UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO


"Subheritage" :
Empire, Mimesis, and Infrastructure in Modern Austria and Mexico.


A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

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in


Art History, Theory, and Criticism (Art Practice Concentration)


by


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DEDICATION

To Luz.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS


"Subheritage" :
Empire, Mimesis, and Infrastructure in Modern Austria and Mexico.


by


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Doctor of Philosophy in Art History, Theory, and Criticism (Art Practice Concentration).

University of California San Diego, 2019

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Prof. Norman Bryson, Co-Chair

This Dissertation attends to examine the significance of the key notions empire, mimesis and infrastructure through the study of selected historical materials and concepts distilled from my artistic practice. In the former case, the historical deploys a narrative upon the aesthetic and material dimensions of monumental heritage in the Austro Hungarian Empire and the Mexican Second Empire. As for the artistic side, it produces its own diagram, whose material existence

allows to weave theoretical and practice-based concepts throughout the entire work. In this sense, my approach attempts to treat selected narrative sources as materials rather than themes or periods, relating them by means of transitions, conceptual ramifications and the consequences of systematic critique. In this Dissertation there is no central character nor period, for its main aim is to articulate, through a theoretical pipetting, the interrelations between my artistic practice and the use of historical materials.

The notion of mimesis is posited as a medium whose uniformity problematizes the representation of imperial colonialism, establishing a conceptual framework so as to understand it less as an instrument than a medium tending toward isotropy. This hallucinatory dimension of mimesis is explored further by examining the interplay between identity and representation according to its ideological scope, where distinct figures (the subaltern, the minority, the melancholic) unpack fundamental relationships between allegory and death. Understood in material terms, such interplay can be translated according to tensions between the city and the urban, the classical and the baroque, the allegory and the metaphor. The imperial city of Vienna serves as the *locus* for the materialization of the dilemma between identity and representation, the place where the monuments build the sense of the antique as by-product of the modern. The notion of *Empathy* proves crucial here as it relates the psychological meaning of architecture and of the modern, but only insofar as it conceals its own hallucinatory dimension, one that articulates the unevenness between manual and intellectual labor. During the Mexican Second Empire, the translation of mimesis into the material becomes radicalized with the implementation of infrastructures such as roads and railways, which are indebted to the ruins of

bygone empires. Finally, the empathy toward monuments acquires a messianic dimension, one

that is tracing the promise of an imminent rupture with the imperial sense of time.

The Apophenia of the Gods

The sense is provided, delivered from a previous operation that facilitates certain acts such as to associate, to tell, to relate or to explain. But the sense is preceded by the occult, and without it, the truth would be irresistible in its obscene overabundance, in its inextinguishable ambivalence. To occult is the general principle of the *order*, which is here the concealment that privileges only one unique factor. In this way, the order would be the repetition of a survival.

The order of a column, for example, points to a disintegration index, to other orders, other hypodermic possibilities that become shattered into kindlings and evaporate as rocky sweat during its very inception. The classical orders do exist leaving behind a heap of rocks whose reality operates outside of what the order makes, in the occult. The things acquire sense occasionally, stemming a rumor, a background distortion above the horizon of ideas. At the same time, we do realize the idea and its chiseling, its leftovers that were concealed for making an order and bringing a sense. These ideas, extending as stretching rods, cutting the air in its most minute fringe, are not completely ours. Their rumor is, at the same time, the suspicion about its graft and deviation. A diverse origin for the scientific sense that wants to return from ambiguity to uniformity, from the causal to the ordinary.

The modern solace wrinkles the mind in a sector where it whispers to itself. It leaves hidden messages behind folds and hallucinates alibis of order. In its most extraordinary areas, these whispers want to become a remote chant, an idea that does not feign a second, inner voice, nor turns thought into its own captions, but simulates a distant and unknowable otherness. The horror in the order of the sense (in the privilege of a unique explanation), is indicated in 1919 by Viennese psychoanalyst Victor Tausk in his text *On the Origin of the "Influencing Machine" in Schizophrenia*.[1] Here it appears the rumor of thoughts supplemented by a distant apparatus *of mystic nature* whose structure feels coherent although it can never be fully explained: boxes, levers, wheels, buttons, batteries and cables descending to your bed and inoculating hallucinatory images, substituting emotions by means of waves or beams, weakening your body through the induction of corporal motion, cutaneous abscesses or seminal emissions, creating sensations without a possible description. The machine visualizes its functions insofar as these are inexplicable. What it is noticeable is the realization of persecution that, when operated by humans, are always men.

For Tausk the apparition of an influencing machine coincides with advances states of ego concealment. In the same way as "the unrecognized person in the dream is the dreamer himself,"[2] failing to describe the apparatus demonstrates that one is the machine itself. The case of Natalija A. pointed by the Viennese illustrates this apparent contradiction. During six years and a half, Natalija has been under the influence of an "electric machine fabricated in Berlin"[3] whose form is halfway an acephalic human torso and a velvety casket. As the influencing effects

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1      Here it has been employed Tausk, V. (1933) On the Origin of the "Influencing Machine" in Schizophrenia. In *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 2, pp. 519-556.
2      Tausk (1933: 192).
3      (1933: 191).

of the machine increase, it loses extremities, first turning bi-dimensional until finally disappearing. By the moment the machine has lost its genitals, Natalija's sexual drive has vanished as her memory; she is even unable to recall that the machine had once arms. The machine introduces the proofs of its own inexistence. It implants, so to speak, the residues of an anamnesis, of a vague indicial reminiscence in which its influencing effects predate its apparition. In the version of Natalija, the apparatus is manipulated by a suitor that after being rejected, fails on influencing her with the help of friends and relatives. It is only after such double frustration that the man recurred to the powers of the Berlinese machine. However, Natalija had a certain familiarity with the apparatus before falling under its influence due to a third-party conversation that she had eavesdropped, or perhaps, hallucinated.

This illusion of persecution, conspiracy or complot increments in its abstraction. First, as a person, then a group and finally as a remote machine that extends these illusions. In doing so, the machine lingers in the mind of its victims as a faded memento. It builds itself in the present through the fabrication of its own past. When finally appears as structure, it does so alongside with its own rumor, of an anterior shadow that was only half perceived. Tausk intuits in this gesture the recollection of old libidinal imagos, similar to the sensation of always have known the loving one. Here, the always necessary displacement (from the anthropomorphic to the machinic, from libido to structure, from reverie to rational explanation), demarcates an itinerary of repression. By inhibiting a transference of libido (for instance, towards Natalija's suitor), the internal cause disguises as external transference.

What is innate in libido (to inhabit a body that is all erogen), becomes organized through the discovery of a body that includes erogenous zones. This encounter requires to pass from libido (without consciousness of the separation body-world) to the autoerotic body that has been

singularized through processes of projection, satisfying an ego constructed by objects chosen by the libido and found by an intellectual, disembodied encounter. For Tausk, the schizophrenic phenomenon of symbolizing a body as a penis equals the representation of a pre-genital epoch.

So there is genitality in the form, but not in the event that creates it, being only "a mode of expression, a language in which phenomena existing prior to this means of expression are communicated." The picture, then, is "I am sexuality." But the context is, "I am wholly a genital."[4] The progressive transition of the influencing apparatus (from its apparition as a body to its abstraction as influencing machine), corresponds to the displacement of ego towards a diffuse sexual entity; genitals conceived by Tausk as "a machine independent of the aims of the ego."[5]

As we know, this machine is nothing but the body of the victim, now transposed as an influencing menace. When the machine is unveiled, the individual will is already at mercy of the external world, of an environment deprived of ego and memory in which thoughts are acquired as hallucinations.


In parallel to this remarkable activity, Tausk also describes how the apparatus supplements bidimensional images, complying with the functions of a magic lantern. As we have seen in the case of Natalija A., the lapse in which the bidimensional image occurs (when the arms of her Berlinese machine vanish), signals the increasement of abstraction; the transition from a machine that resembles a human body to another apparatus that works as a cluster of symbols, an aggregate of functions that can be intuited but not known. And, at the same time, this itinerary builds the past of the apparatus. The machine discovers that its influencing functions had existed as a rumor before its structural revelation; its activity becomes complete by

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4  (1933: 206).
5  (Ibid.)

introducing the inklings that reveal its falsehood. Through the remembrance of a hallucination, Natalija A. recalls the influencing symptoms before the machine appeared in its maximum abstraction. But similarly, this memory that would disintegrate the machine's operative reality (if the symptoms exist without the machine, this is not the origin), comes to the fore as the verification of its inhuman power of control, not only over Natalija, but "her mother, her physicians, her friends, all those who had her welfare at heart, came under the influence of this diabolical apparatus".[6]

This ability to incorporate the trace of falsehood as the necessary quality for the machine to operate is also correlative of Tausk's descriptions of the magic lantern, because "its structure harmonizes perfectly with the function attributed to it, and because it does not reveal any error of judgment beyond the fact of its non existence."[7] The functions of the magic lantern reveal simultaneously its produced effect (the image), and its trick (the realization that the image is illusory). This rational structure is thus enclosed, it is "impenetrable"[8] inasmuch as it does not permit that the image would act as an index of its own falsity: *Show me that nothing is left over or missing / Show me that you lie / You do not see an image / You see a machine that tells you / I am a lie/* is the rational, modern *dictum* in which the ego of images (their ability to hold secrets), circulates without the secret being unveiled. In the influencing machine happens similarly, almost identically; its operative truth is negated in its mode of production, and this is how it emerges as real.

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6      (1933: 191).
7      (1933: 190).
8      (Ibid.)

If the reason is verified in the encapsulation of things as false, the dream ubicates the dreamer as the body of these things. The construction of an influencing machine is the antidote against libidinal drives that confuse objects of desire for desiring bodies, bodies with genitals with entirely erogenous bodies. In their assembly phases, the machine summons itself from a retroactive absence, a sensation in a limb due to a libidinal overload. Then, as refusal and alienation of the sensation, dismissing it as something alien. Afterward, the machine emerges during its projection in the world. In this instance, the machine is either operated by an enemy or built as a cluster of instruments that, due to their libidinal overload have been evacuated and projected far beyond, where the machine exists. The terminal sense of this displacement lingers on a vague remembrance, the intuition of a sensation that once existed without the machine.

We obtain the introduction of a fabricated past that points to overidentification and occultation processes; for bodies that, by being conceived entirely as a genital denote a pre-genital era, or machinic functions concealing the existence of a human body whose internal processes have been prolapsed toward a distant space. Throughout these processes, there is a recurrent gesture which alters the (temporal or spatial) direction of the delirium. In *The Incipient Schizophrenia* (1958), Klaus Conrad develops the topological relationships between concealment and delirious outbreak by coining the term *apophenia*, which designates the simultaneous revelation of delirium and its reification.[9]

Along the phases of the schizophrenic outbreak described by Conrad we find a moment of initial tension that indicates the advent of an imminent event. This stretching of possibilities,

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[9] As Conrad himself annotates in his text, the term *Apophänie* can be translated as "becoming manifest. With two accents: to represent somebody as something." In Conrad, C. (1958) La esquizofrenia incipiente. In VVAA (1997) *Historia y teoría de la Psiquiatría I*. Madrid: Triacastela, my translation.

of polarization of what is coming towards extreme results does never "appears as something inconsequential." Here, to find the zone from where the psychological pressure is exerted results in a description of where it goes. We never find the obstacle that posits such pressure since it has been transformed in a "stimulus,"[10] in a milestone from which we move away or flow along with our delirium in full bloom. For Conrad this resembles the theatrical *trema*, the 'footlight fever' of who is leaping into a future scenic moment. Within *trema* there is no neutrality; only success or failure, ascension or downfall, to get trapped in the schizophrenic indicial domains or to escape from it. It is inside of this scenario without exit where the delirium unfolds, sprouting from the mental tension that turns the reality "imminent,"[11] never inconsequential. The mind soaks with delirium as a plant pot that has been excessively irrigated, now drunk of a "abnormal awareness of signification (...) a mode of experiencing such characteristic that extends to all imaginable modes of intention, from the sensible perception to the representation, the cognition without images and the acts of thought".[12]

And so, this state does not exist insularly, as an accent upon reality, but it occupies and varnishes with a unifying tone. Following Conrad, it outpaces the notion of delirium itself since the state is not secondary, but "central."[13] The apophenia is a mode of experimenting and living the total delirium as a continuous revelation. Without interruptions nor discontinuities, the delirium feigns itself as ordinary, it disguises of the manifest, of what has been perceived and thought without further ado, something "that does not need any demonstration."[14]

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10     (1958: 319).
11     (1958: 320).
12     (Ibid.)
13     (1958: 322).
14     (Ibid.)

Similarly to the influencing machine that once Tausk hallucinated as magic lantern, the index of apophenic reality exists as the totalization of its fabricated characters. The non-existence of such revelation (the apophenia taking over the realm of the epiphany), is such overabundant that becomes cohesive existence without fissures. Either because the image is the expression of a trick (and nothing more), or because the apophenia simplifies itself until it occupies reality (and nothing else), the image and the apophenic reality seek to exist within uniform continuities.

In this way, both exist and acquire an order through the concealment of everything except one trait, the one that permits to verify not the occultation, but the trick: "the world is still arranged, but it has been centered in a peculiar way, namely, it has suffered a sort of supraordination or orientation, similarly to the iron filings that «orientate» themselves within a magnetic field."[15]

This major order described by Conrad is not long-lived. Soon some traits of the apophenic experience acquire saliency; a sound heard here, or an object saw there prolapse, so to speak, from the isotropic field of the apophenia with a new and menacing content that destabilizes the continuity of sense. Conrad denominates this phase as "apocalyptic"[16] and brings us a paradox: "revealed images that do not keep any relationship of real sense."[17] Apocalyptic images, yes, but images that want to subtract themselves from the reality imposed by the apophenia. These apocalyptic images flay out apophenia as sheer structure, in a "splitting of archetypal, asyntactic images."[18] But in so doing, these images still preserve the experiential ruts of the apophenia, which lives within narration and feigns its death in the structure; in the zone

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15      (1958: 323).
16      (1958: 324).
17      (Ibid.)
18      (Ibid.)

where the words and the images are concatenated irrespective of their meaning. In its depth, the apophenia expresses its total dominance with surficial perturbations and death rattles out of verification, being a curly sea of delirium. Tausk and Conrad, the suicide and the nazi, want to schematize the way in which reality disguises of other, yet being the same. Both approaches to the mysterious making of the *order*; the occultation of all the hints that would unveil the concealment except one. The influencing machine whose functions predate itself and apocalyptic images that destabilize apophenia's uniformity (insofar as they radicalize it), are indications of processes where the mind and the image wrinkle and prolapse in very stretched, hypodermic fringes.

Who is looking here for a general principle of hallucinations will only find the bristling and expressive quills of what the order conceals, since totalizing the occult (the trick that allows its existence), only turns the machine more influencing, and the apocalyptic traits of the apophenia all the more credible and immersive. The findings of Tausk and Conrad are also *prolapses*; shadows of doubt that point to the indifferent reality of what is designated as the mind. And yet, both investigations depict an orderly gesture where the curtain opens and closes, at the same time, for what is mind and for what is image. This gesticulation, unique and useless as a crumpled paper, is the indication that we are about to examine.

What are the functions of the apocalyptic image in regards to the convincing endurance of the apophenia? The presence of these images is, at the same time, the rupture of apophenia's narrative continuity (something acquires an abnormal saliency), and the expression of its own structural insistence (the apocalyptic anomaly is not different, but equally apophenic.) We obtain here a distinction only apparent where the event does not presuppose antinomies but sustains

verisimilitude amongst differential scales of sameness. Once more: truth negated in its very execution, yet being truth because of that.

Such flexibility cannot be owned, for the apocalyptic images are not, in this regard, a product of knowledge. Their manifestation obeys to a different dimension, one in which the image performs the role of the Idea, a "given to be reflected upon."[19] Being given, these images are also true (an essential entity detached from the realm of coherence), but being apocalyptic, they don't incorporate phenomena since they refuse to break their bound with their own apophenia. Conrad examines the apocalyptic image as an externality, and fails in his "psychological arrangement"[20] that occults the image's apophenia so as to highlight it as exogenous to its own realm. By having his own *anasthrope,*[21] he looks at formal phenomena affecting a given, apophenic reality now concealed out of scientific necessity. For Conrad, schizophrenia is a process that could be investigated as form, as a *Gestaltanalyse* where the configuration of the symptoms can be boiled down to their "actual themes and intentional modes."[22] But the form of the apocalyptic image only tells us its own truth, not the path to its knowledge. In this sense, to catch one of these images implies to exercise it, hallucinating it before its own reality, though Conrad merely hallucinates his own system, ceaselessly repeating the emblem's text without drawing its semblance.

Within apophenia, you identify something, an eddy whose identity is an unintentional stream. True. You have seen something, an aura. Personhood whose un-intentionality is less a

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19    Benjamin, W. (1998) The Origin of the German Tragic Drama. London and New York: Verso, p. 30.
20    (Conrad 1958: 317).
21    Following Neisser apropos of the *krankhafte Eingenbeziehung* or 'morbid relationship' where "patients understand the representations that appear in their consciousness as being related especially to their own person." Neisser, C. (1982) Erörterungen über die Paranoia. In *Zentralblatt für Nervenheilkunde und Psychiatrie*. Leipzig: J. A. Barth. Quoted in Conrad (1958: 317).
22    (Ibid.)

mirage than a phantasm made out of elements, namely: "the socioeconomic structure mediated

all *geistige* production and hence expressed itself within cultural artifacts alongside (and often in

contradiction to) the subjective intention of their creators."[23] The interplay between -*sub* and

-*super* structures wrinkles history as a discarded paper, casting the faces of what is dynastic by

infolding its area from within; another semblance product of pressure, equally nonchalant and

excessive. In this scratch paper, the elite leaves its imprint as an *a priori,* as technical prophecy,

as a commodity that hones the horizon of its own teleology. And so, the merit wrinkles and folds

this paper as an "exact fantasy" one where "It was not imagination in the sense of subjective

projection beyond the existing world either into the past or into the future; it remained

'immanent,' within the material phenomena."[24] The terror of calling things by name (and having

them effectively summoned), points to the ancient dilemma of duplicity; which here is

understood less as the disavowal of personhood than the repetition of an idea. How to reconcile

the redemption of the language of names with the increasing reification of powerful objects?[25]


A tragedy is the language of the empire, one that becomes incarnated into the singularity

of the emperor, the recipient of history itself. A History whose expression (*Ausdruck*) is made of

institutional convulsions: "the depiction of princely vices, the insight into diplomacy and the

manipulation of all the political schemes."[26] By virtue of this embodiment of the nation, History

can be explained in its mother-tongue: empire.[27]  But the words of a translation have to be

equated, mirroring the authority of the original. A Haugwitz commented by Benjamin is the most

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23      Buck-Morss, S. (1977) The Origin of Negative Dialectics. New York: The Free Press, p. 79.
24      (1977: 86).
25      Objects whose autonomy is "so (...) all embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the
        relation between people" Lukács, G. (1967) History & Class Consciousness. London: Merlin Press, p. 1.
26      (Benjamin 1998: 62).
27      "The Trauerspiel, it was believed, could be directly grasped in the events of history itself; it was only a
        question of finding the right words." (1998: 62).

(and last) valuable commentator, for he equates *in length* his notes with the drama being translated; *two princes in the same bed*. An apophenic translation that occupies its given space and fully assimilates it by being the same.[28]

A thing that is not (but twice its negation) may well be an emblem. In *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama* (1928), Walter Benjamin also reflects on Saavedra Fajardo's engraving *Praesentia nocet*, a Moon's presence, just solid matter casting its shadow upon the Earth. The logic of such matter whispers the taboo; princes do not share the same sun, the same throne, the same kingdom, the same bed. Here, the sympathetic peril indicates the limits of imperial mimesis, namely; the emperor and its translation find a single terminal metaphor. Being both imperial, they are both tyrants. *Der purpur muss es decken* (The purple must cover it), whispers an ominous Benjamin that designates the color as the "ultimately"[29] property of the tyrant. But what Benjamin keeps hidden is the semblance of his *dictum*, being no other than the *Symbolum* number 16 in Saavedra Fajardo's: *purpura juxta purpura dijudicanda* (purple ought to be judged with purple). The emblem displays a table with two identical rolled pieces of clothing. In his *Idea de un príncipe político christiano* (Idea of a Christian Political Prince, 1642), the Spanish diplomat admonishes Your Highness not to compare his purple clothing "in plain light." Instead, one has to "put it next to the purple mantles of your glorious fathers and grandfathers, and notice if contradicts the purple of your virtues by looking on them."[30] By recalling the father and the grandfather, Your Highness also connects to the imperial lineage: *Felipe II*, *Carlos V*, *Felipe I*,

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28     "The radical consequence of assimilating the theatrical and the historical scene would have been that the agent of historical execution himself would have been called upon before all others for the writing of literature." (1998: 64).
29     (1998: 156).
30     "la ponga al lado de los purpúreos mantos de sus gloriosos Padres y Aguelos, y advierta si desdice de la púrpura de sus virtudes mirándose en ellas." Saavedra Fajardo, D. (1642) Idea de un principe politico christiano: rapresentada en cien empresas. Milan, p. 104, my translation.

*Fernando el Católico.*[31] Purple is the color of heritage, one that brights or fades next to corruption and virtue, but not because of them. The access to the imperial archive is in the need of both glory and downfall: "Your Highness would not only make this comparison between your virtues and actions, but also collate that of your ancestors, putting together the purples of some stained with vice, and of others resplendent with their heroic actions, for the examples are never more moving than next to opposites".[32]

This tapestry collates imperial temporalities from a moral point of view, though all imperial, purified in their kinship. In this sense, the *Symbolum* number 16 emblematizes the omnimodus hunger of the empire, one that funnels its contradictions within its very core.

Nonetheless, I would also like to see in this *Symbolum* a blank, purple scroll and its translation, impeccably faced one each other upon the same plane of importance, almost indistinguishable in their unique uniformity. Yet something breaks such a perfect symmetry; the rolls are folded differently in their extremes, as if the gesture of concealing sameness were determinant, though only incidentally, to the designation of who is the tyrant and who is the martyr.

Only that indecision can solve the will to sovereign power and its execution. Not by chance, Fajardo's book includes two more emblems were suffering and royalty, ambiguity and identity are inextricably congealed; for one, the *Symbolum* number 20 entitled as *Bonum Fallax* (A Good Deceptive), renders a royal crown resting upon a cushion. It is not after a second glance that the truth emerges from within the crown as its interior holds a Crown of Thorns. If the external, Classical facade is made of royalty, it is only in order to safeguard and conceal the

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31      (Ibid.)
32      "No solamente haga Vuestra Alteza esta comparación de sus virtudes y acciones, sino también coteje entre sí la de sus antepasados, poniendo juntas las púrpuras de unos manchadas con sus vicios, y las de otros resplandecientes con sus acciones heroicas, porque nunca mueven más los ejemplos que al lado de otros opuestos." (Saavedra Fajardo 1640: 105), my translation.

atonement of its correlate; suffering: "Just as Christ, the King, suffered in the name of mankind, so, in the eyes of the writers of the baroque, does royalty in general."[33] Moreover, the *Symbolum* number 33 depicts a lion facing a broken mirror. The fissure traverses the entire reflection while producing duplicity; two lions reflected. A lion which cannot find its reflection will instead meets its semblance in *any* of the reflections, provided that "either the prosperous Fortune would maintain it, or the adverse break it, the same semblance has always to be seen of him [the Prince]."[34] *Purpura juxta purpura dijudicanda*, or, as the emblem number 33 is entitled, *Siempre el mismo* (Always the Same).

Like any other color, the purple has in its substance the ability to exist as occlusion. The etymology of color, *celo*, stands as its 'true colors;' a deception, a mask onto forms and manners that in some Spanish-speaking countries designates a colored masking tape; as if the erotic sensuousness of bygone mummies would have endured in the guise of industrial wraps of color.

