictional, textual.

It seems that in its critique of modernist architecture, the phenomenology of architecture risks downplaying the ethical programme of modernism as a quest for the unknown, unexplored domains of human experience. Lispector's work makes clear that architecture, just like any other cultural artefact, can be an inspiration for such an experimental quest. Her text provides, to use the same term with which Holston defines the spiritist movement, a form of 'critical imagination' that challenges the implicit frames of thinking, feeling and perceiving.

Lispector's literary modernism is also a form of phenomenology, revaluating sensual and affective experiences – but it is a 'liminal phenomenology', as Marder calls it.⁷² Precisely by taking into account the workings of the semiotic in language, Lispector's writing engages in an intense, extreme relationship with the environment. It can then grasp something of this 'delicate and difficult reality' beyond the normal frames of interpretation. Obviously, Lispector's 'Brasilia' is a textual construction, a dust bowl of metaphors in which the borders between body and city, self and other, fantasy and reality become blurred. But it is precisely this kind of experimental writing that generates new insights into the spatial experience. Lispector's work shows that, in order to translate them into good architecture or urbanism, the phenomenology of architecture should not only focus on experiences of sensual and emotional well-being. Her writing urges us not to forget the transgressive, violently affective relationship bodies have with the built environment. Failing to do so would otherwise lead the phenomenology of architecture to make the same mistake the modernist urbanists made: repressing crucial aspects of the human experience.

- 1 Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva* (New York: New Directions, 2012), 76.
- 2 Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 17-19.
- 3 Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), x.
- 4 See: Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
- 5 See: Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
- 6 See Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).
- 7 Kenneth Frampton, quoted in: Richard J. Williams, 'Brasilia after Brasilia', *Progress in Planning* 67 (2007), 301-366: 303.
- 8 Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, 43.
- 9 James Holston, *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).
- 10 Robert Hughes, quoted in: Paul James, *Urban Sustainability in Theory and Practice: Circles of Sustainability* (Oxon/New York: Routledge, 2015), 10.
- 11 Clarice Lispector, *Complete Stories* (London: Penguin Books, 2015), 571-600.
- 12 Benjamin Moser, *Why This World: A Biography of Clarice Lispector* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 28.
- 13 Hélène Cixous, quoted in: Irving Goh, 'Writing, Touching, and Eating in Clarice Lispector: Água Viva and A Breath of Life' *MLN* 131 (2016), 1347-1369: 1351, n7.
- 14 Lispector, *Complete Stories*, 576.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 584.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 576.
- 17 *Ibid.*, xxii. Quoted by Benjamin Moser in his introduction.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 592.
- 19 Lispector, quoted in: Goh, 'Writing, Touching, and Eating', 1352, n9.
- 20 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
- 21 Kristeva, *Tales of Love*, 333.
- 22 Fernanda Negrete, 'Approaching Impersonal Life with Clarice Lispector', *Humanities* 7/55 (2018), 1-18: 5.
- 23 Lispector, *Complete Stories*, 573.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 584.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 *Ibid.*, 585.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 591, italics in original.

- 29 Ibid., 571.
- 30 Ibid., 577.
- 31 Ibid., 578.
- 32 Ibid., 584.
- 33 Ibid., 590.
- 34 Ibid., 592.
- 35 Ibid., 594.
- 36 Ibid., 578.
- 37 Ibid., 580.
- 38 Ibid., 576
- 39 Ibid., 581.
- 40 Ibid., 587.
- 41 Ibid., 573.
- 42 Ibid., 581.
- 43 Ibid., 583.
- 44 Ibid., 586.
- 45 Ibid., 575.
- 46 Ibid., 572.
- 47 Ibid., 573.
- 48 Ibid., 581.
- 49 Ibid., 598.
- 50 Ibid., 573.
- 51 Ibid., 577.
- 52 Ibid., 571.
- 53 Ibid., 581.
- 54 Ibid., 590.
- 55 Kristeva, *Tales of Love*, 336, italics in original.
- 56 Lispector, *Complete Stories*, 587.
- 57 Ibid., 581.
- 58 Ibid., 582.
- 59 Ibid., 583.
- 60 Ibid., 592.
- 61 Ibid., 596.
- 62 See: Moser, *Why This World*, 275 ff.
- 63 Lispector, *Complete Stories*, 575.
- 64 James Holston, 'Alternative Modernities: Statecraft and Religious Imagination in the Valley of the Dawn', *American Ethnologist* 26/3 (2000), 605-631.
- 65 Lispector, *Complete Stories*, 698.

- 66 Holston, 'Alternative Modernities', 612.
- 67 Jonas Staal, *Nosso Lar/Brasilia: Spiritism – Modernism – Architecture* (São Paulo/Rio de Janeiro: Capacete & Jap Sam Books, 2014), 57.
- 68 Bellos, quoted in: Williams, 'Brasilia after Brasilia', 334
- 69 Holston, 'Alternative Modernities', 606.
- 70 Ibid., 627.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Michael Marder, 'Existential Phenomenology According to Clarice Lispector', *Philosophy and Literature* 37/2 (2013), 374-388: 375.