

# Croac Hunting and the Five Sided Cube<sup>1</sup>

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The mineral had the shape of a five-sided cube and enjoyed a privileged position. It could be seen lying half buried into the earth, only a few centimetres from a female frog specimen and just two metres away from a constantly croaking male frog specimen. Such mineral was aware of the role it was playing within the *mise en scène* of the theatrical stage created in its ecosystem.

One might say that it lacked the faculty of the conscience and that its linguistic ability was restricted—although not inexistent—; however its capacity to experiment, to surrender itself to the evolution of experience, was really high, even higher than that possessed by the frog specimens that were to its right and to its left. The mineral was as much aware of being in such place as the frogs were, as the leaves on which the latter sit were, or as the individuals able to read these lines written here were. Its presence was tearing the viscous fabric of reality in the same way that the reader's does when facing this book. The mineral considered that its quietness and apparent silence should not be confused with its ability to feel, to be simply there, affecting itself and its environment.



In fact, it knew itself very well and was right in understanding that, to be the master of its fate and to move around, a locomotive of its own was not needed. Its adequacy to experience became evident whenever it changed places or got broken off. Despite the fact that the mineral was prone to mutation, it was always there, witnessing every collision, every erosion process, every rising above itself and every change of direction imposed on the air.



The green frogs *Agalychnis callidryas* are perfectly aware of their need, as a species, to communicate with other kingdoms. Their eloquence resides in knowing that the order of communication among individuals belonging to their own species or individuals from other—such as the vegetal or mineral—kingdoms is simultaneously identical and different.

<sup>1</sup> This text was published in 2015 by FICUS [figures of rehearsal] and adapted for the video essay entitled Moiré (and the vocal cord of pulsation).

Frogs, throughout their evolutionary process, have learned from stones that every language involves an order of symbolic mediation requiring a certain distance among interlocutors, whether they are baboons, frogs, pyrite cubes, discourses or rubber trees. The frogs from the *Agalychnis callidryas* species and the trees belonging to the unigeneric tribe *Ficeae* have developed the capacity to communicate quite efficiently, although not without the occasional help of some external mediator.

Trees, and especially their leaves, are familiarized with the size and weight of frogs. Leaves receive impulses from frogs through the touch of their legs and exceedingly, through the touch of their belly. The amount of air a frog breathes is transferred to the leaf through the frequent friction of its belly against the surface of the leaf. Hence, it is easy to imagine how the leaf welcomes the impulses of the frog via a sort of Morse code. In turn, the leaf communicates with the frog through touch, sight and smell. The last one is delocalized and occurs indirectly, that is, the ficus, devoid of the smelling apparatus characteristic of the animal kingdom, benefits from the *Chloroflexi* bacterium in order to smell. This organism, extremely sensitive to any gas found in the atmosphere, synthesizes the gases of the environment giving rise to a kind of allogeneous energy, which is inoculated and easily assimilated by the *Ficacae* arboreal tribe.



Paradoxically, the effectiveness of language between these frogs and the leaves of the ficus lies in a lack of consensus. What to the frog means one thing, to the leaf is something completely different, but, in each case, the exchange of symbols generates an intelligible order of representation





The social condition of Keith Hunting, an observer and an enthusiast of botany and zoology, allowed him to engage in non-productive tasks. When he was not concentrated on studying and writing epic works, Keith devoted his time to observe the animal species living on his lands. In spring, he liked to approach the pool formed in the lower part of his property, where he would spend

hours watching the behavior of the animals inhabiting that small and provisional ecosystem. His attention was particularly drawn to amphibians, since he admired them for their adaptive capacity and tendency to change. Even though he ignored that amphibians had been the first vertebrates to adapt to earthly life, Keith noticed that, when growing, amphibians undergo a drastic metamorphosis which lead them, for instance, from bronchial to lung breathing. In his studying days, Keith had undertaken the task of translating *Naturalis Historia* into English, a work by the Younger Pliny of the first century B. C., from where he learned how cunning some specimens of this green frog species, *Agalychnis callidryas*, were. Keith found out that during the mating season, most of male specimens croaking in order to call the attention of of them wait patiently in silence next to the night, and when the latter, are replaced by the most intelligent pretending to be them, succeed in the strongest, but also the most cunning individuals, get the reward of leaving offspring.



spend all night long females. However, some those croaking throughout exhausted, give up, they specimens that, copulating. Thus, not only

*Heath was ten years old when his father took him for the first time to the pool and explained him how reproduction was accomplished by some green frog specimens. Keith wanted his son to learn the art of enticement and persuasion from male green frogs. But Heath preferred to pay attention to female specimens as he thought that they were, undoubtedly, sharper than males. Females, far from being duped, know very well that those males that have been croaking throughout the night have enough energy to copulate, precisely because they have kept it instead of losing it by croaking. We should choose our readings by the smell books give off. The last thing to be done so as to know an author's thinking is to read what he wrote in his living days. The most common Spanish contemporary edition of Blaise Pascal's Thoughts is a device safeguarding the content of the book through an editorial mechanism designed to complicate its reading. Its design, texture and binding share identical functions with the microscopic thorns present in the small leaves of the ficus.*

The strategy is not new, since it was already used by the famous Muhammad Benjalipa

in his catalogue on medieval encyclopedias, whose margins were impregnated with yellow hemlock to prevent the mischievous baboons from learning to read. Reading, according to the baboons, was a sort of experiment done with the whole body. If reading such book involved tasting the poison and dying, they would be willing to die knowing for sure that such experience not



only affected language, but also its surroundings and outskirts. After all, the baboons were

aware that the poison would introduce some book traces into their body, hardly to be known otherwise. The only available Spanish edition of the theatre play *King Ubu* by Alfred Jarry protects itself in a similar but less drastic way. Just one reading is enough to make its short pages to inevitably fall apart, which consequently leads the book to turn into a pile of papers, comparable to that one gathered up inside a car after having collected the sex advertisements found on the windshield. Thereby, it is not surprising that Carabanchel's most famous club is called *Stagger me sideways* and that it is run by a Mr. Alfredo. This man knows well enough that rehearsing is not about carrying out something in accordance with a pre-established plan, but rather to bring order to a heap of papers.