For Michael Taussig,[35] color indicates a crime where its excessive liveness triggers the ambivalence of truth "colors love to betray themselves like yellow means gold, awesome and holy, but also treason and cowardice." And so, what is the color of the empire? Apparently, one that does not need light to survive. A color whose palette is made of regression, one that summons the dead in order to be heritage. A sacred color, if you like, since it definitely is "what you can not approach without dying."[36] A double death, then; that of its constituency (your virtue is collated with the memory of the dead), and that of its very contact. The *Trauerspiel* cannot be

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33      (Benjamin 1998: 73).
34      "ya sea que le mantenga entero la Fortuna próspera, ó ya, que le rompa la adversa, siempre en él se
         ha de ver un mismo semblante." (Saavedra Fajardo 1640: 221), my translation.
35      Taussig, M. (2006) What Color Is the Sacred? In *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Autumn 2006),  p. 38.
36      In the Spanish translation: "aquello a lo que no puede uno aproximarse sin morir." Caillois, R. (1996) El
         hombre y lo sagrado. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, p. 13, my translation.

detached from a world of things sustained by the stage-property; one that it is designated by Benjamin as the scenic rupture of actions and their reification within objects. Concealing this property of the object (its ability to acquire personhood and become the event), unveils the presence of the antique: "For there is hardly any more pronounced distinction between modern and ancient drama than the absence from the latter of the profane world of things."[37] Its negation is always spectral "dreams, ghostly apparitions, the terrors of the end."[38] Not to summon a "god from the machine" to recall Benjamin's quote on Gryphius, but "a spirit from the grave,"[39] a character that is less a body than a name that is, from now on, the harbinger of a final yet to come.

And, what about all these things? What the objects assimilate here is their ability to mimic death, to fragment the scenic temporality into reified manifestations of the plot. If in tragedies (*Tragödie*) death takes a discrete manifestation in subjects, in the *Trauerspiel* it envelops its characters as its fate, as a tranquil midnight that suspends every end. Though engulfed by death, the characters do not lose their vitality, "only the name-bearing individuality,"[40] thus existing as protolanguage; an ur-designation from which they now emerge as psychic manifestations and spirits. Life as if dreamt by death, which fixes a human order that cannot be put into question, but only developed as a *caesura*, a break between words. In so doing, the progression towards death is postponed (there is no death to go through since you emerge from it), and its pace is substituted by an accumulation of material features which provide limits; the resolution of human jurisdiction. The end becomes concealed by its aims, and human accomplishments find their expression in objects "in which everything is that exists in

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37    (Benjamin 1998: 133).
38    (1998: 134).
39    (Ibid.)
40    (1998: 136).

concord with everything else."[41] Such a condition (the impossibility of connecting the beginning with the end), becomes rather measured by the stage-property, its objects and their ability to indicate transitions towards the final: "no longer immanent, the end is imminent".[42]

Such scenic death envisioned by Benjamin posits a transcendental dimension of the imminent, where its apparition signals the dissolution of the character into the stage-properties arranged by death. If this latter is for the imminence what the *trema* or 'footlight fever' is for apophenia, the stage-property materializes the array of *caesuras* or ends, all paradoxically articulated by the world of things and by passions; another instance where death orchestrates every scene towards its fate: "In a drama of jealousy the dagger becomes identical with the passions which guide it because (...) jealousy is as sharp and as functional as a dagger (...) For Herod does not kill his wife out of jealousy; rather it is through jealousy that she loses her life."[43]

A transcendental death, yet expressed into objects that have endured their own apophenia, their own leap into the modern destiny of mourning.[44]

Following Benjamin, objects do like to mourn because the progression of their intensities matches the pace of the empire. "On the road to the object - no within the object itself - this intention progresses as slowly and solemn as the processions of the rulers advance."[45] I see here the apophenia of the gods, the administration of death as it expressed by these mournful, dynastic artifacts. To repeat: *without interruptions nor discontinuities, it disguises of the manifest, of what*

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41  Kermode, F. (2000) The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction. Oxford University Press, p. 4.
42  (Kermode 2000: 21).
43  (Benjamin 1998: 133).
44  "mourning is the state of mind in which feeling revives the empty world in the form of a mask, and derives an enigmatic satisfaction in contemplating it. Every feeling is bound to an *a priori* object, and the representation of this object is its phenomenology." (1998: 139).
45  (1998: 140).

*has been perceived and thought without further ado.* From the scenic point of view, the *Trauerspiel* has mourning as both the entry and exit[46] of something that is less a space than *a zone*; an area whose existence is sustained by what the order only shows, a trait that hides everything else.

At this point, we are trying to elucidate the temporal dimension of the *order*, and the cadence by which the limits of the scenic zone just mentioned are traced. The pace employed by the order is that of a mimetic dimension, one that has to be qualified by describing its manifestations and limits. Drawing from an examination of the Platonic anti-mimetism,[47]

Schaeffer (2002) distinguishes between mimesis as technical imitation, pretension or mimicry in regards to the uses of fiction (to feign), and that of representation (imitation). The mimetic examination goes further as it requires to parse the interrelation of mimesis and fiction.[48]

This skein can be waived differently, either as *immersion* (the fiction is the reality), or *projection* (you decide to imitate part of the fiction within your reality).[49] The former is denoted by a religious framework where the fiction begins with possession; the act that for the participant implies to become *other*. But the process is not exempt from tricks; for accessing the possession implies, first and foremost, to summon it by mimic it. Through your own pretense, you get progressively immersed into the truth of possession; the body that feigns has now been possessed by the entity mimicked. Crucially, the ritualistic possession comes *after* the emergence of a possessable subject.

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46      (1998: 235).
47      One that paradoxically endows the use of fallacy, therefore of similarity.
48      Being this latter understood as a shared imaginary universe.
49      Schaeffer, P. (2002) Por qué la ficción? Trans. Jose Luis Sánchez-Silva. Madrid: Lengua de Trapo, p. 20, my translation.

As for the projection, it signals the apparent transition from the 'magic' to the 'rational',

where the former is understood as a form of regression (back to the immersion), and the second

as the substitution of a simulacra (i.e. 'bad faith' or 'lie'), for a hallucination. This is why for

some, the mimetic function of projection stands as either an atavism or an ambivalent slope

between what is true and false. The Aristotelian mimetic theory conceives mimesis as an

irreducible, unique social function, where it posits its objects within a representation that does

not percolate back to the real (as it happens in the case of possession.) The process of projection

allows us, through the ludic ritualization of conflicts, to configure canonical, (sometimes

oversimplified) social boundaries between truth and falsity. And so, there is a formative

dimension within the realm of the simulation and the mimetic modelization that for Aristotle

distinguishes history from poetry. Every fact is true, yes, but the narrative structure before its

content (and their mutual symmetry) is what characterizes a fiction. If the mimetic immersion

does not respect the equilibrium between the imitation and the entity being imitated, we abandon

the ambit of the fiction and we arrive at that of the deception. The use of fiction as formative

social process privileges here its contagious circulation before its rational content,[50] a prominent

trait that for Plato and Socrates precludes the access to knowledge. It may be pertinent to think

along these lines whether the risk is less its lack of rationality than the ability for mimesis to

destabilize the notion of *knowledge as property*, so as to the boundaries defined by kinship or

belonging become vulnerated. For there is a divine knowledge that every maker mimics and

every artist imitates; three Platonic degrees of reality, thus of access to knowledge that requires

mimesis to exist.[51] Schaeffer considers whether the relationship between the Idea and its

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50      (Schaeffer 2002: 17), my translation.
51      "This hierarchy (...) posits a problem insofar as indicates that the Platonic theory of knowledge is a
          theory of reflection, a mimetic one: true knowledge is also an imitation" (2002: 25), my translation.

representation is a question of 'isomorphism,' of steps of separation between "what is represented and its representation,"[52] and consequently, that of differential relationships with the truth. Yet the ignorance alone does not suffice to indicate in which truth you are since there are also differential dimensions of pretense. And this relationship complicates further if we take into account that the division between mythic beliefs and conceptual abstraction, between opinion and philosophy, has also to incorporate the split of myth into "the historiography and the narrative fiction;"[53] therefore that of the epic and its shared fictional status with poetry.

Following Schaeffer, Plato does not pay heed to this shift (from myth to fiction) occurring in his era, and becomes oblivious of the distinction between what lie and ludic pretense enact.


Is it true or false? It seems to be the most pervasive question along these lines; two mimetic approaches discussed which seem antithetical: to imitate is to feign being another (Plato) or rather is to model your being according to another's (Aristotle). Schaeffer imagines a Platonic model subsumed within the Aristotelian so as to "reconstruct the leap from this unstable state, amongst fiction and pretense, towards the (culturally and socially) stable state of fiction."[54]

The notion of *modelization* proves vital here since it retains not only the perceptual phenomena but its organization and intentional structure.[55] It is less about fidelity to the real event being mimetized than to represent the event in its more general modalities of possibility and necessity; as if the mimetic operation was able to circumvent a (rather impoverished) correlation with reality and to express instead its more fundamental, all-encompassing traits. The

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52    (2002: 25), my translation.
53    (2002: 29), my translation.
54    (2002: 40), my translation.
55    (2002: 58), my translation.

mimetic modelization is the act of mimicking reality according to a produced representation where the relationships is based on "global analogy."[56] It is of less importance to have, say, a total homology, but to recur, following Clément Rosset, to a "principle of sufficient reality"[57] where its *cruor* or cruelty designates the simultaneity between the advent of the real and its effects; an unappealable, ineluctable real.

The most convincing mimesis is not the one that makes a one-to-one duplicate of reality, but one that keeps the structural condition of its realness open enough so that the fiction can become immersive and circulate through its tunnels.[58] The Archimedes' Principle seems to apply within this realm as well, provided that mimesis requires to excavate and jettison enough reality beforehand. In the same way as philosophy does, mimesis relates the reality *in general*, and as a result it activates the doubt of its existence. What configures the real is precisely the tension between its certitude at the level of the detail, and its uncertainty at the level of its whole.[59]

Seen in this perspective, 'general' mimesis is less a result than a process, an *impulse* that bores the real, leaving the ruts of its operation. Mimesis is no longer the access to one entity through the accidents of the other, but the way in which *sameness* occupies diverse scales of realness; it is as much elusive in its definition as in its particular manifestations; either as a technical imitation, as the production of a pretense (encompassing here the concept of mimicry), and *representation*.[60] I see in mimetic representation the edge of mimesis and the instance that allows apophenia to be an almost perfect example of it; for the distance between apophenia and

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56    (2002: 152), my translation.
57    Rosset, C. (2012) The Real and its Double. London: Seagull, p. 17.
58    "For a mimetic model to have a fictional modeling value, it is not necessary that it owes the properties it has to the fact that somewhere in the world there are states of facts that have the properties they have." In Schaeffer (2002: 202), my translation.
59    (Benjamin 2008: 16).
60    "As the production of a mental or symbolic model founded upon an isomorphic cartography of the reality that wants to be known in virtue of a relationship of (direct or indirect) sameness among the two." (Schaeffer 2002: 61), my translation.

the mold of reality which pursues to occupy cannot be fully described, it rather demands a follow inspection of its movement; the way in which it unfolds. From this vantage point, the apophenia mimics music since the delirium expresses a bloom that refers only to itself, being a recreation from within.

This musical dimension of mimesis stems from notions of imitation and expression, which are crucial for the very existence of Western music. Paddison[61] argues that the musical event shifts from its own internal mimesis to its expression, being this latter more an interference than a direct production. In his periodization, the notion of musical expression comes after the emergence of rhetorical figures comprised either as the Baroque '*musica poetica*' or the 'doctrine of affects' (*Affektenlehre*). The ulterior musical expression of the mid-eighteenth century still looks at the doctrine of the affects as an imitation theory, but one where the feelings are not feigned.[62] With the rise of the 'aesthetics of autonomy' during late eighteenth and throughout nineteenth centuries, the parameters by which music had been conceived are repurported; music ceases to exist only within the church and its social functions, acquiring a wider range of reception. Yet the question persists in regards to its content; what does music express?

One answer can be found in Eduard Hanslick's *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854); music expresses nothing but itself. Finding no causal relationship between the musical composition and the feelings enticed, the Viennese critic leaves music alone with the task of reproducing "phenomena such as whispering, storming, roaring, but the feelings of love or anger have only a subjective existence."[63] Music is what sustains and propels the "dynamic properties"[64] of a

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61      Paddison, M. (2010) Mimesis and the Aesthetics of Musical Expression. In *Music Analysis*, Vol. 29, No. 1/3, Special Issue on Music and Emotion (March-October 2010), pp. 126-148.
62      (Paddison 2010: 128).
63      (Hanslick 1885: 33).
64      (1891: 37).

feeling, being the medium for *motion*, which is "one of the concomitants of feeling, not the feeling itself."[65] Hanslick's arguments (which are oriented towards a rendition of music as anti-expressive and purely functional), cannot be deprived of mimesis, for its self-sustainment as dynamic structure requires for music the "reproduction of what we termed the dynamic element of an emotion, a function which we unhesitatingly conceded to music."[66] In his refusal of representation,[67] Hanslick contradicts his argument by advocating the 'reproduction' or duplication of musical emotion's motion, though he approximates closely his conception of music to that of mimesis as it has been described before; sameness occupying different scales of realness.

Such objectification finds ancient roots, stemming from the manifestations of mimesis (for one, the Aristotelian modality), which imply a wider conception of its effects beyond the imitation of nature, for example "to make and give form."[68] This inclination of mimesis to become the vehicle that encompasses mind and form is, at the same time, the mark of its *order* and disguise. Conceived as it has been, music serves as a medium for a change of space over time; a dimension that hosts processes of displacement, distance, velocity, acceleration, time, and speed. Mimesis does the same within the field of the analogy; it displaces singularity, not as to deny one entity in the name of another, but to submerge entities within the very sameness that mimesis stands for. Of course, I am de-personifying mimesis too much in order to perceive its personhood as an entity usually described in the need of an object direct, of a complement which modifies its alleged mimetism. But there is nothing mimetic within mimesis. Conversely, we are here before a more idle and silent mimesis whose activity never exceeds the tasks of a *medium*; a

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65    (ibid.)
66    Hanslick, E. (1891) The Beautiful in Music: A Contribution to the Revisal of Musical Aesthetics. Trans. Gustav Cohen. London: Novello and Company, p. 54.
67    Labelled by the Viennese as "to clearly exhibit it; to distinctly set it before us." (Hanslick 1891: 44).
68    (Paddison 2010: 132).

dimension that allows the very circulation of analogy: "we can regard the phenomenal world (...) and music as two different expressions of the same thing; and this thing itself is therefore the only medium of their analogy, a knowledge of which is required if we are to understand that analogy."[69] The medium does not express by itself, it only does so by proxy of the things that engulf. And the criterion for such dwelling is to satisfy analogy, such is the reactive that galvanizes mimesis itself. Yet Schopenhauer cannot cut the bond between mimesis and *knowledge*; what the medium of mimesis affords is a *property* upon designation, the power to name the entities being analogized.

The examination of mimesis as widespread biological phenomenon entails similar consequences. As Caillois remarks: "What can signify such similitude, but that in the biological world an autonomous aesthetic *order* appears in general? This order, inexplicable without doubt, manifests an impossibility to go beyond the chain of causes and effects, and in certain cases an ultimate determination, as tyrannic and imperious as the sacrosanct conservation of the specie"?[70]

After Samivel,[71] Caillois wonders how *lepidoptera* can produce a transformation upon themselves; wings and legs repurported within the realm of the "sumptuous and distinctive,"[72] ruts that are granted, once more, by cessation and death, "in virtue of the unimaginable chemistry of necrosis."[73] Once the theory of natural selection has been abandoned, Samivel and Callois are in the disposition of imagining the agency of insects and their mission "certain species of insects were in a given moment intelligent beings (...) and (...) after a physiologic conditioning

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69    Schopenhauer, A. (1969) The World as Will and Representation. Trans. E.F.J. Payne. New York: Dover Publications, p. 262.
70    Caillois, R. (1962) Medusa y Cia: Pintura, camuflaje, disfraz y fascinación en la naturaleza y en el hombre. Trans. Manuel F. Delgado. Barcelona: Seix Barral, p. 49, my translation, italics are mine.
71    Paul Gayet-Tancrède (Paris, 1907 - Grenoble, 1992).
72    (Caillois 1962: 45), my translation.
73    (Ibid.), my translation.

voluntarily provoked (...) they may become (...) machines to keep living, nothing more and nothing less".[74]

The mimetic process enacts autonomy and singularity, and hosts a functional teleology in which a creature can trade intelligence by form; the more it abandons the former, the more power acquires over the latter. But it also executes the predicament of Tausk's influencing machine; first creating its symptoms as an absence; the intelligence that, once released, is dissolved within the mimetic medium. Then, the machine appears as the expression of this former contract; the materialization of a expenditure that stand as insignias (or as Caillois envisions it), as an imperial and tyrannic revelation.


If to play music implies to speak its language, to talk like an empire supposes to control the mimetic parameters of mimesis as such, provided that this latter indicates two things: first, the perceptual circulation has been prey of the *order*; concealed by privileging one factor.

Secondly;  the product of such operation (the visual) becomes equally concealed; enters *ideology*; the concealment of the concealment.[75] Yes, plans within plans, occultation upon occultation. You cloak a previous concealment, a second-degree order of the visual. Mimesis allows to measure the distance (of recognition or existence) between visuality and ideology, being the medium that hosts a regime of perceptual circulation that has been occluded twice; the first time in order to generate the visual, the second so as to produce its ideology. This is why mimesis does not operate here as "the first-order imitation among cultures which so fascinated

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74     (1962: 45), my translation.
75     Which is not the same that designate ideology as deception. See Spivak, G. (1988) Can the Subaltern
       Speak? In Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L. (eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Urbana:
       University of Illinois Press, p. 69.

ethnosociologists and historians of the early twentieth century,"[76] for its has been used as the metrics of the empire, a caliber that domesticates processes of dispersion and circulation which have been already systematized almost entirely by *order*; twisted around a very narrow fringe, a protrusion of what has been hidden that is, paradoxically, its visible apex.[77]

In her book *Mimesis and Empire* (2004) Barbara Fuchs examines the interplay of differential mimetic modalities amongst 'colonial' and 'colonized' factions (Spain, Peru, England, Mexico, Chile), over the course of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Fuchs seems particularly sensitive to the notion of *difference*, being simultaneously the basin for the colonial knowledge and the reproduction of marginalized subjects that eventually acquire the status of a "reverse conquest in its own right."[78] For Fuchs, mimesis is a volition, a spell that, if followed carefully in its instructions and ingredients, reverses its effects. Consider this: "Ideology pirated or ventriloquized becomes surprisingly vulnerable – instead of reproducing it, purposeful mimesis undermines imperial claims to originary authority (...) Imitation compromises the narratives of national distinction by emphasizing inconvenient similarities and shared heritages."[79] If we look closely to these lines, we would assume that ideology can be enacted by means of mere 'purpose,' as if the mimetic operation were a two-way, symmetrical path where notions of authority and patrimonial belonging are traded in an *orderly* way between the elites and their marginal counterparts. Though we have to remember that any mastery of the order requires to reveal not what has been concealed, but the trick that perseveres. So, to conceive

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76    Fuchs, B. (2004) Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities. Cambridge University Press, p. 3.
77    In other words: "the association of 'consciousness' with 'knowledge' omits the crucial middle term  of 'ideological production'." (Spivak 1988: 81).
78    (Fuchs 2004: 141).
79    (2004: 4).

mimetic overidentification as a matter of 'choice' does nothing but putting more order on the spot, it reproduces the concealment that leaves visible only *what has to be imitated*. If so, overidentification is not a volition, but a triggered response, the dead alley of a mind that lives out of the crumbles of another. Such is the ideological aspect of mimesis as its excess of verisimilitude exists as a given that, within the margins, it is seen as a will.

This is a truth that convinces because of its lie. Mimesis, being also ideological, is "the reproduction of the conditions of production"[80] whose circulation does not stand for your take on the real, but for a representation that predates you. Althusser envisions the imaginary character of ideology, its representational semblance, as the face value of the real.[81] The double occlusion that nurtures ideology produces also submission; you enact ideology by bowing before its representation, namely, what the order exudates. These "orders of repression" as he says in passing,[82] are the expression of ideological and state apparatuses that assume material forms: buildings, practices, acts. All these materials leave a trace throughout the leap that occurs from the individual to the subject, for ideology only addresses a subject that has been pre-configured within a systematized category.[83]

Moreover, Fuchs mentions an "original authority"[84] that *owns* the criteria for satisfying mimesis and the reproduction of ideological productive forces. An authority that reproduces not merely mimetic effects, but also the submission to its rules; once more, an ideology that becomes

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80  Althusser, L. (1971) Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation). In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, p. 127.
81  "What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live." (Althusser 1971: 165).
82  (1971: 139).
83  (1971: 170).
84  (Fuchs 2004: 4).

a necessary displacement required for making every subject an *individual*, *evident* one.[85]

Crucially, this effect (which is distinctive of apophenia as well) takes predominance over its 'content.' The always phantasmatic presence of Spanish mercenaries in the American continent is an example of both symptoms: Ponce de León fails in pursuing the Fountain of Youth, and occupies instead a territory now called Florida; Cabeza de Vaca departs for the golden city of Apalachen, but arrives to the burned village of Aute; Lope de Aguirre seeks to find El Dorado and ends up executed in Barquisimeto, Venezuela; Columbus' quest for Asia finishes in the Bahamas; Francisco de Ulloa sails in the search of the Strait of Anián and finds instead the Peninsula of California, and so on and so forth. Fictional ventures for the sake of the Crown's goal to dominate a real space; once more, the apophenia of the gods takes ideology as the perpetual alibi, a *carte blanche* in which every disaster faces not its content, but the representation of its very dissemination. Here the 'discovery' is nothing more than a mimetic recovery, yet the ramifications of its ideology extend irreversibly to every direction, analogizing the entities submerged within mimesis. Accordingly, every new encounter is, in reality, retrospective and it flows backwards, emblematized in a myriad of documents, *relaciones* and literature, as Cortés describing the "mosques" of Tenochtitlan and Peru[86] or Alonso de Ercilla's ethnographic poem *La Auracana* (1569) designating in its glossary a Chilean city "Imperial" because "'they found on all the doors and roofs imperial two-headed eagles, made out of wood in the manner of coats of arms,'"[87] or Inca Garcilaso's *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (1609-1616) and his rendition of St. James (the patron saint of Spain against the Moors) *reappearing* as

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85    "The 'obviousness' that you and I are subjects —and that that does not cause any problems— is an ideological effect, the elementary ideological effect." (Althusser 1971: 172).
86    (Fuchs 2004: 67).
87    (2004: 37).

*Viracocha*[88] during a battle in Cuzco in 1535: "The Indians were terrified at the sight of this new knight and asked one another: ''Who is the Viracocha with the *illapa* in his hand?'' [meaning lightning, thunder, and thunderbolt]."[89]

As early as the 1520s, the Spanish humanists started to warn about the contaminating properties of the chivalric romances, yet they intensify their attention not to the Iberian Peninsula, but to the New World. After Irving Leonard, Fuchs continues to address the question concerning the Indian 'education' and 'evangelization' in regards to the powers of mimetic fiction. In 1531, Antonio de Mendoza addresses a document to Empress Isabella cautioning about the pernicious effects of *Libros de Romance*:

> "Some days ago the Emperor ruled that no Romance Books of profane matter and fables be sent to those lands, lest the Indians who know how to read give themselves over to them, abandoning books of good and healthy doctrine (...) once they know that those books of vain stories were composed without things really having occurred thus, they no longer place authority and credit in our Sacred Scriptures and other books by learned saints, believing, as a people not well established in the faith, that all our books are of one authority and kind."[90]

Furthermore, a letter written by Prince Philip in 1543 mimics the content of Antonio de Mendoza's almost verbatim while emphasizes the fragile status of the Sacred Scripture before the romance texts. The prince's fear lies here in the possibility for 'the Indians' to distance themselves from the immersive properties of the Christian text. A distance that, nonetheless, seems to put at stake less the ideology already imposed upon the inhabitants of the New World

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88 ""Viracocha" – a Quechua term that had originally designated a divine messenger from the Sun but that was applied to the Spaniards because the Incas first considered them such messengers." (2004: 76).

89 "Los indios se espantaron de ver el nuevo caballero, y unos a otros decían: "¿Quién es aquel viracocha que tiene la illapa en la mano?" In Fuchs (2004: 76).

