



Fig.150 Screenshot of a video shot in Amsterdam. While I have been progressively moving away from cities, with the years I have seen them radically transformed. Perhaps they were not literally flooded by the much expected rise of the sea level but by tourists and later pandemics and more human triggered transformations. In this respect it is interesting that I chose a mountain top as the place where ultimately the resulting videos can be viewed inside an ark, a precarious shield that is however literally detached from any urban grid. This choice was not merely a personal caprice to become autonomous but it has been my serious attempt to reconsider society and how it should resume a more organic type of living from scratch. Here I am not trying to say that big cities are bad and nature is good but I am trying to point out that the balance between city and nature has been lost and civilization has dangerously broken away from the latter. My aim is then that of proposing a reconnection of both humans to their own nature and of society to their natural environment but alas I understand that dreadful catastrophes ought to occur before this reset can be even taken into consideration.

## **PLACES 06**

The cities in which I have filmed the most public spaces are Stockholm, Shanghai, Boston, Venice and Amsterdam. These cities are all near the sea and might one day cease to exist if the water level keeps rising. To some extent this is happening because these cities have adopted a rather arrogant attitude of wanting to sustain themselves indirectly, not engaging with their surroundings but relying on a ruthless type of global exploitation. As much as I love cities and their complexities and all the human richness they offer, I have noticed how since the beginning of the

project they have turned into black stars, with a dominant gentrification spreading out from their centers and removing the life that was so characteristic of them. From centers of life they have turned more and more into open air museums free of any possible contaminant. This hyper sterility however has to cope with increasing crises almost as if rather than museums cities around the world are preparing to be hospitals for devastating occurrences such as pandemics and maybe even the great flood that has so much been talked about.

The fundamental problem is however that while a ruling class is constituting itself inside cities a form of tyranny has emerged and that is that of saving these cities at all costs. If mountains and forests have to be destroyed so as to build enormous dikes all around these cities so as to make sure they survive the very flood they themselves generate, no one is likely to oppose. In other words to me society seems very stuck, unable to be flexible and improvise and experiment with new forms of living. Power in my opinion is what has cemented us in something that is likely to become our grave. In the past humanity was far more condescending to nature. Nature would manifest herself in certain ways and this or that populace would register it as an ammunition, eventually acting accordingly. Presently however we are stuck in our private properties and in our little careers and in the routines that the centralized bureaucracy have got us into. There is a whole technological apparatus that would enable us to be fully flexible and transfer our lives elsewhere if needed, all the global population could be nomadic and migrate according to seasons and natural cycles. Instead we are stuck in our artificial cycles and like an animal species that is too specialized and eventually goes extinct because it cannot adapt to changes we are also very likely to get extinct.

I think the origin of this total conformism that paralyzes us like frogs in front of a snake is centralization. In a decentralized setup, different kinds of life patterns could always be negotiated and invented as much as they were negotiated and invented in the stateless societies of the past. The snake to me is centralization itself under whose spell we are unable to bring forward our own initiatives which are the keys to prepare for the transformation that is occurring all around us. If the natural world is radically transforming, instead of transforming with it civilization is becoming more conservative, less keen to change. With the flood coming every nation sees it convenient to just shut its doors, seal

its windows and stay exactly where they are instead of creatively rethinking human life on earth. Humans are following their fears and certainly not their instinct. Their instinct would have long ago directed them to build new and more sustainable cities, cities without a center but with multitude of centers, garden cities, very well balanced like traditional cities with ways to practice self-reliance with the natural environment in which they live. Garden cities that do not demand its citizens to go work for any centralized institution or global corporation but invite people to take care of their own ecologies, of their neighborhoods.

I believe in people and their imagination and the amazing results they can achieve collaboratively but I see a big hinder in the prevailing centralization forcing them to comply with governments that have nothing at all to do with their local realities and which in fact uproots them from these realities and puts them into an unnecessary competition against one another and against the natural world as a whole. In this sense I do not advocate for a return to the wild but I do advocate for a disconnection with the central apparatus and total connection with the local, a connection that begin with the self and expands to the family and the immediate surrounding, a connection that takes the form of caring and nurturing this surrounding rather than following the advice of the authorities saying hands off of it you human monsters, we will take care of it and tell you how to go about. This seems to be more easily said than done but what I want to point out is that my life-project is an example of how to go about. Rather than attempting to promote a global revolution I have focused in nurturing my own ecology, my intimate sphere and with much persistence I came to a state of mindfulness that has enabled me to promote it to others as the most radical form of direct action in an environment that is fully dominated and dictated by the system. This is particularly important now that this system is attempting to penetrate the mind itself while also developing an artificial mind of its own.

With artificial intelligence picking up and with the most likely scenario that this intelligence will be used to enforce an even more tyrannical system, it is imperative to counter this by developing our natural intelligence into a form of autonomous mindfulness. The battle and the resistance here no longer seem to be in the physical world but it is also occurring at the mental level with the system turning its citizens into dull and obedient robots of some sort. The more artificial intelligence, the less natural

intelligence will be left. This is the ultimate stage and we can only fight it putting up barricades of content and meanings, creating the organic cities that are no more inside our own heads so as to one day after the struggle be able to recreate them, bring them back to life and with it the life of a new society back in the natural world.