The *Fragamap* : Sensation Recollected in Tranquillity

'Precision and familiarity, minute details of memorized Self, regions we know by heart, paths we smell and feel, intimate nearness. … Every walk in a strange town ends in drawing. … Questions about similarity. The drawings have their own way with neither connection to the foreign place nor to the Self, and yet we know immediately which belongs to which, as if we can trace its songlines by mere empathy.
Jürgen Partenheimer *Über das Wissen. (Für Richard Tuttle)*, in Richard Tuttle, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, 1990.

The standard cartographic method involves a journey to a remote locale and from there a return to the point of origin. The movement is of a going-out to a place, which is apart and a coming-back to a collection of parts, for the expedition's place of origin will later become a place of assembly. The assembly orders and codifies information as it brings it together. The method necessarily establishes hierarchies of place, of information and of operations. The life at the locale will be collected as a series of simple facts, which will then be resurrected as a potent image.

In the case of the *fragamap* these systems are again in operation, but their modes and chronologies are altered, subverted and even reversed. The specifics of the cartographic methodology are here emphasised, or circumvented. It is the original experience of a place, rather than data collected at a place, which is crucial to the process. The fragmentation of the accepted and established processes is indicated in the designation *fragamap*, as well as in the disparate nature of the recalled experience. Here the information concerning the locale is not rebuilt according to sets of predefined rules, for it has not been rendered as codified information to begin with. Instead it has been experienced and retained as a memory. The memory is later recalled and the *sensation* is re-established. And it is this process, which then inscribes the *fragamap* on paper. So often, too, it is the experience of a city, which is remembered, rather than that of a landscape. The primary experience is complex.

The *fragamap* recreates the cityscape, which it appears to represent and from which it appears to derive. It re-engineers the city as it charts the artist's own experience of it. (Even a smell is not neglected). This it does later on, for delay is an ineluctable element within the whole. The delay both allows a memory to be entered into the necessary systems and also complicates that memory, fragments it. The memory must await the tranquillity offered by the studio in order to play its part in the production of the *fragamap*.

The arena of production, the worktable in the studio, becomes the privileged site within the production process. The *fragamap* is enfolded, and does unfold, within repetition. Its role is to reinvent, to reorder a set of, or series of, primary experiences. To draw it is to *go back*. As a constant return to an origin, it differentiates itself from mapping. The private cartographical activity of the *fragamap* involves going over once again the roads and paths, not as they appear in the city, but as they appear in the memory. It is to re-engineer habit, to rewrite the habitual paths which have been traced between one place and another. It is to derive from habit, from habitual forms, the lineaments of an experiential trace, one which is as ephemeral as the progress of the individual through the city is to the city itself. The city has been read again and again as a series of fleeting experiences, but it is then allowed to retreat. The city is replaced by the desktop, which is now the cartographic site, in an important sense far from the city, and one at which memories are recalled, re-experienced and collected together. The method is complex, for it is a filtering process in which the raw sensations themselves are brought into a

system, but a system which is so different from that of the cartographer and one with which we, at first, are unfamiliar.

There would be many difficulties involved in the production of any expected coherence within the *fragamap* if this coherence would be typical of that which we associate with a map, but such coherence is not an issue here. In a scientific cartography, requiring as it does strict procedures and a datum from which to operate, the question will always remain as to whether a map can be proved to be accurate, in the private cartographies of the *fragamap*, in which the datum may multiply, may even wander, may finally become identical to the desktop upon which the *fragamap* itself is produced, all the issues concerning such accuracy are turned about. Precision becomes a question of familiarity. The scientific is replaced by the private. Facts become experience.

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