90 "Algunos días ha que el Emperador y Rey mi Señor proveyó que no se llevasen a esas partes Libros de Romance de materias profanas y fábulas porque los indios que supiesen leer no se diesen a ellos dejando los libros de buena y sana doctrina (...) porque desde que supiesen que aquellos libros de historias vanas habían sido compuestos sin haber pasado así no perdiesen la autoridad y crédito de nuestra Sagrada Escritura y otros libros de doctores santos, creyendo como gente no arraigada en la fe que todos nuestros libros eran de una autoridad y manera." In Fuchs (2004: 15).

than the self-recognition of the Spanish: "once they know that these vain stories were written without having occurred, they might lose the authority and credit of our Sacred Scripture and other books by learned saints, believing, like people not well established in the faith that all our books were of the same authority and manner."[91]

If all the books are equalized, there is no a singular reference that can be used as ideological apparatus;[92] here the religious truth results suspended (though not for all) in the name of the romance's lie. When ideology dwindles and the occlusion of the visual really is perceptible as such, what emerges is not an image of what the order conceals, but the perception of mimesis engulfing you. There is no room for 'confusion,' only the promise of either pristine apophenia or a destabilized, 'apocalyptic' milieu in which the truth that reigns is the uniformity of mimesis; *purpura juxta purpura dijudicanda*.

The New World is definitely not new as the enemies of the Spanish empire are, in essence, the same infidels as those who were 'defeated' during the *Reconquista*.[93] As far as the empire envisions its *crusade* in the Americas, Indians and Moors are conflated as a convenient fiction that also percolates back to the Spanish themselves; Guaman Poma explains in *Nueva corónica i buen gobierno* (1615) "The name *viracocha* they use generally for the Spanish ''foreigner,'' Jew, Moor, Turk, Englishman, and Frenchman, for all are Spanish *viracochas.*"

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91   "además de esto, de que sepan que aquellos libros de historias vanas han sido compuestos sin haber pasado, así podría ser que perdiesen la autoridad y crédito de nuestra Sagrada Escritura y otros libros de doctores santos, creyendo como gente no arraigada en la fe que todos nuestros libros eran de una autoridad y manera." In Fuchs (2004:16).

92   "As even the Crown will admit, the romance texts and sacred writings exported to the New World present similar narrated wonders; what distinguishes them is an a priori value judgment." (2004: 22).

93   In his *Historia general de las Indias* (1552) López de Gómara is categorical: "The conquest of the Indians began after that of the Moors was completed, so that Spaniards would ever fight the infidels.'' In Fuchs (2004: 7).

(Fuchs 2004: 92).[94] Being all different, are all Spanish because they all are *subjects* (namely, the only possible Subject) of the empire.[95] But the instability of such fiction palpitates still within Iberia, embodied in the figure of the *Morisco*, a terminal metaphor that attempts to problematize claims of a homogeneous Spain. A Morisco in Spain is as much Christian as a native of the holy city of Jerusalem; yet this latter does not speak Spanish and both they dress differently than the Castilians.[96] For others, a Morisco can be the result of improving "the purity of the Goths" after the downfall of King Rodrigo and the ulterior Muslim conquest of Iberia.[97] Better: a Christian past in Granada (the last stronghold of Islam in Spain), can be constructed in the guise of artifacts; here, a parchment found amongst the ruins of a minaret, there, a number of "relics" conveniently discovered in the caves of Valparaíso, Granada. In the former case, the parchment salvaged from the Granada Mosque contains an "apocalyptic prophecy by St. John translated into Castilian by one St. Cecilius, first bishop of Granada, whose own commentary in Arabic followed."[98] A finding that demonstrates in its materiality not only the Christian past of an Islamic Granada, but the necessary conflation of both. As for the latter, it quickly becomes the discovery of the "Sacromonte," the sacred cave that nested engraved lead tables, some of them narrating the martyrdom of two Arabs, St. Mesitón and St. Tesifón, (being this latter the author of the compendium of Christian doctrines *Fundamentum Ecclesiae*.) Martyrs, relics and doctrinary texts demonstrating and rescuing the role of the Muslims in the construction of a Christian basin in Granada; this is the endeavor fabricated by Moriscos such as Miguel de Luna

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94     "Como dicen uira cocha le llaman en común al castellano estrangero, judío, moro, turco, ynglés y francés, que todos son españoles uira cochas." In Fuchs (2004: 92).

95     "what unifies their diversity is precisely this functioning, insofar as the ideology by which they function is always in fact unified, despite its diversity and its contradictions, beneath the ruling ideology, which is the ideology of 'the ruling class'." (Althusser 1971: 146).

96     In Nuñez Muley's petition to Don Pedro de Deza, head of the Audiencia or provincial court of Granada, against the 1567 decrees prohibiting Morisco cultural practices." In Fuchs (2004: 103).

97     As it narrated by Miguel del Luna In *La verdadera historia del Rey Don Rodrigo*. (2004: 112).

98     (2004: 113).

and Alonso del Castillo, both "official translators to Philip II"[99] and creators of a retroactive archaeology of the Christian foundations of Granada as the authorship of the Muslims. Objects for atonement that, in its devotion are reified as real.[100]

Significantly, all these scattered attempts of cultural singularization are effectively contributing to its opposite result, provided that the delimitation of a Muslim presence within the very foundations of Christianity in Granada does not resurrect the Nasrid dynasty as its outcome, but subsumes it within that of the Christian. As for the Crown, syncretism is what 'accommodates' claims for uniformity. Neither part of the Islam nor of Christianity, the specificity of Granada is resolved by flaying out its individuals of costumes and musical instruments, an operation that is less a hindrance for imperial syncretism than its concealment as genealogy. Here, to have a heritage tailored by the empire *as absence* is the maximum coefficient that a Morisco can dream of; the difference that was once imposed now becomes internal, quintessential, it has the *luster* of the survivor's dignity. In his plea of 1567, Grenadian Francisco Núñez Muley attempts (and fails) to ameliorate the Crown's repression against the Morisco cultural practices shortly before the uprising in 1568,[101] but, being unable to imagine an externality (to be 'scientific' as Althusser would say), his appeal sets the horizon within the scope of the empire:

> "For what is the point of wanting to lose such remembrances (...) Do you not
> think that in the preservation of these remembrances there is great honor done to
> the Kings who won these kingdoms, in seeing the diverse ways in which they won
> them? (...) and this was the intention and will of the Emperors and Catholic Kings

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99   (Ibid.)
100  "no matter how many times critics expose the fraud, no matter that the Vatican has explicitly condemned it, Granada today continues to celebrate the feast of St. Cecilius at the Sacromonte every first day of February." (2004: 113).
101  A *messianic* rebellion, as it was designated by historian Ginés Pérez de Hita as guerra civil (civil war). In Fuchs (2004: 101).

in protecting the memory of the royal houses of the Alhambra and other memories, so that they would remain as they had been in the time of the Moorish kings, in order that what their Highnesses won should show and appear more clearly".[102]

In his strive for salvaging the Morisco culture, Núñez Muley ends up building the regional heritage of Christian Spain. The claims for difference and recognition become overturned within a medium (mimesis) that contains secondary turbulences which have no immanence in themselves. For Fuchs, *sameness* "identification, mimicry, reproduction,"[103] is a political valence that can be vulnerated by means of "subversive mimicry, the troubling same-but-different."[104] Yet it remains unclear to where such mimetic reproduction of ideology is pointing to, for the case of mimetic overidentification does not necessarily presupposes "full-class agency (...) a contestatory *replacement* as well as a an *appropriation* (...) of something that is 'artificial' to begin with — 'economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life.'"[105] For Spivak, the skein of differential sameness becomes synthesized as an articulation between political and philosophical representations. Following the Marx of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, this verge renders the notion of *vertreten*, pertaining to "the state and political economy"[106] and *darstellen*, which operates within the ambit of the "theory of the Subject."[107] From this coordinates, the artificial subject-class chosen by Marx (the peasant), is

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102 "Pues, ¿qué se sirue querer perderse tales memorias, ansy los ávitos y traxes, como en los sobrenombres, como en todo lo susodicho? ¿No le paresçe a V.S.R. que [en] quedar estas memorias ay grandes ensalzamientos de los Reyes que ganaron estos rreynos, de ver las diuersas maneras que ganaron? Y ésta fue la yntinción de los Reyes Católicos en anparar este rreyno en la manera que lo anparon y los arçobispos pasados; y esta yntención e voluntad tuvieron los Enperadores e Reyes Católicos en anparar las memorias de las casas rreales del Alhambra y otras memorias, tales que quedasen en la mysma forma que heran en el tiempo de los rreyes moros, para que se manyfestase lo que ganaron sus Altezas y se paresçería más claro." (2004: 106).
103 (Fuchs 2004: 4).
104 (Ibid.)
105 (Spivak 1988: 72).
106 (1988: 70).
107 (Ibid.)

rendered as necessarily "divided and dislocated,"[108] and disabled for achieving the agency of

self-representation. Being incapable to reach a singular identity which finds expression in

"community (...) or organization,"[109] the peasantry finds its representational area within the gap

that *Vertregung* (as political persuasion) creates during its installation within *Darstellung* (as

representation). As a result, the identification of the peasantry occurs in the trenches of the

difference, bearing the mark of an identity whose consciousness precludes them from the

generation of *surplus value*: "is in the area of this intercourse that the feeling of community

leading to class agency must be developed".[110]


The identity here is thus constituted through an event, where this latter does not acquire a

real status by means of its mere executory enactment, but as a result of a philosophical decision.

In *Identity and Event* (2000) Francois Laruelle initially parses the continuity of the event

within differential philosophies: on the one hand, a lower dimension where the philosophies of

communication dwell, on the other, the superior philosophies of the event; both united by the

concept of discourse.[111] This position not only echoes the Marxist gap between the two

representations aforementioned, but also the structural delamination that either *-super* and *-infra*

structures demarcate. Laruelle continues analyzing discourse from the invariant "'philosophical

Decision"[112] whose transcendence is modeled either through the being and the entity (*meta*), or

being and the real (or as Laruelle put it, *epekeina*).[113] So the event concurs with a 'far beyond' of

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108    (1988: 71).
109    (1988: 72).
110    (Ibid.)
111    Laruelle, F. (2000) Identity and Event. In *Pli* #9, p. 175.
112    (Ibid.)
113    Laruelle extracts this concept from Plato's Republic 5–6, where it is understood as a Good that either goes
        beyond essence or beyond being. For a discussion of *epekeina* and the role of "the appropriate" or *to
        metrion* within this discussion, see Ferber, R; Damschen, G. (2015) Is the Idea of the Good Beyond Being?
        Plato's "epekeina tês ousias" revisited (Republic, 6, 509b8-10). In Nails, D; Harold, T; Kajava, M;
        Salmenkivi, E. (2015) *Second Sailing: Alternative Perspectives on Plato*. Espoo: Wellprint Oy, pp. 197-

the transcendental being, therefore: "the event is not merely the result of superimposing an ontology onto a history, but rather, it introduces a new order (...) The event thereby indexes a more general ground which may be, depending on the case, an order of presence, of effects or singularities rather than of generalities, of multiplicities or of the multiple rather than of unity."[114]

The event is not purified of differential transcendences (*meta* and *epekeina*) competing amongst themselves, although combined according to diverse relationships and scales. Hence, it appears disguised as a combination of different transcendentals, determined by them, yet every determination is only native to its modality of transcendence. In this sense, we may have access granted to the event, but not its usage, because the event has been foreclosed by the philosophy that produces the *order* of events, the concealment of its dominion over it.[115]

Identity has been accepted as an ontological sub-category of the event as every identity bears an object; it complements an event that is mute, solitary if you like, which does not refer to itself. This is why the identity endures repeated multiplicities of interpretation, exegesis, hermeneutics...an atonement of the identity in the name of its event.[116] By presenting this scenario, Laruelle comes to grips with an event whose structure supersedes philosophy; enters non-philosophy[117] so as to consider the event in its interplay with the concept of identity, which

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114    (Laruelle 2000: 175).
115    "Philosophy posits the event as a real in itself but in reality it is the effect of a philosophical decision, inscribed within the *order* of possibilities proffered by philosophy (...) particular combinations of meta and epekeina, are not 'events', there being nothing older than the philosophy which encompasses them (...) the philosophies of the event remain affiliated (...) with the far from novel attempt (...) to enclose philosophy within itself." Laruelle (2000: 178), italics are mine.
116    "The event is its own awaiting, it is accompanied by prayer and by petition, or by desire, and this desire is a part of its complete constitution. It is a desired identity, rather than an identity 'in person' (...) It is an object of desire and sometimes of messianic awaiting" (2000: 181).
117    "Non-philosophy's specificity means a strictly immanent (...) practice for philosophy but also for the sciences, art … with determined rules, like, for example, the rule of the chôra, the suspension of philosophical Authority and the transformation of philosophy into material (...) It is simultaneously a theoretical, practical and critical discipline that is distinct from philosophy without being a meta-

entails the unilaterality, non-convertibility of identity and event.[118]  From this non-philosophical

understanding, identity is determined by the *givenness* of the real rather than its desire, which

equates every identity along the same plane: "The real presupposition is identity as such, that

which is not predicated of the entity, of Being, of the Other, or even of itself: an Identity of

immanence, one which is non-consistent. The radical One does not consist within itself."[119]

This echoes (although according to a different dimension) Spivak's critique of the subject

where "desire and interest coincide."[120] Either case, there is no decision, no *commitment* and still

there is a finite immanence,[121] advocating instead for an individual, living body that has not been

assimilated as Subject: "Man is the real base, the infra-structure of any discourse about

materiality, that is why it is a positive 'nothing' whose essence is not decidable by philosophy

(man is not a concept)."[122]  What is at stake here is the representational dimension of the identity

of mimesis.

Assuming that mimesis is for history what the identity is for the event, the former has

been always the result of discourse, a *decision* that nonetheless precludes mimesis to occupy the

entirety of its own realm; a zone that might exist without subjection, without being the subject of

the empire. A zone that apophenia feigns admirably well and whose apocalyptic images sharply

testify. It follows that, if mimesis is not a concept and its encounter is irreducible to knowledge,

it has to be described according to its reality and *infrastructural* character. In an initial state of

mimesis, every entity becomes analogized in the name of heterogeneity and discontinuity. But

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philosophy." In Laruelle, F. (2013b) Dictionary of Non-Philosophy. Trans. Taylor Adkins. Minneapolis: Univocal, pp. 99-100.

118    (2000: 179).
119    (Laruelle 2000: 182).
120    (Spivak 1988: 71).
121    One that denies the notion of the "diffuse mass" of the workers (Spivak 1988: 67).
122    Gracieuse, M. (2012) Laruelle Facing Deleuze: Immanence, Resistance and Desire. In Mullarkey,  J; Smith, A.P;  (eds.) *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*. Edinburgh University Press, p. 53.

beyond that state, the analogy is not isomorphic, but *allotropic*; it relates different structures and

properties of the same mimetic form. This posits a (rather insufficient in its definition) but

crucial shift; whereas isomorphic analogy operates by doubling, thus producing difference, the

allotropic principle subsumes its entities under the name of sameness, therefore developing an

all-encompassing identity. So the wager increases because what mimesis unilaterally converts is

not modalities of analogy, but apophenic models of reality. Therefore, the articulation of

concealment and expression within the mimetic medium as we are exploring it is irreducible to

Fuch's notion of cultural mimesis; "a bridge across that stubborn gap between the self sufficient,

institutionally reified incarnations of ''literature'' and ''history,''[123] for such manifestations

operate along ancillary *orders* which signal the delamination of the real according to an

economic infrastructure and a twofold superstructure composed by "the politico-legal (law and

the State) and ideology (the different ideologies, religious, ethical, legal, political, etc)."[124] An

interplay of levels that paradoxically sustains modalities of division (as in Hegel), or difference

(as Althusser himself).[125] This necessary mediation between both dimensions is described by

Althusser (following Engels and Marx) in a vague way: "the determination in the last instance of

what happens in the upper 'floors' (of the superstructure) by what happens in the economic

base."[126] *Something* with a certain degree of autonomy has been influenced by an action that,

being different, it is also reciprocal; what influences receives influence back and forth. The effect

is clear but not the entire process; *something* unclear has happened without a noticeable cause in

which one representation is arrested by the other. This obscure causality in the Marxist

*determination in the last instance* presupposes a hierarchical model with principal (*-infra*) and a

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123    (Fuchs 2004: 4).
124    (Althusser 1971: 134).
125    See Laruelle, F. (2015c) Introduction to Non-Marxism. Trans. Anthony Paul Smith. Minneapolis:
        Univocal. p. 103.
126    (Althusser 1971: 135).

secondary (-*super*) levels or dimensions which are ultimately sustained by thought; a representational chain of beings, if you prefer, where the access is directed towards the superstructures, leaving the infrastructures within 'the real.' In this way, mimesis determines the *determination in the last instance*; for there is nothing arbitrary in mimesis since it is a vertical expression, a current upwards that drifts 'anomalies' up to a dimension in which their scale is the verification of what the order grants: a concealment cloaked by a trick, one that feigns its singularity.

The *determination...*is also taken by Laruelle in his *Introduction to non-Marxism* (2015a)[127] as the symptom of a more radicalized concept of causality. It is presented by Laruelle as it follows: it starts from the assumption that there are two differentiated causalities (one principal and many secondary) with differential scales of importance yet represented as a singular relationship that employs a reversibility; extensions from one causality to the other. But for Laruelle, second causalities only attain appraisal after being modelled by the principal one or by the infrastructure, being irreducible to the superstructure's logic. The last instance remains invariable despite the variability of second causalities. Mimesis does the same: it introduces a lack on its production, now deferred towards secondary causalities (i.e. acts of fiction, copy, camouflage) so as to supplement its own referential primacy, one that is exerted from the ambit of perceptual absence; this is why the sacred fetish is never found, the insect assumes the traits of its surroundings, the fable passes over disguised as historical account, and so forth.

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127    McKenzie Wark (2015) summarizes Laruelle's non-marxist program in the following way: "firstly, universalizing the concept of base or infrastructure; secondly, to posit a base foreclosed to every superstructure; thirdly, to posit a determination in the last instance that as a kind of non-ontological causality; fourthly, to unify science and philosophy as both subject to this unilateral causality from the Real. The concept of DLI has thus been transferred from the social-historical terrain and become a kind of formal 'axiom' or perhaps decision". In Wark, M. (2015) Laruelle's Kinky Syntax. In *Public Seminar*, April 23, 2015. Retrieved from http://www.publicseminar.org/2015/04/laruelles-kinky-syntax/

The *determination…* has to solve its internal contradiction between abstract

transcendentals and concrete labor through a more radicalized instance, "a cause without a

Whole and even more without synthesis or expression."[128] What is needed, then, is a causality

that endows such identity *in lieu* of a further mediation made by the world or capitalism, a

causality that is real because it is one, not confounded with being and its forms.[129] What non-

marxism unifies here is the causality of immanence (as in Spinoza) with the opposite scenario, a

power incarnated as "organic, individual and monadic life (Michel Henry)."[130] Less rational than

real, the immanence of the *determination…* obeys to the conditions of its own singularity, while

keeps some of its secondary causalities under relative autonomy. This becomes articulated by

means of "cloning," a process distributed under three different stages: initially, a dyad composed

by a real identity and a term which is "identical to the indifference of the real";[131] then, enters a

transcendental state that attempts to solve the simultaneous appearance of the dyad and the real.

This produces a 'clone' of the Real-One and "of identity par excellence."[132] The clone is

the transcendental entity that operates within the real without occupying it. In this sense, cloning

requires empiricism without being a double or a reflection. The latter stage, designated by

Laruelle as *aprioristic* extends the operation of cloning by reducing its conditions of reality to an

empirical datum which serves as "empirical support."[133] This "unilateral duality" created by

cloning is the mark of *the last instance* as Laruelle envisions it,[134] a stage in which what has been

determined is what configures the *determination*, being a manifestation that surpasses matter as

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128     (Laruelle 2015c: 43).
129     "As if "labor power" were finally capable of its own "proletarian" theory, without Hegelian  idealism, or
        that it became the limited model of the universal instance of the force-( of)-thought" (Laruelle 2015c: 52).
130     (2015c: 44).
131     (Laruelle 2013b: 30).
132     (Ibid.)
133     (2013b: 31).
134     (2015c: 47).

its cause; the *-infra* is here bearing the scintillating jewels of the *-super* for the sake of acquiring garments. But the jewels must be cloned.

We ignore the occult, for its limits have been prefigured, *sacrificed* in the altar of a reality that, as an influencing machine, always comes after its symptoms. The limits of the immanent revelation that apophenia demarcates are forcluded in the name its transcendental symptoms; a divergent, miserable itinerary, once more: *from the anthropomorphic to the machinic, from libido to structure, from reverie to rational explanation.* We accept truth in the name of its lie because we conflate representation with the limits of a reality that, being incepted, cannot be fully decomposed. Within the functions of its apocalyptic images, what apophenia indicates is precisely an excess of immanence that percolates outside the duplet that delirium and reality configures; a broken reflection whose central fissure is an abyss of complementary beings, a gutter of piteous resentment, again salvaged in the name of repetition.[135]

Demoted as they *necessarily* are, these apocalyptic images might once spark, though for now they remain as the embers of a promise only sustained by the *order*, an orientation that traces the path toward a comforting oblivion. As an almost exact fold of lived matter and its representational limits, between an identity and other language. Given this plane, the fold is a scene, a plane where the empire gives *ánima* and *Geist* to its objects by means of mourn. Words and weapons are all the same, all purple, with both the same representational danger. If the continuity of apophenia designates the limits of the real, the imperial stage chisels its perimeter

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135 "resentment is temporality folding back onto itself, the internalisation and the doubling of transcendence in itself that refuses its immanence and simplicity...if resentment is the return of the felt (senti), its reflexivity, we oppose to it ... the nonrecurrent flux of affectivity or the lived without return but not without the appearance of a return." Laruelle, F. (2001) 'Lettres non-philosophiques: Resistance ou Affectivite - comment le monde est donné'.
In http://www.onphi.org/letters/10/resistance-ou-affectivite---comment-le-monde-est-donne

by administering death, a temporality whose montage requires broken words, a forced resemblance that activates mimesis.

And again, the limit of what the mimetic realm endows has been enveloped upon entities always in the need of a complement, of necessary displacements that bring us a mimetic medium impoverished in the name of its diversity. Again, a critical move, always verging on its end, although one that has been anticipated as cautella or as a *handy* incoherence; the mimetic access is granted insofar as its usage is denied, otherwise we would come to terms with the ultimate mimetic reality, one in which mimesis harbors and submerges its subjects for the sake of mimesis, and nothing else.

Since broken words and mimesis always restore the valence of its entities, (which are *de facto* subjects rather than *de jure* identities), the mimetic current is, by the same token, the representational order of the empire, one in which its circulation is concealed so as to produce only cloaked visuality and ideology; the causes of a river that, being the same, is the same river twice. But, once within, you have no choice, for your mimetic execution only mimics the mimesis you are in, which is to say, ideology. And so, what is mimesis for? If its access is granted, and its production only reproduces the copy of its enclosure, it is an effect that comes before its content.[136]

This trait stands as the great prerogative to devastate the Earth in the name of its hallucination, a right (granted by the purple) to articulate stultifying violence and whose mourning continues within a plane made out of ruins. It is in this zone that the empire fabricates its end, feigning the hallucination's blackout, the palpable presence of the imperial stage-

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136     "Just as the philosophy worthy of credit is understood only by those who already know it a little, and therefore, do not really have a need for it, so medicine cannot and will never cure more than the healthy." Rosset, C. (2008) El principio de crueldad. Trans. Rafael del Hierro Oliva. Valencia: Pre-Textos, p. 37, my translation.

properties chiseled by death. All the longings for assimilation lie here, all these subjects are scattered remnants along the patterns and the ruts of a patrimonial tapestry whose cities are built only when they are demolished.

Inevitably, the executioner falls prey also of the representational overabundance hosted by imperial mimesis, which folds it back onto those who were looking through that medium.

Without distinguishing, every claim for recognition out of mimesis ends up by turning the limits of this latter all the more robust, fed as as they are by a mimetic reproduction that cannot flow backwards.[137]

And for that matter, every attempt to dispel the identification of identity has to put at stake the condition of the medium in which it exists. For want of an identity that does not refer to itself, it is sacrificed in the name of the event. For want of an extension (of though and flesh) in which mimesis can be fully and irreversibly deployed, it is arrested by a decision and an order always in the need of reproducing differential multiplicities; thought is funneled towards the roads of representation; infrastructures where the lights are always extinguished at the very same moment.

