

The Editor to the Reader

AS I GO AHEAD

ALFREDO CRAMEROTTI, EDITOR 'CRITICAL PHOTOGRAPHY' SERIES

Since its origins, the relationship between photography and landscape has been political as well as representational: one way, among many, to understand photography as a visual language that constitutes itself as it takes place in every moment and corner of the planet. Photography is, quite simply and endlessly complexly, the common substrata of our daily experience, wherever we live.

What underpins this book is how the making of landscape imagery throughout humankind has formed those very landscapes. The matter is not what landscape photography ordinarily means, since I believe there is little sense in identifying photographic genres. Rather, what is at stake is that places are the stuff that engenders stories, not the other way round. Between the story (of a landscape, in this case) and the image, photography acts by shaping what is both conceivable and actual. Hence my assertion that photography is often a political act, even more so when forming a collective image of a place. Although being a universal language, photography is a very complicated language; it is influenced not only by techniques and processes and their limitations, but also by the cultural and political environment in which it works. Even so, it is not the photographer who takes the centre stage, nor the subject of the photograph; it is the camera's ability to translate and transform the material world.

I may be enriched by a photographic experience in relation to a landscape, or disappointed altogether, but I would not be untouched. Photographic image-making is a process orientated towards the future: a starting point, a moment in which something is put in motion, rather than a final recording act. It is a difference to bear in mind.