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137     Spivak radicalizes this point by saying "to confront them ['the Other'] is not to represent  (vertreten) them but to learn to represent (darstellen) ourselves." (1988: 84)."

The Skeuomorphism of the Goddesses

We mime in the hope of attaining identity, but mimesis seems not for everybody; it has been walled in such a way that its temporal arrangement, its *ordenación*, is also an ordination, for it only permits a narrow chink for those who are not resting beside the purple. This explains why the empire's mimetic clumsiness is always in good standing; it indicates why the "virtual Spaniards"[138] (namely; any Spaniard), conceive erring as indissociable part of the "adventure" (*some* place is *any* place), why they protect their Saracen dermis against the inclemencies of their horrendous 'crusade' in the New World; the powers of mimetic analogy always remain loyalty seated, next to the purple. Surely, we can parse this mimetic jurisdiction from its negative zone, one in which, as if a malediction were, labor is double labor; to speak in a purple tongue so that, from such *demihood*, one can explain (and nothing else) the horror to the purple. A disclosure that merely feeds and reinforces the compass of mimesis, one which never changes its magnetic orientation. An analogy is here one-way street, thus there is no dignity in learning purple (moreover, an impossible task), mimesis only accepts sacrificial expenditure for the sake of enhancing the empire's mimetic horizon, the one which folds its descriptions and limits. There is no counter-mimesis, only alterity disguised in mimetic parole. *But the jewels must be cloned.*

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138      (Fuchs 2004: 152).

These are some of the empire's prerogatives constituted upon imperial mimesis; its lynchers whisk away identity and purpose, their historizable victims (those who spoke and wrote in purple) are only accessing to the conditions of intelligibility that describe, *in the last instance*, the imperial prescription. These principles are held in virtue of mimesis, which operates as the *lingua franca*, *carte de visite* and *carte blanche* of the empire. To be against such machinery requires, once more, the immense labor of articulating discourse and flesh so that the empire's aleatory impunity can, at least, be trespassed so as to touch the fragile core of the lynchers, in the hope of revealing nothing but a hollow gargoyle.

In this respect, it is worth clarifying that mimetic subversion as it has been summarized here cannot achieve the conditions for obliterating the colonial mimetic apparatus; in part, because we still conceive mimesis as a sort of *techne* or linguistic apparatus whose knowledge would be snapped up one day, like the scepter mentioned by Benjamin.[139] In this vein we may find Homi Bhabha's *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse* (1984) in which the *mimicry* of colonialism is understood as a desire for formulating a subaltern that is not the same, and it necessarily has not to be the same as the colonizer: English speaker, although non-white, Hispanicized, but not Spaniard, part of the empire, but committed to vernacular practices, conspicuously religious, but irreversibly syncretic. As you can see, it is less about the creation of a difference *ex nihilo* than a repetition *inter dicta*. This form of imperial discipline utilizes failure and disavowal as metrics for its success, it forcludes the representation of the subaltern just *before* it folds onto that of the oppressor, thus congealing a farcical identification that is weak enough to not challenge the imperant semiotics, but sufficiently vivid in its failure so as to reassure the imperial authority. And so, mimicry has no identity beneath its surface, none

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139    "The sovereign is the representative of history. He holds the course of history in his hand like a sceptre." (Benjamin 1998: 65).

of the factions involved have an identity: "The *menace* of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial authority also disrupts its authority."[140] The translator, the puppet-politician, the colonial imitator are all legitimate versions of otherness that, in their repetitive failure as subjects (they never fulfill the colonial representation) allow for an articulation of what destabilizes the colonial authority: "It is a desire that reverses "in part" the colonial appropriation by now producing a partial vision of the colonizer's presence. A gaze of otherness, that shares the acuity of the genealogical gaze (...) this process by which the look of surveillance returns as the displacing gaze of the disciplined, where the observer and "partial" representation rearticulates the whole notion of *identity* and alienates it from essence."[141] The colonial authority is turning incomplete by the colonized through a gnarled interplay of authority and metonymic reproduction of hollow identities.

Bhabha sees in mimicry all the irrational justifications, pseudosciences, superstitions, puppets, and puppeteers...*formalisms* that collide with the colonial enunciation of its enlightened authority so that all the ambivalence seems intentionally exerted from the empire. But the Mumbaikar betrays a version of colonialism which prioritizes the utilization of mimetic representation as fiat currency for colonization, and makes the assumption that mimesis is a process resting entirely on imperial hands. Here I may have a different perspective, one in which the empire does not control the *limits* of mimesis since the empire itself is *within* it.

Mimesis engulfs equally the empire's inland and its colonies (which are not purified of their pre-colonial status as empires or castes as well). Yet this factor has been dismissed in favor of a mimesis that only envelops the colonized subjects, presupposing in so doing (and even in

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140    Bhabha, H. (1984) Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse. In *October*, Vol. 28, Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis (Spring, 1984), p. 129.

141    (Ibid.)

spite of the oppressor's incompleteness pointed by Bhabha), an externality whose argumentation does not go further as soon as we take into account the empire's 'cohesion,' or the relationship between authority and exploitation. Assuming that mimesis is less an authoritarian discursive object than an indiscriminate medium for analogy, it renders misleading to conceive the empire as peripheral to it; rather, it is precisely the primordial lack of imperial identity (either because of territorial fragmentation, nationalistic multiplicities or undeclared, crypto-cultures embedded as 'native' to the canonical, imperial worldview), what demands not the supplementation of the Other, (from this vantage point, this would be a pseudo-symmetrical, specular reflection of *the same lack*), but a *demihood;* an entity whose status is measured against an imperial entity that imposes, *from the base*, extractivist, material modes of production from which it configures its authority. If the empire has not a complete identity, it is unable to predict what remains up to the whole, *nor it cares*. At the utmost, it conceives unity in diversity because it cannot afford wholeness and completeness. This is why the empire seizes, first and foremost, the *matter* of the subjugated territories.

To put it bluntly, no one controls mimesis, for it is not a spell you cast, but something you are within. Yet once immersed, you may or not have access to the concrete strata, since colonialism is also material; their bloody and rusty metals are not metonyms, nor the colonial deforestation is the camouflage of its ideology, nor the soil devastated by fire, covered by lead and oil, forcefully variegated with railways, harbors and roads are the empire's visual synecdoche.

Representational and theoretical mediations, of course, do exist, same for a dimension of epistemic violence that covets and dwells mimesis without occupying it entirely. However, the empire should be submerged once and for all into the same mimesis that we used to think it

produces; the prevalence of mimesis as representational victimary apparatus has to be dispelled, for it renders an oppressor whose culture is 'global' and its identity 'cohesive,' all in the name of vertical representations of authority purified of reflexivity (the empire's inland also stratifies itself in order to articulate imperial mimesis). To dissipate this partial mimetic activity supposes to find representations which are already within autonomous mimesis or immanent to it, and from there, to examine *infrastructural* dissymmetries without retorting to the prevalence of the metonymy and its curated exegesis. More mystagogic than hypnagogic, this labor has been thoroughly undertaken by the young Marx (2000) and its actualization developed by Spivak (1984).

Reading to the latter whilst she is following the former, we can find two representative registries that operate through subsequent concealments. Spivak grapples with the role of ideology in relationship with intellectual and economic history and the role of the international division of labor as well. This *ideology* (the concealment of what remained noticeable after hiding the visuality), is incarnated within institutions and representations that ubicate a silent reality. The Calcuttan problematizes the question concerning representation, pointing toward two existing modalities: representation as a deferred political speech act (pertaining to the state), and representation as repetition of a presentation (which supposes the description of a subject). This discontinuity is what allows to collate disparate representational cases; sometimes, the subject is multiple and irrepresentable, sometimes, the multitude becomes decomposed in order to generate ulterior differences.

Following this distinction amongst state, economic and subject's representation, Spivak invokes the young Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1851-52) and his study of 'class,' which is "artificial and economic, and the economic agency or interest is impersonal

because it is systematic and heterogeneous."[142] The subjects that dwell within the concept of

class and its consciousness (one that is not a given instinct, but indicated by the capital), are not

singular entities, but a "a divided and dislocated subject whose parts are not continuous or

coherent with each other."[143] Is this fragmentary subject the one who requires of a representative

that either represents the subject figuratively as its voice (*Vertreten*) or as a technical imitation

(*Darstellen*); two interrelated modalities that, on the one hand, articulate a discourse framed by

the state and politics or attend to generate a rendition of a subject.

Spivak detects the subaltern in the crossroad between both modalities, obtaining a fold

between the former and the latter since, if a representation is also a substitution (the

representative assumes the voice of the represented), the political-rhetoric exercise becomes

concealed, *ordenada*, behind the very mimetic act that produces. Thus the priority is no longer

the description of a class, but the visualization of its representative mimetization; so the potential

of the *Vertretung* or *usurpation* is annulled by mimetizing it within a double *Darstellung* or

*betoken*. Sustained by words, this slippage correlates the exertion of imperial mimesis insofar as

we assume that is nothing but a corrupted form of *Vertretung*. Yet this modality is the most

fragile for it requires the effects of abstraction (*Darstellung*), for debilitating its identity and hide

the Other's use of word under its meta-mimetic semblance; it is no longer the articulation of a

deferred tongue, but the presence of who is occupying this tongue what it counts; a presence that

cloaks speech and body, possession and class.

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142    (Spivak 1984: 71).
143    (Ibid.)

Following Spivak, and *contra* Bhabha, my approach to the imperial mimesis supposes to recalibrate the different modalities of representation and concealment (which all function within mimesis), avoiding to "reintroduce the individual subject through totalizing concepts of power and desire."[144] Undertaking this task also implies to acknowledge that most of the counter-mimetic gestures of appropriation and over-identification do not appropriate and over-identify the *Darstellung* (the rendition), but the *Vertretung* (the usurpation); therefore, who is learning to speak in purple tongue does not mimetize the representative *techniques* of the empire, but the representation of the concealment that the oppressor utilizes as imperial representative. It follows that the representation enacted by the empire is not that of its executioners, but of the process by which these occupy the representation of the subaltern. Such nuance, minimum although crucial, is that it never was an imperial identity, to begin with, but merely a process where the act of representing an identity was substituted with the representative action effectuated in the name of the subaltern. Considering mimesis less as a *techne* and more as a medium is what allows to radicalize this appreciation, provided that the empire's executioners are not exempted of analogization, thus being its lack of *Darstellen* more accessible. Within this representative skein what remains mute is the Other, the subaltern, the oppressed, the colonial subject, the women, all sacrificed by intellectual renditions that either "diagnoses the episteme" or "prove that intellectual labor is just like manual labor".[145]

We speak of the victims; "those neutralized or without-life lived experiences,"[146] which are, by the same token, preexistent to every aprioristic generalization in the name of the absolute.

They dwell in a real dimension that is previous to the world without being assimilated to

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144     (Spivak 1984: 74).
145     (Spivak 1984: 69-70).
146     (Laruelle 2015b: 26).

its representations; being less than a subaltern, the victims are *minorities:* "immediate givens of

multiplicities beyond the possible techniques of their production".[147]

The *minor* character of the victims and their representation (as either theory or memory),

does not allow us to ubicate them, it only generates an *order* that shuffles them with their

representations. In *General Theory of Victims* (2015), Laruelle expands this thought, and in so

doing affords a passage through the fissure that endures amidst *Vertretung* and *Darstellung*, a

mimetic fringe in which we do not know whether the victim is another different than me,[148] or if

the means for oppression lead to an end. In this zone, the victim exists as a human being without

humanity, as a lived experience able to represent:

> "Predicates do not exhaust the subject, which is foreclosed to them, provided that
> we conceive of the subject as an under-determining Last Instance. This is not to
> forget concrete and fleshly victims in a new generality, but to refuse by this
> formalism to mimetically or specularly duplicate them in theory, a duplication its
> generic meaning rejects. *The cloning of victims* in the form of intellectuals will be
> something completely different from a mimetic rivalry."[149]

This passage merits further revision, for it describes an operation in which the

representational *Vertretung* can be displaced within the medium of mimesis. Laruelle exposes in

passing how the cloning operation[150] refuses the mimetic duplicity that we have described before

(what occupies a subject by speaking on its behalf). This operation is distinguished, on the one

hand, of the separation (Kant) between subject and object sustained by a scientific *a priori*; on

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147     Laurelle, F. (1981) The Minority Principle. Trans. Edward Kazarian. In *Le principe de minorité*. Paris:
        Editions Aubier Montaigne, pp. 5-7.
148     (2015b: 36).
149     (Laruelle 2015b: 29), italics are mine.
150     For this passage I have utilized the following sources from Laruelle: (2015c) Introduction to Non-
        Marxism. Minneapolis: Univocal; (2013b) Dictionary of non-philosophy. Minneapolis: Univocal;  (2013a)
        Principles of non-philosophy. London & New York: Bloomsbury Publishing; (2010) Philosophies of
        Difference. London: Continuum. The thorough inspection of Laruelle's wager made by Brassier has been a
        useful compass here. Brassier, R. (2001b) Behold the Non-Rabbit: Kant, Quine, Laruelle. In *Pli*, 12 (2001),
        pp. 50-82.

the other, of a realism (Quine) that presupposes a truth in which logical and factual facts are indistinguishable. Further, Laruelle pursues a pre-condition for thought that does not absolutize its scale in relationship with the real[151] yielding an immanence whose status is not determined by other entity; thus not being immanent *to* something.

Following Ray Brassier's examination of Laruelle's non-standard philosophy (2001b), such immanence has to comply with the transcendental role without becoming into it. This only apparent duplicity of immanence requires of thought, which actuates from within the real and, by existing there, it partakes of its determination. To think from immanence implies to co-produce it instead of summoning an external field foreclosed to thought. Until now, we can deploy three preliminary conclusions of Laruelle's wager: the immanence is posited as a transparent and isotropic foreclosure to transcendence; the immanence is necessary within the execution of transcendence; the act of thought is *non-thetic*, that is, *non-intentional* or *not acting according to*, or not as *correlative*.

These stages have two principal fields, an immanent *real* and a phenomenic transcendental *world*. Like a pearl, the former forecloses itself to the transcendental field, turning this latter into an "empirical occasion" or support from which the real configures itself as non-intentional to thought. Due to this sequence (a foreclosure of the real to the world in which the real's thought is modeled into the world's immanence), the real acquires transcendence as a non-intentional model of intentional transcendence; the real's foreclosure *clones* itself as thought upon the occasion that the world's intentional transcendence affords.

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151　"real without being empirically determinate and capable of assuming a transcendental function without becoming ideally transcendent." Brassier. R. (2001) Alien Theory: The Decline of Materialism in the Name of Matter. (Doctoral dissertation on PhD Thesis.) University of Warwick.
In http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/4034/. p. 68.

Hence the real exists as a unilateral duality that comprises, on the one hand, the identity of immanence without unity, and the duality of transcendence without distinction on the other; the *cloning* operation is here an instance of immanent subjectivation that is not phenomenological. By effectuating this separation or unilateral duality, the real becomes the subject of a transcendental theory without turning the immanent towards empiric subjectivity nor phenomenological conscience. Laruelle's proposal considers thought as something that does not run upon the phenomenon, but within the real, *in the last instance*: neither formal, nor informal, neither efficient nor material.

The subject of this non-phenomenological theory is a Strange, a non-intentional organ upon whom the phenomenological experience is determined. This subject does not execute theory as its representation is, for Laruelle, *performative* and determined by a theoretical-practical composite that is not phenomenological. This process of cloning turns the empiric as indifferent, as unpacked mimesis that cancels distinctions between experience and judgment, fact and essence, *a posteriori* and *a priori*, turning the concrete or phenomenological in its unconditional immanence, and, at the same time, as indifferently abstract in its unconditional transcendence.

At this point, we find a scenario in which the abyssal dimension of mimesis hosts diverse functions of *order* and *ideology*, delaminations of the occult where to give voice to a third party hiddens your own decomposition, where thinking from within the phenomena only grants access to the deterrent that cloaks the image's concealment and its soluble dispersion within mimesis.

Furthermore, we encounter staged destruction: subject, subaltern, victim, strange...along with a descent in which the mimetic abyss is variegated of remnants of humanity and personhood as a way of adornment.

51

In his massive and non-finished project "Der Schmuck" (1936-1937), Hans Hildebrandt establishes a generative principle of adornment in the funerary gesture of concealment.[152] The jewels thus appear from the spoils of the dead that, by being donators, become victims and bearers of a temporal constellation. "The ornament amassed in museum collections externalizes the dialectic between absconding and illuminating—long centuries of darkness interspersed by short periods of brilliant display. It is precisely this interrupted external presence that grants articles of adornment their periodic glow and episodic glimpse of afterlife."[153] This arrangement of victims preserved in death and constellated by their jewels is the mark of either decoration and world order, a *kosmos* that, moreover, is understood by Gottfried Semper as an interplay between the gem and the setting, between authority and a neutral ground.[154] Let us discern the structure of the jewel: "units that in symmetric, eurhythmic, or directional arrangement form the essence of adornment, and secondly it consists of that which enfolds the units, links them in a chain, and attaches them to the adorned."[155] A patterning composed by individuals, subordinate ornamentation (a join of units enfolding individuals), and a carrier are the three fundamental elements of this cosmological arrangement, unearthed from dead victims and worn by a representative of the lineage that unites what it is above and below.

This unifying medium that analogizes everything towards the same direction can be hallucinated from different perspectives, For instance, Bolívar Echeverría describes the

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152      In Hans Hildebrandt, "Quellen d[er] Kenntnis," in idem, "Der Schmuck," ca. 1936-37, Hildebrandt Papers (box 11, folder 25), 3. Quoted by Papapetros, S. (2009) An Ornamented Inventory of Microcosmic Shifts: Notes on Hans Hildebrandt's Book Project "Der Schmuck" (1936-1937). In *Getty Research Journal*, no. 1 (2009), pp. 87-106.
153      (Papapetros 2009: 88).
154      Semper, G. (2004) Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or, Practical Aesthetics. Trans. Harry F. Mallgrave, and Michael Robinson, Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, p. 307.
155      Semper, G. (2010) On the formal principles of adornment and its meaning as a symbol in art (second section). In *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 57/58 (Spring/Autumn 2010), p. 306.

archaeological function or "historical decantation"[156] of diverse capitalist extensions by distinguishing four *ethos* or models: the first assimilates the world through a quantification of value and the development of production, a second which problematizes the aforementioned values, then, another in which triumphs the resigned acceptance of the capitalist reality, and a fourth that refuses the interiorization of capitalism from a scenery that, without discussion, is that of a defeat.

Echeverría unfolds four models (protestant, romantic, classical and baroque) which, under the notion of quality, becomes destroyed and assimilated. And nonetheless, it exists for the Ecuadorian an implicit verticality, since it is always the first model (protestant, realist) the one that has the prerogative for combining or assimilating the traits of the others.[157] In this sense, the baroque approach is what allows to grapple and intervene upon destruction itself: "it is baroque the modern way that allows to live the destruction of the qualitative, produced by capitalist productivism, by converting it in the access to the creation of another dimension, challengingly imaginary, of the qualitative."[158] The baroque is here a negative marker of the historical conceptualization of the 'classical,' and it would be for ornament what a neutral ground is for the jewel; an arrangement of motifs that envelops a pearl.[159] Following this image, we find that the

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156    Echeverría, B. (1996) El ethos barroco. In *Debate Feminista*, Vol. 13 (Abril 1996), p. 74, my translation.
157    "the realist ethos is which organizes its own combination with the others and obliges them to translate towards it in order to become manifest." In (1996: 74), my translation: "el ethos realista, es el que organiza su propia combinación con los otros y los obliga a traducirse a él para hacerse manifiestos."
158    (Ibid.), my translation: "Es barroca la manera de ser moderno que permite vivir la destrucción de lo cualitativo, producida por el productivismo capitalista,al convertirla en el acceso a la creación de otra dimensión, retadoramente imaginaria, de lo cualitativo."
159    "The baroque technique of material conformation (...) is disenchanted by the insufficiencies of ['classical' canon] (...) before the new vital substance that must form, and it bets on the possibility that the retraction of the latter upon the former could be which restores its validity." (1996: 77), my translation. "La técnica barroca de conformación del material (...) se desencanta por las insuficiencias del [canon clásico] (...) frente a la nueva substancia vital a la que debe formar y apuesta a la posibilidad de que la retroacción de ésta sobre él sea la que restaure su vigencia."

53

notion of baroque is hollow, it surrounds a lost jewel.[160] To retain this arrangement without gem, (a piece of sheer adornment and a hollow presence as main character), allows us to rethink the possibility of cloning the jewels by being not a copyist, but a forger of fragments.

The baroque ornament is characterized by occupying the entirety of its operative realm to the point that creates a reality made out such occupation, as if the technical mimetization of its process led to its foreclosure as mimesis. Echeverría unveils this consequence as an "absolute mise-en-scene," where: "the service of representation -of turning the real world into a represented world- has been accomplished in such a way that it develops a need in itself, an autonomous "formal law" that is able to alter the representation of the mystified world to the point that it turns it into a different version of itself."[161] The scenic character of this baroque bloom, its descriptive consistency has become more necessary than a prescriptive 'real,'[162] a cohesion that is sustained by a particular gesture (allegory) and a particular gaze (melancholia).

And here, I have chosen allegory as working material; the main reason lies in its ambiguity, a peculiar one if we think that, in its ambivalence, every allegory is as it is precisely because of its fragmentary character; it has *limits*; edges, contours. And for that matter, an

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160     "it could be argued that, due to that, the baroque behavior begins from despair and ends in vertigo: in the experience of fulfillment that it seeking to extract its richness, there is no other fill that the fruits of its own void." (1996: 78), my translation. ["Puede decirse, por ello, que el comportamiento barroco parte de la desesperación y termina en el vértigo: en la experiencia de que la plenitud que él buscaba para sacar de ella su riqueza no está llena de otra cosa que de los frutos de su propio vacío."

161     In Echeverría, B. (2008) El ethos barroco y los indios. In *Revista de Filosofía "Sophia"*, Quito-Ecuador. Nº 2/ 2008. p. 8, my translation. "La *messinscena assoluta* es aquella en la que el servicio de representar -de convertir al mundo real en un mundo representado- se cumple de manera tal, que desarrolla él mismo una necesidad propia, una "ley formal" autónoma, que es capaz de alterar la representación del mundo mitificado en la vida cotidiana hasta el punto en que lo convierte en una versión diferente de sí misma."

162     "in the "melancholic strategy of transcending the life (...) has become, as world of life, a thousand times more necessary and fundamental than grounded than of the real world." (2008: 7), my translation. "la "estrategia melancólica de trascender la vida" (...) se ha vuelto, como mundo de la vida, mil veces más necesaria y fundamentada que la del mundo real."

allegory allows us to follow the sacrifice of the ancients, one in which the more the antiquity is

touted and yearned, the more it becomes displaced, for coming to terms with antiquity results in

comparisons between ulterior moments. No doubt that the ancient is a prestidigitator who, in his

unwillingness to stand as a singular object, creates oscillations around itself. The distortion, the

inevitable slippage towards another event that occurs as soon as we approach to 'the ancient'

seems unsolvable (and this text will not be the solution either). It is rather my interest to *furnish*

allegory with a space in which we can give an account of its material dependence and its

operative power which encompass mind, image and time. Understanding the simultaneity of

dimensions that every allegory enacts (incompleteness and meaning, singularity and kinship),

supposes to reckon its irreducibility into a dialectical recursion, nor even to a negative one (there

is no backdrop to deny here.) "Allegory (...) exists only in allegory."[163] This mournful murmur of

the allegory is, at the same time, its content and its origin,[164] a masked emptiness that is revealed

only by the gaze of the melancholic[165] because it is a victim from what it is far from the Earth. So

be it; let us introduce the melancholic gaze for the sake of unveiling the allegory in its own

conditions. This maneuver will be also the account of how melancholy survives its dialectical

debilitation throughout ages, a process that echoes the parallel existence of antique and the new

as told by Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl in *Saturn and Melancholy* (1979). Lineages of historical

time united by the dark matter of the *black bile*, which alongside with other humors (blood and

the phlegm), partake also of a system of correlations between cosmic, earthly and human scales.

It goes without saying that with the ancient advent of humoralism, the human body is

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163    (Benjamin 1998: 233).
164    "Every feeling is an *a priori* object, and the representation of this object is its phenomenology" (1998:
       139).
165    (Ibid.)

posited as irretrievably ill, unable to achieve an optimal equilibrium since everybody is determined by the primacy of one type of humor over the rest.

Initially, the melancholia is understood as a mental disease induced from a bodily disequilibrium, and whose manifestations range from "fear, misanthropy and depression to madness in its most frightful forms,"[166] but, having a noble lineage (the melancholia stems from the realm of great tragedies and the Platonic notion of *frenzy*), the disease merits further investigation; Heracles, Ajax, and Bellerophon are, from now on, contaminated. By the time Aristotle is coming to terms (in his *Problema XXX*) with the conundrum posited by the melancholic phenomenon, this is already eminent in politics and philosophy whilst stands as "the sacred disease by the ancients."[167] The melancholic is now "outstanding"[168] because her black bile can be drastically affected by natural phenomena such as heat and cold, and whose output acquires the guise of a *temperament* that outpaces the biological behaviour of the humors. With Philip Melanchthon (1497- 1560) we note a turn into the psychological connotations of the humoral, and the shift towards a more moralizing conception of melancholy. Note this passage quoted in *Saturn and Melancholy*: "When melancholy originates from the blood and is tempered with blood, it gives rise to the insanity of the fatuously happy, just as the cheerful madness of Democritus is said to have been, who used to laugh at the foolishness of mankind and by his unruffled mind prolonged his life to the hundred-and-ninth-year."[169]

This transition is one of scale, from the humoral to the physical and psychological, and from there to the cosmic. In their study, the Austrian and the two Germans recall the vital

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166    Klibanski, R; Panofsky, E; Saxl, F. (1979) Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art. Nendeln and Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, p. 14.
167    Aristoteles, *Problemata physica.* Ed. Ruelle, Knoelinger, Klek, Leipzig 1922, quoted by  Klibanski, R; Panofsky, E; Saxl, F. (1979: 18).
168    (1979: 35).
169    (1979: 89).

transformation of ancient medicine into "iatromathematics"[170] whose weirdest exponent is perhaps Antonio Guainerio ( - 1440). He might be so because, in his refusal of the Aristotelian paradigm, he comes with another version of melancholy determined by the stars. According to his alternative, during the soul's incarnation, a particular celestial constellation seems to gain prevalence and determines the qualities and activities of such and such soul; but spiritual evenness becomes doomed by weak physical constitution, the body manifest discomfort and negatively subtracts the powers of the soul, for it anchors this latter to the bodily organs.[171] The soul thus forgets its own native ideas and "recollects only through learning part of what has been forgotten."[172] By repeating the myth of the Fall, Guainerio is in passing rendering a fractalized copy of the *modern* longings for the past, of a reminiscence that cannot be articulated except "discursively."[173] Interestingly, Guainerio is building the *influencing machine* more than four hundred years before Tausk.[174] A disembodied identity becomes influenced by a distant, obscure ensemble of celestial bodies, which is the source of its personhood and quality. But the body cries out, and the libidinal overcharge restricts the intellect and its innate ideas, foreclosing the act of understanding. "But if owing to a state of ecstasy, the senses are put out of action ("bound"), then the soul is left to itself and is enabled for a short time to re-experience (as it were) its pre-natal state; it then perceives "sine discursu," by direct intuition, and can receive the influence of its presiding star without adulteration or diminution."[175] Suffices here to remark that the re-connection to the influencing ensemble is attained by means of delirium or *ecstasy*. Either

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170    (1979: 94).
171    (Ibid.)
172    (1979: 96).
173    "because the soul, chained as it is to the body and dependent on the help of bodily organs, can recognize things only "discursively", that is to say, not by immediate insight, but only through the combination of reasoning and sense impressions" (1979: 96).
174    Provided that Guainerio's source described by Klibanski, Panofsky, and Saxl, was published posthumously in 1517: *Practica*, Venice 1517. tract. 15, fol. 23'.
175    (1979: 96).

be the case, melancholic or schizophrenic, both have the ability to defer the body in virtue of a remote source of influence. The more this latter actuates, the more it disintegrates the bodily cohesion, turning it into a cluster of organs that resembles the complex structure of Tausk's machine, or, by extension, a conglomerate of celestial bodies. Ironically, the influencing machine built by Guainerio in 1517 and designated by Tausk in 1933 *is* the factual execution of the machine's functions within a historical dimension, for its symptoms always precede their physical manifestation. To repeat: *when the machine finally appears as structure, it does so alongside with its own rumor, of an anterior shadow that was only half perceived.*

But beyond this apophenic interval, the account also points to the political dimension of the melancholic. Let the stars be the empire, and their organs the pervasive hindrance posited by the material hodgepodge composed of workers. The imperial innate lexicon can only be retrieved by abandoning the material in pursuance of the direct access granted by the interval of ecstasy. In light of this, the melancholic phenomena endures its stretching, ranging from its ancient, *grotesque* designation (as *physis*) to its modern *promise*; the access to the imperial text without translation: *Purpura juxta purpura dijudicanda*. Not by chance the melancholic is touted as classless: "since the melancholic was liable to this ecstatic state which put the senses out of action, it was understandable that even without any education he should then become "literatissimus" (...) absque eo, quod ab aliquo (...) didicerit vel addiscat, sed per influxum solum."[176] *Apart from the fact that someone has learned (...) to learn, but only by an influx*. So be it.

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176        (Ibid.)

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the case of the melancholic becomes increasingly personified in order to correlate the elite's body. We may find this explicitly stated in Nicholas de Cusa's *De concordantia catholica* (1433), where "The king, therefore, must be a luteplayer, who well understands (...) how to preserve harmony (...) For that reason, it is the business of the ruler, like a wise doctor, duly to keep the body of the state healthy."[177]

Understanding the melancholia as an "intellectual force"[178] implies to accept its role in the configuration of singular personalities in spite of homogeneous versions of it, for the (cosmic, bodily, ecstatic) variables outpace the attempts to diagramming it. To enrich things further, the melancholia bears, in its bond with astrology, the mark of religious dismissal, provided that claims "the human will affirming its independence even of Providence."[179] Yet a free will arrested by astral influence, since this melancholic individual still is marked by the whim of the constellations. In light of this, the attempt to systematize melancholia implies to articulate *lame* dialectics in which synthesis is deferred in favor of recursion to antithesis.

Elsewhere, Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) develops a system that could fit within these aforementioned coordinates: the gifted melancholic, who is suffering from the planetary, *Saturnian* bodily torments and dwindling faculties "grief, fear, and depression —might save himself by the very act of turning voluntarily towards that very same Saturn,"[180] which means to account for an overidentification of Saturn's influence, a full acceptance of the 'agency' that is left. This is why by emphasizing the act of "active contemplation,"[181] the melancholic synchronizes her activity with the effects of Saturn. Resignation as salvation, as if the unbearable

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177    Nicholas de Cusa, *Opera*, Paris 1514, Vol. III, fol. 75. Quoted by Klibanski, R; Panofsky, E; Saxl, F.
       (1979: 119-20).
178    (1979: 241).
179    (1979: 246).
180    (1979: 271).
181    (Ibid.)

dosage of Saturnian contamination would leave its subject prey of an overdose; nothing can yet be done except to fold oneself onto it, to be the immanency of the substantial transcendental flux.

But from this perspective, the political dimension of such planetary influence does nothing but to transpose the *alienation* into the cosmic realm, for the classless melancholic may well be ascending until reaches the access to the imperial text, granted, but such elevation happens at the expense of hindering and harming the body. To reach the property of knowledge cashes out as the obliteration of matter, thus of the possibility of individuation. According to this scenario, the subject of melancholy stares at the realization of her own finitude in light of the influencing star.

Alongside with this configuration of the melancholic that we have just described, there is another lineage worthy of discussion contained in the massive *Saturn and Melancholy*. This parallel account has been traced back by the three historians to the ninth century in the figure of Abū Ma'shar and his "analysis of the spectrum' which bonds celestial bodies, natural elements, and human humors. For example, "The color of the black bile is dark and black, its nature, like that of the earth, is cold and dry. But the colour of Saturn also is dark and black, so Saturn must be cold and dry by nature."[182] Such a demoniac identity conferred to Saturn does stem from its conceptualization as a god. In the post-Olympic astrology, the downfall of the gods is defined as pious transubstantiation into celestial bodies, a profane form subjected equally to atonement and finitude. Conversely, those who were not transmuted into stars (for instance, Hephaestus, Poseidon and Athena), continued to exist in allegorical moral tracts.[183] Yet this convertibility is not restricted only between stars and gods, but amongst gods themselves; therefore the Greek god Kronos fuses with the Roman Saturn so as to create an irreconcilable ambivalence; a *good*

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182    Quoted by Klibanski, R; Panofsky, E; Saxl, F. (1979: 127-28).
183    (1979: 133).

Kronos with Saturn, the "haunted fugitive."[184] Further assimilations in the same vein (the incorporation of the Babylonian cosmology) create, literally, god *series* in which all become melted along the religious assembly line: the Babylonian Ninib in hand with Greek Chronos, the Egyptian Nemesis, the Roman Saturn.

The Stoic reinterpretation of melancholia equates every celestial body within a universal medium where the distinction between heat and cold is primal and key. This is why Saturn, which is cold due to its remoteness to the Sun, becomes the owner of what is cold on earth as if the distance from matter were the prerequisite of its ownership. The Stoic *Moira*, composed by the laws of nature and Fate alongside with the designation of a celestial jurisdiction shatters the celestial myths into physical properties. For the Stoics, the gods are no longer persons, but *functions*; a set of influencing effects and the resultant carnage finds its factions; on the one hand, Christianity will answer what happens in the afterlife, the antiquity what happens during lifetime.[185] In the ambit of thought, this translates into a transitional phase that begins with the interpretation of myths and follows with "structural (...) abstract allegory" or "concrete analogy," from constellating reality to the mimetic articulation of celestial functions.[186] Understanding the mythical as terrestrial allows here for a physiognomic and moralizing celestial agency, one that is determined by its dependence of the material substrate. It is from such scenario that the Saturnine character matches the melancholic temperament.

Beyond this instance, the ulterior Neoplatonic understanding stratifies the cosmos according to the influencing powers of the stars. Given this reconciliation between Plato and

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184    (Ibid.)
185    (1979: 139).
186    "They no longer say: "Saturn signifies time because Time devours temporal events as Saturn did his children," but "Saturn, cast out from the Olympus into Hades, rules the lowest region of the celestial globe." (1979: 142).

Aristotle under the translucent canopy of the Neoplatonists, the soul now travels through differential cosmic scales (including the planets) while exercising certain moral faculties throughout the journey. However, a journey from the celestial to the material is nothing but a *fall* (informed by Persian and Gnostic worldviews), where the outwardly impure and the guilty earth marks the distance of the plunge, one in which still the soul carries valuable virtues from afar. If we move on throughout this melancholic itinerary, the Scholastic William of Conches (1090-1154) threefold approach to cosmology encompassing mythological, astrological (as apparent motion) and astronomical (as real motion) centers the interpretation of melancholy around physical causes although employing a *logical* distinction: Saturn is credited with cold not because he is cold himself or because he causes cold, but because he signifies cold."[187]

Something that unites the Scholastic and the Neoplatonic visions is the act of enclosure in which either the contingency of the melancholic and the materialization of the influencing machine (namely, Saturn), becomes deprived of transcendental relations. In spite of the cosmic scale, both entities are conceived as impervious, singularized so as to keep a set of functions which are autotelic. A planet that signifies its influencing activity, and nothing more, the melancholic that stares the limits of her gaze, and nothing else. Such is the panorama of melancholy, cloaked as the fabrication of a pearl; the cosmos and the spirit are here reified (and rarified) as absolute volumes fabricated from within themselves: "as in Neoplatonism, the stars were not active forces but symbols."[188]

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187     (1979: 182).
188     (Ibid.)

The tyrant is an Absolute; by being symbolic, unites the material and the transcendental, the appearance and the essence. In Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1928), the symbol is pointing to an identity that eludes a fixed characterization throughout historic time.

Take the 'classical,' with its alloy made out of beauty and the divine. Or the Romanticism, which locates a perfect individual along a sequence of events under which acquires a sacred status. This individual can only exist within the realm of culture, or as Benjamin envision it, inside its "radius."[189] Moreover, the Baroque annuls the 'classical' internalism for its content, political as it is, only addresses a religious community instead of an individual.[190]

It may be that the 'classical' has been conferred with the powers of the symbol, it can have that of the allegory, its counterpart, or at least, its *plasma*: "the dark background against which the bright world of the symbol might stand out."[191] An allegory would be what is left out of the symbol's apparition, the paper sheet that, once cut out so as to obtain a shape, is discarded, albeit it keeps the constitution of the symbol's enclosure. But beyond that scene, what Benjamin pursues is a more radicalized expression of the allegory, one that it is irreducible to the expression of an idea and its counterpart; a *concept* that is, as in Schopenhauer's approach, inscribed in the fashion of a hieroglyph. Benjamin's despised and forgotten allegory is not, in this sense, a bynomy configured by visual denotation and abstract meaning; its status soon acquires what the text and speech correlate, but with a very distinct temporal dimension; one that is forestalled by the persistence of the 'classical.'

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189     (Benjamin: 1998: 160).
190     (Ibid.)
191     (1998: 161).

After Creuzer, Benjamin's operation implies to caught the symbol, which exists at a certain distance from the allegorical and its behavior, distant and fleeting as if the ghostly appearance of lightning were. This symbol, and no other, stands also outlying its 'religious' and 'mystical' counterparts; otherwise, we are facing a 'plastic' symbol[192] incarnated in sculptures.

Furthermore, this plastic symbol becomes arrested as part of a mimetic process, provided that the symbol's essence is "obedient to nature, adapts itself to natural forms, penetrates and animates them" as Benjamin recalls following Winckelmann.[193] Nothing far from mimesis as Caillois would envision it; a symbol that loses its enclosure and daubs the earth, becoming its backdrop. Thus the 'plastic' or artistic symbol is excessive with regards to its forms, it outpaces them, breaking recognition while suspending denomination, though this excess is not arbitrary in its efforts; the symbol is mimicking what is nature, it *learns* how to domesticate and reveal itself, purged in the name of the pictorial and the allusive. 'The symbol of the gods' as Winckelmann says before Greek sculptures, humans only incidentally, recipients of a grace sustain by the fragile order of representation.

Meanwhile, allegory is displaced towards a background due to its lack of totality (the symbol's prerogative), and from there, it actuates "a progression in a series of moments."[194] If the symbol is the instant where meaning is kept by the symbol, the allegory is a tidal recursion operating between the visual and its meaning. The former is the identity that emerges (as enclosure) from the event of the latter, and crucially, the temporal fold exerted by allegory, its univocity *vis-à-vis* time, turns visible the chiseling of death; for the obliteration of the symbol does nothing but turning the stratum of nature all the more vivid and palpitant, its destruction is

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192     (1998: 164).
193     (Ibid.)
194     (1998: 165).

not prerogative of time, but of the real reclaiming its tribute. On the other hand, an allegory is the very *montage* of the real facing death; its pace is glacial, unswerving. Under such predicament, an allegory is the last image; not because is definitive (it still has death behind), but precisely due to its *finality*, its role as the last concealment. The symbol always stands a step behind, being a reminder of the crepuscular condition of every expression, a critical one because is verging on its end. In Benjamin's allegory, the route is not a limpid arch from life to death, from aperture and fulfillment towards is cessation, it is rather more circuitous as the direction is retrograde, from death backward, with meaning emerging from death back to decline, uphill; an itinerary in which it is the stone who is chasing Sisyphus.[195]

Such itinerary delineates the historical development of allegory, whose initial impulse if found by Benjamin and Giehlow in the decipherment of hieroglyphs, in the inscription of *rebus*, "devices"[196] where letters and words are assembled with pictorial images. The Baroque assimilation of allegory turns it all the more hieratic in character; death once more, as what connects the alphabetical script and the Egyptian signs are "titles (...) and sculptures which are suitable for sepulchral monuments."[197] These hieroglyphs are the repository of divine wisdom, but the Baroque does not fold onto an Enlightened teleology, in fact, it deviates from it since its aim is less the happiness of the earthlings than the execution of its retrograde pace, from death to dusk.

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195     This is why "the greater the significance, the greater the subjection to death because death digs most deeply the jagged line of demarcation between the physical nature and significance." (1998: 166).
196     (1998: 169).
197     (1998: 169).

It follows that the allegory is paradoxically relativist and specific. Its meaning can be lurking behind anything, albeit its own drift is granting, by the same token, that the things are no longer profane or prosaic.[198] Yet this friction between authority and technique, "convention and expression"[199] finds an example in the writing of history, in which an allegory acquires the status of a creation.

For Benjamin, writing is also allegorical because its expression is inextricably bound to its codification. Now another tension emerges between the script and hieroglyph, amongst atomized scriptures and sacred complexes. In the Baroque's allegory, the textual endures a typographic inflation and a metaphoric overabundance: "the written words tends toward the visual."[200] And nonetheless, the outcome of such excess is not a dense unity, but an amorphous recollection of fragments that maims beauty off its renewals. The allegorical transcendence becomes rigorous, exclusive and inexorable.[201] Allegory, the *grand* weakener of symbols, fights against the will to remain the same that is characteristic of the symbol; it shatters this latter with the powers of its *montage*.[202]

The gaze that parses allegory's sequence is the melancholic one. As in any other allegory, melancholy is critical, just before death; a "fixed image and a fixed sign"[203] stared through the eyes of death. What allegory does, accordingly, is to flay out its subjects so as to unveil their infrastructure, with no image behind. This "schema"[204] of an immanent writing that is

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198    (1998: 175).
199    (Ibid.)
200    (1998: 176).
201    (1998: 183).
202    "Allegories become dated, because it is part of their nature to shock" (1998: 183).
203    (1998: 184).
204    (Ibid.)

simultaneously script and stage fuses meaning and material as a terminal metaphor. This is why a *Trauerspiel* is not a drama for its characters, but a drama *for you*, the reader-spectator. Who stares is thus the executioner of the allegorical pace, the melancholic. Accepting that allegory does *montage* implies to understand the role of melancholy as its *transitions* are made out of glances addressing minute, mundane objects in the hope of their eventual incandescence. For these objects are not personified, they merely stands as persons without personhood, without soul.[205] And for this latter ingredient, it becomes less concealed than scattered "distributing the person's characteristics so secretly in the thousands folds of allegorical drapery."[206] All these melancholic objects have no spirit in themselves; it is the melancholic the one who assumes the toil of collecting spiritual kindlings, like the remnants of a banquet, the rubbish left behind by a past joy. Either way, the melancholic activates the assembly of matter without void in between; matter manifests darkness, pure spirituality all over whose murmur is made out of mourning, a silence that overlaps with nature.[207] Matter that resists, *after all*, the antique notion of *physis* imbued with its promise; the guilt that goes in hand with knowledge. This silent, *satanic* matter is also a mimetic operation, an abyss that floods contemplation itself. The gaze of the melancholic fills its objects with a tensional direction, from the realm of ultimate destruction back to "the idea of resurrection,"[208] denying the existence of what is bring forward.

There has been an implicit equation by which the unity of the symbol reflects the cohesion of the 'classical', one whose utmost whim is to become nothing but recursive

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205     "Allegorical personification has always concealed the fact that its function is not the personification of things, but rather to give the concrete a more imposing form by getting it up as a person." (1998: 187).
206     (1998: 191).
207     Because it is mute, fallen nature mourns." (1998: 224).
208     (1998: 233).

appearances and disappearances.[209] In *The Future of the 'Classical'* (2006), Salvatore Settis

unpacks the complexities of such notion in an attempt to de-centralize the very concept that the

'classical' seems to sustain; an uncorrupted identity that has passed over centuries in its

maximum degree of singularity, yet bearing in its essence the always elusive reference to the

'primitive.' The archaeology of art that during the nineteenth century pursues to uncover the

ancient art is one of the main attempts detected by Settis in the configuration of a 'distance'

between what can be rightfully designated as modern *versus* the primitive. And so, the German

historians of this period conflate literary and monumental sources in order to address the original

impulse of Greek art. As we are about to see, such a quest was deployed in contradictory paths.

In one way, the existence of Roman copies of Greek statues was legitimized on the basis

not of existing material Greek originals correlating their Roman counterparts, but of the readings

of Pliny, Lucian or Pausanias in which the originals were described.[210] In this case, the statue's

legitimacy stems from its role as a document. But soon after, this textual primacy of the

archaeological matter is again rendered insufficient in comparison with the numerous

excavations unearthing Greek originals[211] that nonetheless were anonymous. Given this, the

identity of the 'classical' is forged as either authorship confirmed by copies, or by originals

without textual confirmation. In this latter "history of art without names," Settis perceived the

route to a substantial nature of Greek art in which its appearance occurs in the guise of a

*fragment*; the modern destiny to achieve completion in spite of meaning. There is originality

which cannot be fully endowed, a meaning that cannot be completely conferred due to lack of

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209    "It needs to made clear that the 'classical; often emerges and re-emerges not so much in the form of a
       rediscovery as in the rebirth or return, as though it were a phantom with its own will and personality, and
       capable of returning whenever it feels like it." Settis, S. (2006) The Future of the Classical. Cambridge:
       Polity, p. 6.
210    (Settis 2006: 29).
211    "Further discoveries from Samos to Athens revealed more originals every year, ones that almost always
       had no reference in written sources and for which there could be no attribution." (2006: 29-30).

material integrity. Yet the promise of an ulterior epiphany (of identity and meaning), is what extends the event of the 'classical' according to its own rhythmical form, which has been sublated as the internal drive of European culture and of its history. And it its the role of this latter what creates a particular difference between the pace of the 'classical' and 'other' *renaissances* in which culture seems to plunge and emerge, for European, 'classical' history has been fused with myth along the very sinusoidal.[212] Either case (having a myth of a continuous provenience or successive rebirths), the presence of death is required as something that partakes of the externality (the cancelation) and the destiny of the 'classical.' It could be feasible to think that the classical requires the eventual presence of the allegory, provided that its leap from meaning to matter, from history to myth demands the encounter with cessation and death. It is worth exploring further this other rhythmical dimension of the allegory in its dialogue with the 'classical,' not so as to propose a dialectic between the two, but in order to understand the periodization of death.

It is pertinent to remember that the roots of the 'classical' are not located within the domain of history, but of the political and economic discourse, in direct relationship with the six classes of Roman citizens lay down in the Servian Constitution. Settis clarifies this point further: "*Classicus* came to mean in its most restricted sense a citizen belonging to the highest classes of taxpayers,"[213] a member of the elite whose powers are now percolating within the realm of the historic; a sacred member because, by being historical, is also mythic. It also seems that the writer is, as always, the one who escapes from matter, from the mass of the undifferentiated: "It was not until the second century AD that Aulus Gellius used it figuratively to describe a writer as

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212    "it does not appear elsewhere [that] the mythical model of cyclical return has been embodied in history and itself become the object of historical investigation." (2006: 109).
213    (2006: 60).

'classicus scriptor, no proletarius' - 'of the first order' and not 'one of the mass' (...) and, perhaps even more aptly, 'good or being read by the *classici* (the richest taxpayers), but not by the people."[214] The promise of what is 'classical' outpaces here its historical periodization; it signals the stratification of the *socius* according to a text that cannot be read by everyone, (either because it is not complete or because it has no meaning in itself.) As if only the elites were able to read an apophenic text made of unrelated apocalyptic images, in which the 'classical' reassures the prophecy of its ulterior resurgence in full opacity.

The question here is also pertaining to the role of matter not throughout *the entire* sinusoidal traced by the 'classical' (as we already know, to attempt this would produce either nonsense or disappearance), but the itinerary that encompasses decay and death, for it is in this interval where matter reclaims something that could be either a fragmented meaning or singularity without sense. We do not know. It is an *event horizon*; light emitted from within a black hole that never reaches an observer. The closest we can get is by means of parables and *parabolas*; a clear arch of infancy, youth, middle age, decline, and death. If we understood this latter as the trajectory of historical, 'classical' chronology, we may find an early manifestation in the texts of sculptor Xenocrates of Athens and Antigonus of Carystus, where the parabola (whose main principle is analogy), was applied into rhetoric, music, geometry, painting, and sculpture according to a retrospective appreciation of antiquity in spite of the present time. It is not until Dicaerchus of Messina (Aristotle's disciple) that the parabola becomes irreversible modified; at this point, it features an ultimate catastrophic event, singularized as an individual death.[215] In this *tragic* turn, history fades until it ceases in the event of the death of a human being. As soon as this conception becomes prevalent (as it happens with Pliny), history assumes

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214      (Ibid.)
215      (2006: 68).

a biologicist-evolutionary drive and reclaims the ruin as its *locus*: "In the ruin history has physically merged into the setting" denotes Benjamin[216] as he sees history plunging irreversibly into debris. Far from beauty, in the ruins the antique is presented as a product of destruction, bearing the marks of its consumption by nature. But beyond their relatedness to the ancients, what makes ruins so appealing to the baroque is its fragmentary composition; heaps of matter in which their ultimate destiny of material completion has been extracted, and substituted not by desire, but by mere repetition of accumulating fragments. The ruin is the *promise* of a fragmentary, decomposed whole in which the present has also existence.[217] Benjamin seeks the materialization of history and he unveils, in passing, a decisive finding; the significance of the ruins for the Western civilization does not lie uniquely in its composition, but first and foremost in its configuration: "The exuberant subjection of antique elements *in a structure* which, without uniting them in a single whole, would, in destruction, still be superior to the harmonies of antiquity, is the purpose of the technique which applies itself separately, and ostentatiously, to realia, rhetorical figures and rules."[218] In such a setting, made out of matter and text, the ruin emerges as a *structure* whose identity and constructive cohesion is conferred by destruction; the ruin's technique.

These ruins have been identified insofar as they are *eventual*, as we have seen with Laurelle, since they ground a cohesion composed by "multiplicities or of the multiple rather than of unity."[219] As ruinous as it is, this eventual dimension operates within a transcendental field

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216    (Benjamin 1998: 178).
217    "The legacy of antiquity commutes, item for item, the elements from which the new whole is mixed. Or rather: is constructed" (1998: 178).
218    (1998: 178-179), cursive is mine.
219    Laruelle, F. (2000) Identity and Event. In *Pli #9*, p. 175.

demarcated by either a representation of identity (*meta*) and that of the real (*epekeina*).

Differential transcendentals, after all, contested according to their own modalities of existence, all indebted to their decomposed structuralization. Within such a setting, mimesis assimilates its materials by executing an all-encompassing material analogization, namely; destruction. This latter is a *first order* mimetic manifestation, (*first* since it produces the weakest concealment, therefore the highest resolution of an *order*), in which destruction analogizes everything; it daubs the mimetic resolution as destruction, overriding every mimetic agency (as it happens in other mimetic manifestations such as camouflage or mimicry). But in spite of its destruction, (or precisely because of that), what every ruin presents is the renewal of antiquity as *a renaissance*, a resurgence which obeys to a particular sinusoidal of disappearance and re-emergence.

This 'classical' pace that every ruin is obliged to follow does not cancel its allegorical dimension, nor its imperial lineage. Settis elaborates a convincing argument regarding the importance of ruins in relationship with the fall of Rome,[220] which signals "a dramatic break with the past (...) religion (...) state and territorial organization, and a society with its own institutions, values, and cultural (...) paradigms. What remained became inextricably fused with the thoughts, values, and memories of the Judeo-Christian tradition."[221] Yet this account betrays another trait in which the ruins are playing a remarkable role, for it is less about tracing back the past from an ulterior moment than positing this latter as the 'antique' from which something *new* emerges. In Settis' account, the fall of the Roman empire points less to the 'antique' (which arguably occurred before), than to what comes after; the Christian tradition. Unlike the prevalent vision imposed by Winckelmann, Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl approached Roman art not as the

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220    (Settis 2006: 77).
221    (Ibid.)

decline of Greek art, but as the forefather of medieval art.[222] The Viennese art historians are permuting the identity of the ancestor, and the shift simulates a dynamism that is intrinsic to the historical development; never in reference to its previous periodization, but to the ulterior. This brand of origin exists through the constant actualization of the antique, that now leaps from one instance to another, from a guarantee to decadence and resurgence, where this structural coordinates (the antique pointing to the ulterior, not the other way around), delineates the momentum of the 'classical.'

It is possible also to materialize this process from an angle in which the analogy is not established between formal similitudes, but between a form and its absence. We would be thinking of less a multiplicity of fragments than of the construction of a meaning, and even more, of objects that inscribe, in their singularity, the ruts of disappearance; less a copy than a *clone*, less an authorized repetition of another entity's accidents, and more an execution of the structure of its design. Being not a copyist, but a designer. The connotations of design would exceed here the mere production of objects since design is (in its decimononic significance) theological planning, a Book of Nature which congeals the subjective and the objective, the real and the phenomenological.[223] Form would occupy the primacy of words, turning itself into an immediate Scripture without need for translation; a premise that was once even implemented within the German educational system of the nineteenth century by privileging the visual recognition and the material manipulation of *Gestalten* through the study of their forms or "object lesson" (*Anschauungsunterricht*).[224]

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222    See Settis (2006: 34-35).
223    "Much like arguments of "intelligent design" in our day, it asserted that for anyone who knew to look, the evidence of the hand of a benevolent Designer was everywhere." in Alexander, Z. Ç. (2018) Mass Gestaltung. In Axel, N; Colomina, B; Hirsch, N; Vidokle, A. Wigley, M. (Eds.) *Superhumanity: Design of the Self*. University of Minnesota Press, eflux Architecture, p. 71.
224    "Crucial in this effort in Germany were the so-called "Falk Laws" of 1872 (...) which, apart from reconfiguring the confessional organization of Prussian schools, removing Catholic clergy from teaching

It is in this intersection attained (between the form occupying the word, and the authority

of cloning before the repetition of copies) that the notion *skeuomorph* becomes relevant. To

describe it implies to articulate the functions conferred by his inventor, the British archaeologist

Colley March, who in his text *Evolution and Psychology in Art* (1896) investigates the

relationships between art, growth, and accrual under the rubric of the evolutionary trope. March

is looking for manifestations of origin, development, transformation and death that obey to the

same forces[225] while being traversed by diverse artistic modalities, such as *artifice* (where the

intentionality is utilitarian) or *artistic treatment*, which echoes the development of ornament

without being conflated with it;[226] fragmented parts that are arranged so as to denote beauty and

utility. Arrangement and development are here the marks of evolution, of a staged, *continuous*

differentiation among collated objects that is accompanied by differentiation between utility and

beauty. Throughout this elongated process of variation, March is able to notice the pervivence of

traits that, although once were functional, now endure as ornamental or artistic treatment: "They

have become Ornament and are perpetuated to satisfy "expectancy.""[227]

Tracing back the apparition of ornamental motifs along the evolutionary phylogeny

signals the encounter of their technical methods of construction. The process postulated by the

British incorporates a temporality that is, at the same time, hierarchical in its sequence (technique

happens before ornamental treatment), and structurally homogeneous (based upon continuity).

This structure for transmitting technique towards ornament is coined by March as a

portmanteau that links the predication upon form and the Greek plural *δκεύη* that is utilized for

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positions, and establishing interconfessional schools, did something less predictable: drawing classes
were made mandatory in elementary and secondary schools." (Alexander 2018: 72).
225    (March 1898: 442).
226    "Though Ornament is unlike Artistic treatment in this, that it is a concrete thing, the two resemble each
other in their quality of absolute dependence." (1898: 445).
227    (1898: 445).

diverse objects.[228] The concretization of a technique's concealment as ornament, under the logic of uniformity in the name of symmetry and "expectation" was noticed by the archaeologist in a previous essay on Polynesian ornament.[229]

In his analysis of manufactured labor such as fastening, wattlework, and basketry, the technical solutions exist apart of the ornamental milieu since there are not accessory to the structure. Conversely, a former interdependency between techniques and materials are paving the way for the apparition of the skeuomorph. March's account of antique pottery makes the sequence; a wicker basket, a wicker basket with a coating of clay, pottery molded within gourds, ornamented European vases contained, supported or enwound by weaved fibers and cords.

Therefore "as the manufacture perfected itself, these aids were discarded. But hand and eye were accustomed to them, expectancy required their visual equivalent, and ceramic ware was adorned by skeuomorphs of netting and binding."[230] This itinerary allows for March to understand the vase as the heir of the basket, an skeuomorphic inception halfway the mythic gemmation and a technical generation, a lineage in which technique's sex is granted by the skeuomorphism of the goddesses,[231] those who, by being minority, are also testifying before

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228     "This plural designated tackle, tools, vessels, equipment, dress." (1898: 445).
229     March, C. (1893) Polynesian Ornament a Mythography; or, a Symbolism of Origin and Descent. In *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 22(1893), pp. 307-333] in which March radicalizes the trope of *zoomorph:* "the animal form passed into ornament under the control and determination of a pre-existent "skeuomorph" or structure-form" (March 1893: 307). Following an essay written by Stolpe, the archaeologist recalls the Tongans, who "constantly refer pain from grief, anxiety, and other affections, to the bowels" (March 1893: 308) while practicing the inspection of an animal's innards for augury.
230     (1893: 446).
231     Interestingly, March is looking after a particular sexual reproductivity of myth and technique. See, for example: "In many cases we are not left in doubt as to whether the pedigree-stick is a mark of descent through a line of male ancestors or through a female lineage. The sign of the former is a phallic symbol attached merely as a determinative adjunct. In a staff figured by Dr. Stolpe (...), the god-originator, probably Tangaroa, gives issue, by gemmation, to the second in the series, presumably a female, and she gives birth to a male, and the succession is continued in a row of alternate males and females." (1893: 321).

death. Take, for instance, March[232] and his account of the household goddess *Tiki* in New Zealand, the one who experiences the materiality of life since she is "the first who died a natural [or woman's] death."[233] By being a woman, she experiences death as natural. In Mangaia (the Cook Islands), death is similarly understood as "to draw (...) a jewel from its casket."[234] To extract the pearl, the symbol, and to leave alone the allegorical arrangement made out of pure expectancy for the return of the goddess is the promise of the skeuomorph and the *order* of the baroque.

Now we have been able to observe how the technical evolution combines processes oriented towards artifice and its ornamental mimetization. A skeuomorph is nostalgic inasmuch as its presence points towards an absence, a discarded version of itself[235] or a racialized "intuitive public taste."[236] The materiality to which the skeuomorph refers to is siphoned and purified as sheer ornament; a momentum of motifs governed by an autonomous realm. Repetition of motifs reassures the management of meaning, while its 'expectancy' merely reaffirms repetition as such. If the technical impulse is to be located within humans, the operative realness of the skeuomorph seems autonomous, hidden outside the past[237] and exerting its influence not only upon the workers, but specific ornamental tipologies. The following passage is revelatory in this respect: "It may be noticed in passing, that there are certain bamboo chunum boxes met with

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232     Who, must be noted, is a blatant racist: "What conditions can we discover that are favorable to the evolution of Ornament, that raise it in beauty and dignity? (...) Certainly there must be leisure, the  time for contemplation, receptivity and productiveness that itself implies a racial superiority, that itself is proof of a better ability to get and keep comfort and security." (1893: 456).

233     (1893: 311).

234     (1893: 309).

235     (March 1896: 446).

236     (Ibid.)

237     "Skeuomorphism is not a thing of the past." Basalla, G. (1988) The Evolution of Technology. New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 107.

mostly on the Solomon Islands, that look as if they had been made by artificers whose minds were dominated by the "drum skeuomorph," controlled, that is, by a tendency to produce as a functionless ornament what was always present to their senses in structural utility."[238] The influence exerted by the skeuomorph is irreducible to language, and it is expressed in the concretization of forms that point toward absences, that bond production, and destruction, manufacture and apophenia. Hence I think of how the skeuomorphic activity would afford to clone the jewels (which equals to gain authority upon its representational, mimetic sequence). In March's succinct description, the route from image production to ornament is described in this way: "The first step is (...) to produce only a visual equivalent; and this, when the continuity of workers and observers is unbroken, may depart by degrees so widely from the original figure as to end in a veritable metamorphosis".[239] So let us clone March's: "The first step is to produce only an equivalent *order* (a concealment of the way in which the image's dispersion is foreclosed); and this, when the mimesis of victims and executioners is unbroken, may skeuomorph by degrees so widely from the given figure as to end in a true forgery."[240]

It appears a possibility that in reality is only a whisper; that of a technology of destruction in which production is simultaneously that of a form and absence; that of the concretization of an entity that occupies, contingently, the space that it creates insofar as it denotes an absence that before it was not taken into account. We would be abandoning the mimetic abyss (and the notion of copy), and entering into the possibility of a real forgery, *a forgery that also forges*. As we already know, the powers of the purple are sustained by unifying identification with identity; *for want of being no longer Spaniard, Jew, Moor, Turk, Englishman, and Frenchman, are all*

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238    (March 1893: 327).
239    (1893: 452).
240    (Fresneda 2019: 77).

*imperial viracochas*. Provided that I might already cloned a British elsewhere, we can accept the existence of a Spanish forger whose existence came to light in 1930 and whose activities sum, so far "about forty-six items, of which fifteen are panel paintings, twenty-five are separate leaves of vellum, and the remaining six are manuscripts containing one miniature"[241] of medieval art. It goes without saying that our *viracocha* forger is also capable at skeuomorphism; consider how

"It is worth noting that the forger has altered the costumes, which were contemporary with the date of the book's publication, to a style more in keeping with the date of the actual event."[242] The forger has many names, sometimes, he is a Provençal, Jean Miraillet (1394-1457), sometimes is Jorge Inglés (English by birth but based in Spain between 1440-1450). Every attempt to individuate the identity of the forger only yields an excess of multiplicities; as if fixating an imperial singularity led to the converse effect. See the confusion that the forger creates:

> "It has been suggested that the 'Spanish Forger' was active about 1900, that he was indeed a Spaniard or, alternatively, that he was a Frenchman, and that the paintings which have been identified as his work are really the product of more than one hand. Is it possible to deduce anything more definite from his known work? *Certainly the style varies considerably* (...) Basically the style of the 'Spanish Forger' could be derived from elements in French, Flemish, Spanish, and some Italian manuscript work executed during the second half of the fifteenth century."[243]

The forger seems intriguingly idle for a number of centuries until it reappears in the midst of the controversy, litigation and much speculation surrounding the case of the *Augustus Arete*, a bronze head depicting Roman emperor Augustus that was purchased by art dealer Hans Humbel in 1992. But before the purchase was made public by Humbel, he obtained the *Boletín del Museo*

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241    Backhouse, J. (1968) The 'Spanish Forger.' In *The British Museum Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 1/2 (Autumn, 1968), p. 65.
242    (Backhouse 1968: 66).
243    (1968: 67) cursive is mine.

*Arqueológico Nacional of Madrid*, dated 1984, in which his acquisition (or one that Humbel took

for his own), is signaled as a forgery made by 'The Spanish Master' workshop.[244] The case

attained such notoriety that led to a discussion forum and an exhibition.[245] Much debate ensued

regarding not only the authenticity of the Arete but of the significance of categories such as

original, copy and fake. For our purposes, it is worth noticing Jens Kulenkampff essay, in which

he stipulates, for instance, that "work is an original work, which forms the starting point for (...)

historical and genealogical dependence of other works which are (...) secondary with respect to

the first one."[246] The distinction between copy and forgery is illuminating, for the former stands

as "declared to be the copied original work" whereas in the latter case "pretend to be original

works of a certain author."[247] A distinction that remains a matter of authority; of whether or not

declaring the indebtedness to the original. As you may have noted, what becomes increasingly

absent throughout this dispute concerning the Arete is precisely the perpetrator; the forger

creates its own *order* by means of *Gestalt*, leaving the mimesis to the experts. Lehman himself

comes to grips with this difficult task of identifying the Spanish Master, a name "born out of

necessity,"[248] and that arguably hosts a workshop whose production was "active especially during

the 1990's and whose work was "undeniably professional from an archaeological, artistic and

technical support."[249] Now that the academics have been cloned, we are no longer before a mere

fabrication; "One could call these alleged ancient, unique works "original forgeries.""[250] Far

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244    Lehmann, S. (2015) (Ed.) Authentizität und Originalität antiker Bronzebildnisse: Ein gefälschtes
        Augustusbildnis, seine Voraussetzungen und sein Umfeld/Authenticity and Originality of Ancient Bronze
        Portraits: A Forged Portrait of Augustus, Its Prerequisites, and Its Surroundings. Dresden: Sandstein
        Verlag, p. 17.
245    On May 2014 at the Archäologisches Museum of the Martin-Luther-Universität, in Halle-Wittenberg
        (Germany).
246    (Lehmann 2015: 52).
247    (Ibid.)
248    (2015: 184).
249    (Ibid.)
250    (2015: 185).

beyond the criterion that endows unauthorized copies with aesthetic dignity, the forgery that does cloning occupies the dimension of authority for it creates its own *order*[251] and from there, its own authority, like a real that always comes first, or like the anecdote recalled by Otto Kurz in which painter Sebastien Bourdon (1616-71) clones Claude Lorraine: "Once he produced a copy after a landscape by Claude which he had seen on the easel in that artist's studio. Being a fast worker, he had finished his copy and sold it as the original before Claude had put the finishing touches his own composition."[252]

Now that the jewels can be cloned, we have to understand cloning in the intersection between structure and destruction; one in which we summon the ruins as the organization of decomposition and death. We find here a scenario in which destruction is neither complete nor collides within the singularity of the fallen, where the overlap with nature is still not completely 'natural' as the productive forces have been effectively reversed (from the consumption of value to the production of matter). Yet paradoxically, the ruins have a direction, a *progredi* or 'walk forward' whose footprints acquire variegated shapes. As the impressions bedrift, there is an understanding of progress as a double realization, namely; the acknowledgment of entities outside rational clarification, and, simultaneously, the belief in their future explanation. After Democritus and his atomist approach to time, the idea of present time as a degenerate residue from a Golden Age is put into question. But, by the same token, atomism provides no prospect for change; everything seems destined to ultimate collapse. Lucretius, who is a 'presentist,' resigns himself with the image of an autotelic time, where philosophy is a final fact that

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251 "the perfect art forgery -like the perfect crime - is the one which has never been detected." Kurz, O. (1973) Early Art Forgeries: From the Renaissance to the Eighteenth Century. In *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. 121, No. 5198 (January 1973), p. 74.
252 (Kurz 1973: 87).

adumbrates a "tolerable life."[253] Here, the light is crepuscular, cast from future ruin and

obliteration. And yet, nothing has really changed: "Death therefore is nothing to us and does not

concern us in the slightest."[254] As for Lucretius (and formerly, the comic Amphis), the future is

the installment of matter where the end was formerly evacuated, it is nothing but a "deathless

death,"[255] which avoids the projection of present toward it. The pace of time, its *progression*

becomes measured by the recurrence of death, which is not interested in individuals more than

the matter they contain. In the light of this scenario, every fate is a promise that gives us an

empty reflection: the inescapable death and its hunger for matter leave no trace behind.

Death fixes a human *order* that cannot be put into question, but only improved by means

of a human effort, namely: the manipulation of matter. In so doing, the progression toward death

is postponed and substituted by *growth*, a gradual accumulation of material features which

provide limits; the resolution of human jurisdiction. The end thus becomes concealed by its aims,

and human accomplishments find their expression in objects. Such a condition (the impossibility

of connecting the beginning of the ruins with their end), becomes rather measured by objects and

their ability to indicate transitions or *saeculaes* which operate by creating differential parameters.

But, how is the shape of such indications? On the one hand, time becomes denoted by

formal interrelations between objects in the guise of "temporal sequences."[256] This scope

prioritizes relationships, rather than magnitudes, of formal kinship. By presenting *closed series*

and *open sequences*, the sense of time is indicated by constant developments of similar events; as

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253    Bury, J. B. (1920) The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry Into Its Origin And Growth.  London: Macmillan and
       co. Ltd., p. 17.
254    Brown, M. (Trans.) (1997) Lucretius De Rerum Natura III. Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 830, p. 73.
255    (Brown 1997: 194).
256    Kubler, G. (1962) The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things. New Haven and London: Yale
       University Press, p. 9.

if the matter was a lamination of textures[257] that occasionally emerge from a silent, indifferent sea of time.

Conversely, we can have an understanding of form as a "diagram of forces"[258] where matter acquires its shape and sense by virtue of combining discrete modalities of motion. This is to say that the form of an object is the expression of its own process of concretization. It points to the way in which disparate forces (the encounter of motion with matter), activate this latter accordingly. Furthermore, the execution of such interpolation requires the addition of time, understood here as the required magnitude that provides direction to form, and consequently, "growth."[259]

As a way of mental experiment, we may reverse this statement and argue that: time is the matter that gives form to a motion. It follows that time is no longer a formless magnitude, but rather a concrete expression of what we denominate *growth*. If we want to problematize this case further, we should add: form is the encounter of matter with motion, growth is matter's motion.

This slight contrast allows for a description of differential temporal materialities. First, that of a self-enclosed form of time that reunites in itself the mechanical intertwinement of motion and matter: it presents what it has. Secondly, a finite development that, nonetheless, alludes to a 'continuation' of itself beyond its material limits: it presents what it does not have. In the first case, we have the interruption of absence; a chunk of rock that does not stand for the quarry's form. In the latter, the summoning of what it is beyond its limits; the way in which a

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257    My contention is that Kubler's analysis presents two major circumstances which limit my approach to it. Firstly, the reduction of his entire account toward the scope of human affairs. The emergence of "the history of things" stands for a totalizing semblance of humanity: "A visible portrait of the collective identity, whether tribe, class, or nation, comes into being." (1962: 9). Secondly, the topological schema provided by Kubler is still indebted with biological metaphors; (see pp. 99, 122) a prospect that puts into question the internal efficiency of a "history of things" with nerves, tissues, blood and eyes.

258    Wentworth, D. (1961) On Growth and Form. London: Cambridge University Press, p. 11.

259    (Wentworth 1961: 15).

fragment of coral develops itself further.

Up to now, we are extracting chunks and fragments of material time where the end has been evacuated either as something that we will never find (because the evidence is incomplete), or because its promise of continuation has no completion. In both manifestations, the end has been displaced by growth; it is no longer an external background of cessation; nor a final cause placed at a terminal point. The end described here is a functional characteristic: "a teleology without τέλος, (...) an adaptation without design, a teleology in which the final cause becomes little more, if anything, than the mere expression or resultant of a sifting (...) in short of a process of mechanism."[260] The end cannot be measured retrospectively, but rather substituted by antecedents. For instance, in the activity of a body activated by molecular and mechanical motion (a body *possessed* by growth), the end becomes embodied within a functional mechanism where its very activity expresses time.[261]

The 'final causation' is not a transcendental field anymore, for it has been included within a form that insofar as it growths by means of differential forces (once more: the encounter of motion with matter) it expresses time. This tentative conclusion seems nothing but platitudinous: growth is matter deploying itself further. Subsequently, the imprint of direction onto form leads to growth, where a form can being modeled by discrete actualizations of the end. Since a

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260      (1961: 4).
261      Here we can note an interesting correlation with nineteenth century's scientific materialism, where the notion of energy was presented "in terms of its effects - in the material form of different kinds of mechanical work." Rabinbach, A. (1992) The Human Motor Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 48. Rabinbach's account of matter depicts a 'transcendental' world, where energy is a material trait. On the other hand, we have the current, widespread assumption that energy measures (in most cases, quantitatively) the function of an entity even in absence of mass, such as in the case of photons or EM radiation. In both cases, the end of their activity is concretized back in the material. This is not to say only that a Higgs field explains the acquisition of mass by massless particles, but also that the very process occurs near to Geneva, in the Large Hadron Collider, a tunnel 17 miles in circumference, as deep as 574 feet beneath the surface of the Earth, located as far as 4534.55 miles from the place where these lines are being written.

vectorial direction includes 'in advance' the presence of an end, growth signals its development

with a *caesura*, a 'break between words.' It is not the matter what imposes itself over a

preexisting emptiness, conversely, it is death what by virtue of hypodermic actuations within

matter, produces material time in the guise of growth. The shape of time is neither cast nor

congealed from within, but fringed and sliced from without. Our end is here a dedicated surgeon

whose forays occur in present time, on a daily basis, partaking of the matter by virtue of tiny

accumulative operations which, once invoked, become messianic.[262] The sequence that the end

proposes, I believe, is a progression from death to matter, a subtraction that gives form to motion

and utilizes *absolute* volumes; a drive from its forclusion, a fore that is a wreck.

The sum of material traits finds its utmost expression in the construction of architectures;

the shape that progress acquires throughout its development. In its former assumption, *absolvere*

is 'to bring to an end,' or to 'make separate.' It was only after the mid-sixteenth century when the

term started to describe a much more *despotic* position by conflating detachment and purity, an

instance that is unconditional, regardless of its relative position. In *The Possibility of an Absolute*

*Architecture* (2011), Pier Vittorio Aureli concretizes architecture as "the individuality of the

architectural form, when this form is confronted with the environment in which it is conceived

(...) as something being resolutely itself after being "separated" by its other."[263] To be *in*

*progress*, is, therefore, to be on command of architectural implementation. From a spatial

approach, an *absolute* architecture implies the recognition of this antagonism between the city as

the extension and absolute architectures that indicate limits between the city and themselves.

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262    Norman Bryson describes this modality of time as something which "has to do with absolute beginnings
        and ends (...) hidden behind the days of mundane time. (…) my translation. "Esencial a la idea del tiempo
        mesiánico es que(...) tiene que ver con principios y finales absolutos (...) Escondido detrás de los días del
        tiempo mundano." Bryson, N. (2014) Introduction. In Botey, M. (2014) *Zonas de disturbio: espectros del*
        *México indígena en la modernidad*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, p. 13.
263    Aureli, P. V. (2011) The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. ix.

The space is created here by means of material separation, being a *spatium*, the verge between two adjacent ribs. For Aureli the emergence of this spatial conflict prefigures the apparition of polity; so the presence of this latter is a by-product of the material disposition of architectural matter.    Insofar as the *polis* is the place of the many, it is a space that exists in between individuals. Simultaneously, the private space or *oikos* posits a fixed array of positions: master and slave, father and son, wife and husband.[264] Within this initial model, the material distinctions between the *oikoi* (a group of private houses) and the space of the *agora* outline the enactment of polity.[265] The inescapable presence of material architectures is reinforced in the project of the Roman city, where the *urbs* or agglomeration of houses subsumed the question of the public within the generic repetition of the private. A fundamental distinction emerges as soon as we conflate the model of Greek *polis,* characterized by a walled perimeter, and the Roman *urbs* which was, in fact, a territory featuring roads as key motif.[266] Therefore we are facing two different political aspirations: the former, a *nomos* based upon a sense of community which has been framed in advance by material distinctions between the public and the private. On the other hand, we have a *civitas* based on the exertion of law over "an insatiable network in which the empire's diversity became an all-inclusive totality."[267] Either way, such aspirations are dependent of uneven architectural modalities which become consolidated either as an "archipelago"[268] of discrete, self-enclosed architectures or in proximity to the development of a material template for circulation and dwelling.[269]

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264    (Aureli 2011: 3).
265    Here I am not dismissing the existence of pre-Greek communities that existed before the advent of the *polis*, nor their shared sense of polity. My aim here is to investigate the material constitution of polity by collating two presences; that of the Greek city with its walled perimeter and the Roman city with their roads. (2011: 4) Therefore, we are tracking the political effects created and incarnated by architecture.
266    (2011: 4).
267    (2011: 5).
268    (Ibid.)
269    We have to contend with Aureli's distinction between political forms of coexistence: "'We can say that both the *polis* and the *civitas* are explicitly political forms of coexistence, unlike the sphere of the

Seen in this perspective, the emergence of the modern city was the heir of neither the *oikos* nor the *civitas*, but the *urbs* where the presence of *a space in between* was displaced by prolapsing the domestic, private space within the city. What we currently known as *infrastructure* is the result of such endeavor: "the network that (...) unfolds and aggregates the house within an organic whole that bypasses any political power."[270] This protrusion of the private onto the city creates a fundamental shift; from the sense of cohabitation within the city toward its function and maintenance. I concur with Aureli in the presence of "economic administration and the physical presence of administration"[271] as major propellants throughout the emergence of the Western city after Rome's collapse. Unlike the sense of the political provided by the construction of space, the city was modeled according to economic requirements. We are here witnessing a different sense of the public generated by the bourgeoisie and developed under two parallel vector of action; first, we encounter an activity that addresses only a particular segment of citizens (those who meet economic criteria for participation). It

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*oikos* or, at a different scale, the *urbs* which indicates the material condition of cohabitation independent of any political sense" (Aureli 2011: 6). The reasons are various. One stems from Aureli's understanding of the city's fabric as a uniform recipient for the law. *Contra* Aureli, we could argue that the enactment neither of polity nor lex becomes accomplished in full, but rather their actuation is subjected to differential degrees of implementation, for the exertion of law does not guarantee its total execution over the entirety of the city; a predicament that applies in both scales *oikos-polis*, *urbs-civitas*. Here the question becomes a conundrum due to its indebtedness to the "transformation of quantity into quality," as discussed in Engels, F. (1987) Anti-Dühring, Dialectics of Nature. In *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Collected Works*. New York: International Publishers, p. 571, which points "where a certain quantity shifts its different properties, even in regard to smell" (Ibid.) In this sense, Aureli provides the endpoints of architectural polarization without declaring the verge that indicates the leap from non-political to political coexistence. Moreover, we have to expand this inquiry toward our current state of affairs, where polity becomes stretched (with different degrees of implementation and compliance), along a variety of superimposed material and topographic layers: "One structured micropolity is pressed against another and linked by the fuzzy membranes that make and the material condition of cohabitation independent of any political sense." In Bratton, B. (2015) The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty. Cambridge & London: MIT Press, p. 167. Perhaps this fact (the occasional impossibility of conflating meaning and a shared, communal place), illustrates how Aureli's "material condition of cohabitation independent of any political sense." (ibid.) becomes currently reinforced. At the utmost, this dilemma has been substituted by the displacement of polity by 'function'.

270    (Aureli 2011: 7).
271    (Ibid.)

follows that the administration of work and commodities configures the way in which the public sphere works; in the guise of an economic function or by-product.[272]

Over the last three centuries, human coexistence was increasingly based on the administration of *urbs*, propitiating an understanding of the city through the lens of the urbanization. In 1867, Catalan engineer Ildefons Cerdá coined the trope *urbanización* (urbanization) in his *Teoría general de la urbanización* (General Theory of Urbanization).

According to this vision, the city is less a habitat based upon a center-periphery opposition, than a fabric composed by roads and individual dwellings; a shift that posits architectural form as process, not as representation. During the nineteenth century, urbanism enters the realm of the city according to a variety of methods: from Baron von Haussmann's cutting-axe principle in Paris to to Hilberseimer's *Hochhausstadt* or Vertical City (a project for reforming Berlin by using a single typology of building), not to mention Cerdá and his *Eixample* or 'extension' of Barcelona by using an isotropic grid. In each case, we can extract tentative tropes that allow us to understand the consequences of this major leap toward urbanism. Within this model, the distinctions between public and private, political and economic result merged and incorporated into the urban space, where the notion of governance gives way to the administration of the city according to the former "despotic administration of the house."[273]

Against any limit prefigured by finite architectures, the enactment of urbanism seeks the obliteration of boundaries in favor of an array of repeatable models. The growth here is incremental and devoid of finitude. However, it is precisely the mandatoriness for repetition

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272    I cannot help but briefly point to Spanish colonial urbanism as a clear example of this displacement. As soon as we read the construction of the colonial city as the logical outcome of the military settlement, we can infer to what extent urban layout was arrested by very few modalities of circulation. In some cases, options were reduced in order to guarantee an appropriate flux of material, civil and military bodies. During sixteenth century Merida city (Yucatan, Mexico), adjacent streets to the *Cuartel de Dragones* (a former Franciscan hospital), was enlarged in order to allow mounted troops to take turns easily.

273    (2011: 16).

what sustains the lingering presence of finite architectures. First, because the grid incorporates limits in itself, for in the same way as it assimilates its terrain, it presents discrete endpoints that preserve both structure and truth. It is precisely because the reticle depicts angles and endpoints, that every section of the grid is allowed to incorporate differences. Insofar as urbanism unifies reality according to a total plan, it produces the possibility for incorporating exceptions within its field.[274] The connection between this ambivalent status of the grid and polity is more than suggestive, and posits the former as the field that agglutinates *nomos* and *civitas* in itself: the potential for infinite growth and the presence of "an archipelago of Paranoid-Critical islands insulated by the lagoon of the Grid."[275] At the same time, it emerges as the field that gives primacy to the idea over the concreteness of the terrain.

After this rather compact outline of the complexities of modern urbanism *versus* ancient modalities of architecture (in which form is an indicator and instigator of the polity), we may contrast them under a same encompassing idea; that of progress. Once more, the incarnation of progress was initially traced back in *positional* architectures, nowadays, according to *directional* urbanisms. For one thing, the urban denial of form by means of repetition implies the suspension of limits; a postponement of the finite. This *bad infinity*, to put in Hegelian terms, describes the way in which a 'genuine' infinite (the maintenance of what it is finite by means of total negation), and the finite (formal limits that provide negation), becomes severed in two

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274    An example can be found in Rem Koolhaas' *City of the Captive Globe*, a project where the architectural confrontation becomes arrested by the urban layout. Later on, Koolhaas developed further this idea: "Its planning therefore can never describe a specific built configuration that is to remain static through the ages: it can only predict that whatever happens, it have to happen somewhere within the 2,028 blocks of the Grid. It follows that one form of human occupancy can only be established at the expense of another. The city becomes a mosaic of episodes, each with its own particular life span, that contests each other through the medium of the Grid." In Koolhaas, R. (1994) Delirious New York: a retroactive manifesto for Manhattan. New York: The Monacelli Press, p. 21.

275    (Koolhaas 1994: 273).

differentiated entities. As a result, the notion of the infinite becomes detached from its finite

concreteness. The finite loses its ability to endure in absence of itself, whereas the infinite loses

form. In the meantime, the notion of progress posits a project that results canceled at the precise

moment of its predication: "The progress to infinity is therefore only repetitious monotony, the

one and the same tedious alternation of this finite and infinite."[276] We can come to terms with

urbanism as a project that not only defers its form by means of *bad* growth but relies upon

structural antagonism. Such a condition illustrates the way architecture (understood as a

dialectical interplay) diminishes its importance in favor of urban planning whose failures "are

due to the exclusive focus on thesis."[277] As we have discussed earlier, pre-urban

conceptualizations of the city were devised by reflecting the agonistic contradictions incarnated

by space; the very notion of *space* appears as a result of conflictual spatial practices. Alongside

with the city as "archipelago" once imagined by Aureli or Koolhaas (as for previous precedents

such as Piranesi or Boullée), the act of rethinking the city implies to not understand it according

to a uniform, total blueprint. Conversely, the *dialectical city* emerges by virtue of contrasting

discrete elements: "The city made up of 'complementary places' consists of the largest possible

variety of different parts, in each of which a special urban aspect is developed with a view to the

whole. a sense it is a system of the 'city within the city'".[278]


Ungers postulates a "city within the city" in order to delaminate differential

infrastructural layers. In so doing, his attempt is to restore the *architectureness* of urbanism by

rediscovering discrete, particular features subsumed by the infrastructural momentum. And so, in

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276     Hegel, W. F. G. (2010) The Science of Logic. Cambridge University Press, p. 113.
277     Ungers, O; Vieths, S. (1979) The Dialectical City. Milan: Skira Editore, p. 14.
278     (Ungers and Vieths 1997: 20).

the same way as Ungers jettisons the emergence of the city according to digital metaphors,[279] he also diminishes the importance of new methods to come.[280] The dialectical city starts from what has been discarded by urbanism; the indifferent imprint of its own growth. Its means are already existing, so the city's enactment has been framed by present conditions. However, the configuration of this archipelago is still in the need of conditions that outpace the immanence of its execution, far beyond the requirements for its material completion. Ungers's vision, we should remark, is developed "with a view to the whole," which is to say: from an architectural practice toward a given urban mode. Architecture here is an externality of urbanism, an archipelago of material traits built upon a distinction figure-background.

This distinction is not devoid of hierarchy, yet we are arrested by a constructive logic that still is additive. More to the point, the sense of completion provided by this logic (the fact that buildings are constructed until they are finished), does not interfere with the growth of the urban layer. The urban expansion results impervious to the completion of discrete architectures.

If we concur with the dialectical model, perhaps the relationship between the urban and the architectural is that of *subsumption*; a process of maintenance by means of assimilation.[281]

These remarks may not meet an overarching account of the intercourse between architecture and urbanism, dialectical motion and bad infinity, but so far they provide a helpful standpoint for further exploration. Thus the *archipelago* is less an array of heaped matter over the sea, than the expression of sea's protruding itself further, "a sea that explodes the scattered

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279     "The vehement debate (...) on the multimedia city, which is supposed to offer a new vision for the future, is no more than a continuation of the attempt to approach the urban phenomenon through technical means and to perceive the city as a uniform total work of art (...) This multimedia chaos is nothing but a new magic formula for an old, long-obsolete ideology of the city as a totality." (1997: 14).

280     "So urban design is the art of discovery and not invention. No new systems —technical or otherwise— are added. What exists through chance, necessity, inadequacy, is accepted." (1997: 21).

281     One that is colored by Engels' description, where "a relation determination is predicated of the subject." (Engels 1987: 504).

land into an arc."[282] The shore cannot exist apart from the sea; it is its end, the place where parts exist only as dead ones.[283] Given this abyssal condition (a dialectical tide that sublates matter within death), we have to tackle the conditions by which this archipelago can be described. Here, architectonic, absolute matter exists as a result of its own dialectical encounter with death.

Within this relation we do not have the emergence of given matter out of an idle background; we rather descry the sea subtracting itself, where it gives shape to matter out of a material loss. More profoundly, construction occurs as a result of *dismantling*, and it endures within a *caesura*; a singular tidal ebb. We pursue objects that exist insofar as they dwindle, that grow as they fade.

Until now we have depicted their placeness (the congealment of place and time) but still remains to parse their mode of acquiring concreteness. Nevertheless, our exploration will not stop at the level of relations; paradoxically, it rather seeks the identity of our objects. Such a quest should not exhaust the dialectical momentum, nor its ability to create an identity by means of fragmentation.[284] For the sake of problematizing the distinctions elaborated by Aureli before, I would add that the identity of an absolute object does not require the *other*, the necessary comparison as standpoint, nor as a relational principle of sufficiency which determines the ontic status of the object. To obtain an identity by means of mediation not only implies the primacy of the latter over the former but also predicates the mediation before its own enactment. If the question concerning identity was formerly understood as an additive process of "sublation of

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282      Glissant, E. (1997) Poetics of Relation. Trans. Betsy Wing. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, p. 33.

283      "Part and whole, for instance, are already categories which become inadequate in organic nature (...) becomes a part only in a dead body." (Engels 1987: 494).

284      "dialectic is also the torrent which smashes the many and their bounds, which tears down the independent forms, sinking everything in the one sea of eternity. The myth of it is, therefore, death. Thus dialectic is death." Marx, K. (2010) Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy, Sixth Notebook. In Marx, K., and Engels, F., (1818) *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, London: Lawrence Wishart, p. 496.

abstract identity with itself,"[285] we are now understanding identity insofar as its form arises out of its own consumption. For the moment, at this preliminary stage, we can argue: to have an identity is *to own a function* that consumes itself; therefore, the apparition of an identity equals its consumption. I follow here Alfred Schmidt's *The Concept of Nature in Marx* (1971) and his understanding of consumption "which ends neither in nothing nor in the mere subjectification of the objective, but is itself again posited as an object. The consumption is not a simple consumption of the material, but a consumption of consumption itself."[286] In Schmidt's terms, this stage of production (use value) consumes matter in order to give form to materials, but this is feasible as long as Nature acquires identity by virtue of productive human exchange. Given that, we adjudicate identity at the expense of its form, which can be obtained after its consumption, but not in the interim. We thus have materials in absence of matter,[287] where the identity of the object material appears beyond the death of contingent matter. The productive process has displaced the access to the identity of objects by totalizing them within endless chains of differences; an issue that correlates with the way by which philosophy totalizes its objects as well.[288] In one way or another (either materialist facticity or philosophical theory), we have

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285    (Engels 1987: 496).
286    Schmidt, A. (1971) The Concept of Nature in Marx. London: NLB, p. 72.
287    Here I contend with the fact that "The materialist decision to identify the real with matter is seen to retain a structural isomorphy with the phenomenological decision to identify the real with the phenomenon. Both decisions are shown to operate on the basis of a methodological idealism: —materialism on account of its confusion of matter and concept; phenomenology by virtue of its confusion of phenomenon and logos." In Brassier (2001: 5). An initial answer, in this case, should rest upon the understanding of matter also as event; the material *encounter* that produces our access to the Real. Althusser speaking: "What is more, it is clear that the encounter creates nothing of the reality of the world, which is nothing but agglomerated atoms, but that it confers their reality upon the atoms themselves, which, without swerve and encounter, would be nothing but abstract elements, lacking consistency and existence. So much so that we can say that the atoms' very existence is due to nothing but the swerve and the encounter prior to which they led only a phantom existence." Althusser, L. (2006) Philosophy of the Encounter: later writings 1978-87. Trans. G. M. Goshgarian. London & New York: Verso, p. 169.
288    "identity is mistakenly conflated with a homogeneous and transcendent unity that would circumscribe them. They are caught in becomings, lines, textual or other interminable processes, in which they are exhausted. Their reality as points, terms, or individuals is drowned in tendencies, continuums, and infinite teleologies." (Laruelle 2016: 2).

denied identity in the name of difference. Following Laruelle, philosophical thought begins with Difference and navigates within itself in order to parse Identity, the resultant prey is an "image or an appearance of Identity (under conditions foreign to the latter) but is not Identity as such."[289]

Thereby the aporia becomes consolidated by substituting the real by being. Conversely, our turn to Identity acknowledges the aporetic resistance of the real to itself.[290] The act of thinking non-philosophically creates the conditions for a material immanency where thought is a material irrespective of its material conditions; not because it could be composed by atoms nor neurons, but because it has a valuable usage. This "immanental" enactment of thought within the Real's immanence follows a less topological than fluvial metaphor; material thoughts follow the pace of torrents, waves and currents, streams and flows. Correspondingly, we have to problematize this non-philosophical approach within an architectural practice that, as we have seen in these passages that we have, it entails the use of absolute form and consumption. In so doing, architecture is the owner of a 'function' that executes its own material mode of reality while executing its own consumption. This *principle of sufficient execution* bears the imprint not of construction, but of a dismantlement.

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289    (2016: 7).
290    "the One [Real] is the real unique cause despite the distance of the effect or the mediations that separate it
       from the One: a cause that reasoning or description never abandons and does not objectify surreptitiously
       by setting it in a face-to-face (= dyad) (...) We shall thus say of the One and every given = X: the One and
       X are not the Same but only identical in-the-last-instance." (Laruelle 2013b: 50-1).

The Smirk of Time


Imagine your face as a city; its wrinkles are channels descending by where once only were open pores, its extension results constantly rubbed, scratched, shaved, cut, daubed and exposed to the sun, rain, ice, dirt, flies, mosquitoes and also to hands, fists, lips, eyes, and genitalia. The city's countenance is a grimace resistant to all these gestures and, at the same time, the battlefield of all the encounters; sometimes fortuitous, sometimes deliberate. In this city-visage, the smiles are made of nothing but time, being this latter a rupture of the face that reveals teeth and hollow, murk and vacuum. The grin of time is, in this way, built and destroyed, arranged (*ordenada*); urban scowls and archaistic rictus, simultaneously enduring as deadpan and pietist smile. To every city, one or various *orders* are overlapped, leaving a glimpse of not the tearing of ideology, but the vesture of its style. Therefore, by being covered with significant textures, the architecture hesitates between being denture or smile, bellow or word, skin or mask.

Your semblance is no longer to be seen, but traced by the duct of fingers. It is not a face resting between eyebrows and cheekbones, within armors of fold and blush. Your face is rather an incomplete room, and ongoing construction and parking lot, an epidermal stretching that turns indistinguishable flesh and bone, skull and face. Thus your structure is your new face, a

hotchpotch of ruins holding a smile which, like time, it seems to commence in the eyes. And so, the sense of the city rests in its smirk, made out of immense gestures that articulate a synthesis of destruction, a carving within its own matter. As a dry tide, cities succumb upon themselves and drag shoals of allegory, currents of ruins and abysses of *order*. Through this palpitation we find also the imperial grimace, a smile without commissure that always continues through other purple lips, always contiguous. Knowing more about this suspended smile of the empire is to foresee the sluggish cracking of its cities, it implies to materialize the impunity of its face upon the semblance of its urban expression. As we have read before, *the empire's inland also stratifies itself in order to articulate imperial mimesis*.

Now that the city is a subject, its rendition seems a technical imitation of its voice; for whatever material strata represents (or *mimes*), it must cloak the smirk by creating a figurative representation at the urban level. As you can see, I am extending here the imperial dilemma exposed by Marx and Spivak (between *Darstellen* and *Vertreten*, between rendition and usurpation) onto the city. In this sense, we are also following Aureli's aforementioned distinction between the city composed of absolute volumes and public space in between (*polis*) *vis-à-vis* the generic prolapse of the private (*urbs*). So this portraiture that we are making right now is made of diffractions; a lambent interplay amongst, on the one hand, the technical representation of the imperial city and its formal absolutism; on the other, the occupation of the representational functions of architecture in the name of its functional expansion. Let the *Darstellen* of the *polis* and the *Vertreten* of the *urbs* now be reunited, as their necessary consumption revives the emperor's face, the one (and many) semblance that is always a liquefied, frothy face; a *Fratzengulasch* which could be either a portrait of a city or a geometric plan.

For one, the portrait of a city has to outpace its complexion in order to address its spirit[291]

that is, a particular tone or mood which is "expressed through its main monuments"[292] and that

shows always its best architectural profile, as it happens with the portraits of Paris with the West

on top; a vantage point that permits to elaborate a particular, non-cartographic description of the

city's singularity, a *chorography*. Unlike this approach, the geometric plan emphasizes a

monumental flux where *the spirit* is grasped in the relationship between angles, distances, and

levels[293] that soon begin to cut down the surface of the city, perusing its infrastructural

stratification made out of quarries, sewer systems and cemeteries. During the nineteenth century,

the interest in domesticating the subterranean dimension of the city becomes crucial for the

empire[294] as it becomes the prime matter of its momentum; the underground is what materializes

the two-faced task of simultaneously preserving and modernizing the city. Such a project

(articulated around a moralizing exertion of objectivity) assumes distinctive material semblances

depending upon the case; Paris refuses a regular grid in favor of Neoclassicism; in a similar vein,

Vienna initially bets on the superposition of monumental buildings featuring disparate

constructive styles. Either case, every constructive instantiation of the empire demands a

throbbing material field governed by the constructive powers of death.


To build an imperial face is, in this light, to proceed with inexorable destruction; we see

such surgery during the period in which French emperor Napoleon III commissions to his

prefect, Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the renovation of the city of Paris between 1853 and 1870.

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291    In Picon, A. (2003) Nineteenth-Century Urban Cartography and the Scientific Ideal: The Case of Paris. In
       *Osiris*, 2nd Series, Vol. 18, Science and the City (2003), p. 136.
292    (Picon 2003: 136).
293    (Picon 2003: 139).
294    "the underground symbolized the resistance of the citizens to sanitation and pacification. Thus exposing the
       structure the city's bowels, making all aspects visible, was part of a larger program of rational control."
       (Picon 2003: 143).

The construction of the emperor's new smile bears the mark of architectural annihilation: among other places, the *Boulevard du Temple*, the *barrière de l'Etoile* and the *rue de la Barrillerie* are *demolished;* the *rue de Rome*, the *Boulevards du Paris, du Palais* and *du Prince-Eugène* are *cut* so as to execute ideological suppression[295] in the name of urban planning.

Haussmann eviscerates the innards of Paris by deploying a truly allegorical gesture, namely: to *clone* central Paris by using death as material. Under the surface of Paris there is a mirrored substrate made out of deep time; a subterranean network of chalk, limestone and gypsum quarries left behind by the Roman empire to its offspring that, shortly after the Revolution of 1789, was used for storing the human remnants of the overflowed Cemetery of Innocents.[296] In 1804, emperor Napoleon issues a decree on burials and inaugurates the Père Lachaise Cemetery, an *absolute* or "self-contained space that retained an intimate and ultimately constructive relationship with the city[297] "nurtured by the encounter of true mourning in anonymous citizens, and perhaps the transfiguration of dead bodies into monuments of death.

Only after twenty years after its inauguration, the Cemetery has raised notoriety in Europe due to the variety of its monuments that, insofar as they enthrall they also stratify the social body of their hosts. Legacey (2016) traces back the organization of French cemeteries and their remnants; by generating separated districts (for the wealthy, the indigent and those in

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295    "It is perhaps one of the most persistent stigmas on Haussmann's work that he replanned Paris for purely strategic reasons, to rip open the revolutionary fortresses, to dislodge the incendiaries. No administrator could ignore the constant threat the slum-dwellers represented to public order, nor the part they had played in all the revolutions since 1879." Chapman, B. (1957) The Life and Times of Baron Haussmann. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, p. 184.

296    "The whole territory south of the Seine (...) is excavated. Chantillon, Issy, Vauves, Vaugirard, are  all built on quarries. They are abandoned and closed, but they are not called catacombs; they will not receive this name until the bones of the urban cemetries be thrown into them." Gamma (1867) Dead of France. In *The American Art Journal* (1866-1867), Vol. 6, No. 11 (Jan. 5, 1867), pp. 170-171.

297    Legacey, E.M. (2016) Cities of the dead: the Catacombs and Père Lachaise Cemetery in post-revolutionary Paris. In Huskinson, L. (ed.) *The Urban Uncanny: a Collection of Interdisciplinary Studies*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, p. 80.

between),[298] the cemetery detaches from either egalitarian ideals and monarchic inheritance, and collates both under a coexistence of social differences "highly visible but harmonious" as Legacey remarks.[299] Envisioning the proximity of social difference is not a unique prerogative of the French cemeteries; inspired by Haussmann's renovation of Paris, Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria issues a decree in 1857 resolving the demolition of the city walls of Vienna and the integration of civilian usage in the area. His plan is to carve a great *jewel* (a ring) which becomes progressively speckled with monuments, mansions, parks, and squares. The city that was once bearing the imprint of the baroque military city decides to break up with its own wall or *glacis* and to deploy less a sense of urban functionality than "cultural self-projection."[300] Within a decade, the political shift that turned absolutism into constitutional monarchy allowed for the liberals to gain control over the councils of state and to relocate the sense and meaning of the *Ringstraße*, a reconfiguration by means of secular beautification; instead of cathedrals, *palais* and *Hofburgs*, new centers of constitutional government and high culture emerged while a sense of shared, public splendor was extended through the new edifices of the Ring and a sense of affordability was endowed to those who, although were not members of the old aristocracy, could be partake of the "aristocracy of the spirit" as defined by Carl Schorske in *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (1981). The Ring "helped forge the link with the older culture and the imperial tradition, to strengthen that "second society," sometimes called "the mezzanine," where the bourgeois on the way up met the aristocrats willing to accommodate to new forms of social and economic power, a mezzanine where victory and defeat were transmuted into social compromise and cultural synthesis."[301]

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298      (Legacey 2016: 81).
299      (2016: 81).
300      Schorske, C. (1981) Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture. New York: Random House, p. 25.
301      (Schorske 1981: 45).

Ironically, such an environment lacks of physical finality; if the Baroque city was deployed according to a central *locus*, the *Ringstraße* was organized "in relation to a broad avenue or corso, without architectural containment and without a visible destination."[302] A polyhedral street that, in the same way as it exudates magnificent buildings along its path, it renounces to be subordinated to them. As a result, the streets connecting suburbs and the inner city gain little prominence, leaving the internal city of Vienna as enclosed.[303] The principles of contiguity and opposition amongst the buildings are here suspended, leaving the street as the unique organizing principle: "The public buildings float unorganized in a spatial medium whose only stabilizing element is an artery of men in motion."[304] Along with this monumental drift, the coexistence of disparate architectonic styles does nothing but to accentuate the *Ringstraße*'s dislocation: the Gothic *Rathaus*, the Baroque *Burgtheater*, the Renaissance-style *Universität* and the classical Greek *Parlament* trace a stylistic sequence in which the absence of tradition was arrested by the *order* of architecture.[305]

The presence of the Ring as a sequence of architectural styles is thus understood as historicism betraying a lack of true style, but for some, it acquires a different sense; as a truly aesthetic project in which the concessions to modern life are seen as a hindrance. The influence of the *Ringstraße* is noticeable in Camillo Sitte (1843-1903) whose critical analysis of the sequences and configuration of plazas, trees and streets led him to devise a 'spatial art' or *Raumkunst* in his *City Planning According to Artistic Principles,* which was published in 1889 and became widely influential among many branches of twentieth-century planning.[306]

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302    (1981: 32).
303    "what had been a military insulation belt became a sociological isolation belt." (1981: 33).
304    (1981: 35).
305    "Where historical tradition was lacking, historical erudition had thus to fill the void (...) myth stepped in where history fail to serve." (1981: 43).
306     "it is not without reason that Sitte has been so often called the "Father of Modern City Planning."" In Sitte, C. (1986) City Planning According to Artistic Principles. Trans. Christiane Crasemann Collins. In

Sitte's work posits a counterintuitive approach to urbanism, turning his back to the

hygienic pragmatism that is prevalent at the moment and stressing instead the primacy of

irregularities and the perceptual organization of an urban plan that it is punctuated by trees and

monuments. Though Sitte is professionally closer to crafts than to architecture or city planning,

his interest focuses on *Volkskunstwerk*, minor arts and functional architecture which is

anonymously created over long periods of time.[307] He understands city planning as any other

artistic and cultural aspect within a greater, national *Gesamtkunstwerk*,[308] where its evolution

(heavily informed by his late, separate research on Darwinism),[309] indicates a process of cultural

evolution. Seen in this way, Sitte's aim is to enact an 'artistic' (as he opposes it to 'modern')

planning in which the correlation between a building's architectonic style and its functionality

must be extended "from the individual building to its spatial environment."[310] Like art historians

Alois Riegl or Heinrich Wölfflin, Sitte reduces the urban to underlying principles whose

evolution is not restricted by questions of style, that is; urbanism is here conceived as a

patterning or sequencing of space, where the arrangement of plants complies with structural tasks

beyond the decorative scope, therefore leveling trees at the same functional importance as

monuments.[311] Sitte conceives the urban presence of trees and shrubbery as a pervasive recall of

human ancestry sustained in virtue of a picturesque "decorative greenery" opposed to the

geometrization of trees and their patterning along the layout of the *Allee* or avenue. Unlike the

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Rosenborough, G. (1986) *Camillo Sitte: The Birth of Modern Planning*. New York: Rizzoli.

307      "Sitte came to regard style as something alien to the urban context, to the process of change, and something to be avoided because it was usually associated with a lack of humility vis-à-vis the totality of the city" Rosenborough (1986: 19).

308      (Sitte 1986: 321).

309      A eight-volume project, where the first five trace the 'cultural evolution' of perspective, Greek, Etruscan and Roman architecture, comparative mythologies and 'folk-evolution.' More to the point, "Sitte kept Darwin's portrait beside Beethoven's and Wagner's and considered the 'struggle for survival' to be a Germanic concept". (Rosenborough 1986: 33).

310      (Schorske 1981: 63).

311      (Rosenborough 1986: 67).

pragmatism of sanitary greenery, Sitte's point is to achieve a psychological effect, for the

interplay between "ancient fountains with splendid groups of trees, priceless remains of old

private gardens, ancient fortifications covered with green creepers"[312] ameliorates the

melancholia of the modern citizen who suffers his detachment from nature. The urban

arrangement of plants in Sitte's *Raumkunst* acquires the utmost importance[313] because it

integrates the sense of outdoors at the urban level: "To see this on should go to Constantinople

(...) there's greenery everywhere (...) the vegetation (...) nowhere interrupts, as it does in our

Allees, the unrestricted view of monumental buildings (…) The overall effect is really fabulous;

such must have been the impact of ancient Athens or of ancient Rome. Why can moderns no

longer create such wonders?[314]

However, Sitte seems to get at a different obscurity, which implies to conceive urban

planning as a sculptural excavation. In a chapter boldly entitled as 'That the center of plazas be

kept free,' the architect struggles against the geometric imposition of urbanism with the aid of

"rational theory" and one unexpected scenario featuring children "in their favorite pastime of

building snowmen."[315] Sitte speaking:

> "Imagine the open square of a small market (...) covered with snow and
> crisscrossed by several roads and paths that, shaped by the traffic, form the
> natural lines of communication. Between them are left irregularly distributed
> patches untouched by traffic; on these stand the snowmen, because the necessary
> clean snow was to be found there. On exactly such spots, undisturbed by the flow
> of vehicles, rose the fountains and monuments of old communities."[316]

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312    (Sitte 1986: 309).
313    "a tree or a group of bushes, just like a fountain or a monument, belongs near the plaza's edge or in a
       secluded corner (...) For planting trees, a design in harmony with the architectonic surrounding is of basic
       importance (...) This can be achieved (...) by the installation of minor architectural forms (...) stone vases on
       pedestals, small fountains, sculptured figures (...) and, besides, many city motifs such as coffee pavilions,
       refreshment stands, poster columns, etc, even carriage lots." (1986: 311).
314    (1986: 317).
315    (1986: 159).
316    (1986: 160).

The scene depicted by Sitte deserves close attention due to the sequence he renders; one where ancient monuments are delineated by the enactment of modern urbanism; the flux of vehicles. 'For the ancient monuments to arise, a number of cars in motion is required' seems to exclaim the architect during his invention of a sculptural method that employs vehicles which, in carving the city's layout, they unearth the presence of bygone architectures. Further, the archipelago created by such technique is not only the dwelling of monuments, but snowmen created by children at play that "when follow unhindered their own artistic instincts in drawing or modeling, what they create bears a resemblance to the unsophisticated art of primitive peoples. One notices something similar with regard to children's placing of their monuments."[317]

Now the scenery is a layered environment in which what modernity is unveiling (namely, the ancient) shares its extension with the modern production of the primitive. Sitte's urban excavation creates a rediscovery of the ancient as by-product of urban functions, allocating the former in the same *locus* as the playground of the modern primitive; both dwelling in the same place.

In both cases (the Parisian Père Lachaise Cemetery and Vienna's *Ringstraße*), we face *absolute* volumes whose cohesion are structurally determined by the street and historically by the road; the pedestrian unifies a conglomerate of isolated stories and historicism, the vehicle casts the emergence of the antique as what was left over by industrial progress. And yet, it is possible to examine the counterpart of such conglomerate. In Paris we can also find The Empire of Death in its Catacombs,[318] a network of mining tunnels that in the 1780's begins its renovation; six

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317    (1986: 159).
318    "After descending down a narrow and winding staircase and passing through several dark tunnels guests were/are greeted with a sign over the entryway to the Catacombs announcing, 'Silence, mortals. This is the empire of death.' [Silence, mortels! Ceci est l'empire de la mort.]" In Legacey (2016: 84).

years after it started receiving its first hosts and inaugurating a new funerary culture in the city.

Described by Legacey as the "dark double" of Paris,[319] some of its initial corridors follow the same direction that the street above, reflecting the city's layout although changing its functions; you live and work at the surface level, you die and become sheer structure in the underground. Such a condition yields two intriguing ideas. For one, the city is resting upon a city that is hollow, a subterranean excavation whose pillars of stone and bone are bearing the weight of the living.[320] Tellingly, the human remnants of the Catacombs are not scattered, but carefully allocated in a variety of manners; under the aegis of Louis-Étienne Héricart de Thury (1776-1854), the Catacombs feature millions of bones in decorative and structural arrangements; sometimes as decor echoing a truly medieval style, sometimes in combination with stone masonry pillars, as walls or *hagues* surrounding a subterranean dwell (The fountain *de la Samaritaine*), or arranged as a barrel-like column (as in the case of the so-called *Tibia Rotunda*).

Despite this attention to the presentation of human remnants, there is a pervasive sense of homogeneity within the Catacombs that makes it the *verso* of what the Père Lachaise Cemetery stands for: "If Père Lachaise's most notable innovations included the prevalence of elaborate tombstones and a clearly delineated social hierarchy, the Catacombs offered a visual display of precisely the opposite: a mass of undifferentiated, anonymous bones in which 'death has

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319    (2016: 78).
320    Consider this account of the quarries in their pre-catacomb era penned by a mysterious Gamma: "a portion or Southern Paris rests for it is not the cemetry alone which lies on the catacombs. A considerable portion of the Boulevards, Mt. Parnasso, St. Jacques, d' Italie, de l' Hopital, d' Enter, St. Michel, and a great many streets lie on the catacombs. The Western railway runs for some distance over the catacombs, and the whole extensive station of the Western railway (rive gauche) is built on the catacombs (...) A considerable portion of the garden- of the Luxemborg, and the Garden of Plants, and all the Horse Market, and all the Abbatoir de Villejni, lie on the catacombs. The immense building, know as Val de Grace (...) [is] built on the catacombs; they are supported by piles. The whole territory south of the Seine, as far as Chantillon heights and Gentilly, is excavated. Chantillon, Issy, Vauves, Vaugirard, are all built on quarries. They are abandoned and closed, but they are not called catacombs; they will not receive this name until the bones of the urban cemetries be thrown into them." Gamma (1867) The Dead of France. In *The American Art Journal* (1866-1867), Vol. 6, No. 11 (Jan. 5, 1867), pp. 170-71.

confounded ranks."[321] In the Catacombs, every ornament is incidental and a by-product of a given skeletal structure, every bone anonymous, united in the love for the dead. A structure made out of dead Parisians is not only the cancellation of the social hierarchy that the Père Lachaise Cemetery precisely posits, but also a cancellation of temporal and historical discontinuities.

In architectural terms, this unification of structure and identity conflicts with the historicist style criticised (albeit touted) by Sitte and his attempt to promote the square as the humanizing *locus* of urban life.[322] The conflictual core of the Ring, (its modern street layout speckled with incongruent historicist architectures), does not passes unnoticed to another architect who, like Sitte, was critic of the *Ringstraße;* Otto Wagner (1841-1918), one of the major critics of Viennese architecture of his era, a late member of the Vienna Secession and arguably the author of the first manifesto of modern architecture.[323] If Sitte abstracts the creation of the antique as inevitable production of modern transportation, Wagner relocates the example in his criticism of Sitte's favorite *locus*, the square. "Every monument is an integral part of the square on which it is intended to stand, since the square must already exist before the monument is composed; thus the square should never be brought into harmony with the monument, but always the monument with the square."[324] So it is not only that the urban layout predates the

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321    (Legacey 2016: 83).
322    "Sitte's project was to restore the square in order to arrest the driving flow of men in motion in a space conducive to sociability and congregation. The square was for him the urban form that could generate and sustain community, could restore the sense of belonging to a polis that hectic modern commercial culture was killing." In Schorske, C. (1998) *Thinking with History: Explorations in the Passage to Modernism*. Princeton University Press, p. 159.
323    As Mallgrave denotes in his Introduction to Wagner's Modern Architecture: "[it] was the first modern writing to make a definitive break with the past" or, at least "the culmination of nineteenth-century efforts to create a new style." Mallgrave, H.F. Introduction. In Wagner, O. (1988) *Modern Architecture: a Guidebook for his Students to this Field of Art*. Trans. Mallgrave, H.F. Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, p. 1.
324    Wagner, O. (1988) Modern Architecture: a Guidebook for his Students to this Field of Art. Trans. Mallgrave, H.F. Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, p. 84.

emergence of the antique, but that also determines its form; in this way, the modern ornament is enacted "impressionistically," employing only those elements that can be predicted.[325] Wagner is critical of the 'Renaissance' style (who identifies in Semper's *Hofburg* theater), in which the stack and chiseling of stone becomes unnecessary from the point of view of time, money and labor optimization. He proposes instead a 'modern' technique in which an initial structural framework (made of bricks or metal) is paneled with marble slates anchored by bolts. Far from being a structural necessity (the bolts are only pertinent during the first three weeks of construction, until the mortar is cured), these pieces seem to express a "decoration (...) invested with a constructional meaning seemingly inspired by necessity,"[326] as if decoration could be turned inwards, and to speak less of the edifice's purpose and more about the instance of its erection. The Viennese sees an evolution of architecture propelled by material and technical means, so change is decided by 'purpose' (*Zweck*), then articulated by methods of construction which produce new forms.[327] Construction is, in itself, the irreducible core of architecture which assures that formal expression will be intelligible while it grounds the architectural practice onto pragmatic foundations; Wagner goes on to declare the virtues of the modern way of building in which technical solutions will decrease the number of constructive elements and the amount of time and money required. And yet, Wagner cannot fully escape from the logic of the skeuomorph; by enacting the modern way of building "a number of new artistic motifs will emerge."[328]

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325     (Wagner 1988: 85).
326     (Mallgrave 1988: 37) .
327     (Wagner 1988: 93).
328     (1988: 96).

The architect seems to cancel the temporal dialectics of the skeuomorph as he annuls the expectation that links technique and symbol.[329] But at the same time, the act of construction will generate artistic motifs autonomously, thus assuming the same allegorical displacement that the skeuomorph stands for. Hence it is not a question of materials mimicking materials, but of constructive measures predating mimesis among materials; by putting the primacy of infrastructure upfront, Wagner is seemingly declaring how a process of skeuomorphism can be determined *in the last instance*, designated from the infrastructure towards its stylistic outburst.

However, the Viennese seems more aware of the necessary correlation between what the infrastructure expresses and its derivative ornaments. See how "things that have their source in modern views correspond perfectly to our appearance (...) things copied and imitated from old models never do (...) A man in modern traveling suit (...) fits in very well with the waiting room of a train station (...) with all our vehicles (...) yet would we no stare him if we were to see someone dressed in clothing from the Louis XV period (...)?"[330] The correlation here is not created by a temporal dimension of the historic (in which technique reappears as a symbol), but according to the span of fashion in which the skeuomorphic expectancy does not acquire positive presence; it is precisely the fact that structure and costume match (with nothing being missed) what confirms the presence of the modern, a pace in which the "salvation in mimicry"[331] is overcomed by the creative drive. This immanent condition of functional materialism acquires the traits of a revelation unfettered from the past, to the point that "we cannot speak of a Renaissance of the Renaissance. A completely new birth, a Naissance, has been emerging from this

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329     As a matter of fact, he appears to be pretty anti-skeuomorph. See how "Mistakes (...) are too numerous (...) iron buildings that have the characteristic features of stone forms, plaster buildings that display a full stone pattern, numerous exterior details that pretend to be more than they are." (1988: 95).
330     (1988: 77).
331     (Ibid.)

movement."[332] For Wagner the selection of a style in particular is irrelevant, or at least subservient of the imperative relation between form, practice and need. From these assumptions, it is not difficult to imagine why in 1894 Wagner was commissioned for building Vienna's new railway system, the *Stadtbahn*. As chief architect, he designed not only the stations but a number of viaducts, tunnels and bridges[333] in which allowed iron to emerge as substantial element and ornamental material that supplants any historicist style. In his Uber-Döbling station, the symbolic has been passed over the features of the infrastructure, or, as Schorske reminds us, to some sort of ur-style made out of 'construction.' In the station:

> "an ornamental iron arch supporting the projecting roof is shaped in the form of an iron railway trestle. Thus Wagner used iron representationally, to symbolize through a form in which iron normally functions on an elevated railway—the form of a trestle—a function it does not here perform (...) The iron arch here proclaims, in the face of the Ringstrasse tradition, the validity of technological forms as symbols. Thus Wagner brought into the city the utilitarian "style of Adam...naked and strong," which the Ringstrasse builders had admired only in the engineering works of the countryside."[334]

Following this ramification depicted by Schorske implies also to recognize that the expectation is no longer temporal (between a symbolic form and a functional absence), but spatial and functional; we recognize a function embedded as misplacement. I see Wagner envisioning a technique that incorporates in itself an aesthetic experience, or, a material whose style is its function and its aesthetic experience stems from its usage, a visible advent that results from their mutual blending, a *phanero-technics* as Gilbert Simondon describes to Derrida in a letter never sent, dated in 1982.[335] Simondon ruminates an interplay of artistic thought and practice in which the latter does not complies with any reflexive task, and described as *techno-*

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332    (1988: 79).
333    (Schorske 1981: 79).
334    (1981: 79).
335    Simondon, G. (2012) On Techno-Aesthetics. Trans. De Boever, A. In *Parrhesia*, Number 14, 2012, pp. 1-
        8.] Simondon opens his letter gnomically by asking to Derrida "There is no reference to religious thought
        and practice in your project. Why?" He does not return to that initial point ever again. (2012: 1).

*aesthetics;* techniques which are already aesthetic. From the Eiffel Tower to its antennas, from the Garabit viaduct to bicycle wrenches and car spoilers, the philosopher is reuniting functionality and beauty even when the subject matter is not tangible:

> "Electricity is not an object, but it can become a source of "aesthèsis" when mediated by an adequate instrument enabling it to reach the sense organs. The same is true for a galvanometer or an oscilloscope, which are both mediators. Hearing the sequential melody is made possible by an industrial technical object that has been partly diverted from its function. Because around each product, there exists a margin of liberty that enables it to be used for ends that were not foreseen. Inversely, aesthetic sensibility can be used to optimize a machine. To equalize, or balance out, the tensions of the elastic parts of a catapult, the Romans made them vibrate like the cords of a harp, until they all resonated in harmony."[336]

The philosopher is seemingly conflating the aestheticization of technical means (as it happens with his catapult), with a more refined displacement in which the technical object incorporates its own functional vacuum; a hollowness from which new artistic motifs will emerge, to repeat Wagner's dictum. The aesthetic is here relocated within the realm of the industrial, in places of "production and emission"[337] that have been endowed, from now on, with a new aura of spectral productivity. What techno-aesthetics are unmasking is precisely their independence from previous models, their *phaneric* singularity (clearly visible to a naked eye) that allows a simultaneous cohabitation and detachment. Simondon recalls the plateau of Villebon, where newly asphalted roads contrast with old farms, yet the road is more silent, it has less history to tell us for its sense is always immanent; you drive, or you walk; end of the story.

What the modern creates is a sense of muteness embedded in its infrastructures, a skeletal armature of mourning that, as if another catacomb were, furnish its entire extension with a homogeneous recognition of aesthetic value. The road is silent until your speed makes it bellow,

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336     (Simondon 2012: 5).
337     (Ibid.)

and this tuneless experience turns the infrastructural all the more primeval: "The techno-aesthetic feeling seems to be a category that is more primitive than the aesthetic feeling alone, or than the technical aspect considered from the angle of functionality alone (which is an impoverishing perspective)."[338]

Throughout this itinerary, we are observing the tension between the necessary coexistence of the 'historical' and the 'modern' within the arena of the urban; two antithetical notions now enveloped around a never-ending argumentation upon the aesthetic value of built matter. Meanwhile, as Karl Krauss once commented "Vienna is now being demolished into a metropolis,"[339] and stretching its imperial smile in a sovereign effort; keeping the dynastic remnants as meaningful while extending a new sense of urban functionality. A smirk that does not finish in any declared expression, and suspends its gesture:

> "one encounters the beginning and the end of the smile—but not the exhaustion of a smile, the entelechy of the smile. It's only the two extreme terms of the smile that are (...) revealed. The smile that begins, and the smile that ends so as to return to the face's mask of seriousness, are the extreme terms of this temporal thickness: the smile will unfold itself, and at the same time it will also already be disappearing (...) Aren't there two messages to decode, in order to infer the source-message (the master-message), which is lacking?"[340]

Given this apophenia, it is worth thinking about Simondon's question regarding the *order* of the imperial smile (either as an expression that is originally incomplete or that has not yet ended) in regards to the European foundations of aesthetic value, for we have been observing the interplay of the ornamental and the functional within Vienna's semblance, yet remains unclear the way in which such an imperial grimace becomes aesthetically significant. Thus it results all the more pertinent to examine Robert Vischer's theory of 'empathy' or *Einfühlung* as it appears

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338    (2012: 6).
339    Frisby, D. (2002) The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's 'Second Renaissance'. In Leach, N. (2002) (ed.) *The Hieroglyphs of Space: Reading and Experiencing the Modern Metropolis*. London and New York: Routledge, p. 28.
340    (2012: 4).

in his thesis *On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics* (1873). In his *Contribution...* Vischer depicts an exhaustive compendium of mental, physical and kinesthetic forces partaking of the realm of perception and artistic creation. Initially, Visher conceives 'form' as always carrying a 'content' which bears a symbolism that it is noticeable as much as it is a mysterious "deep, dark, secure, intimate, yet free, unifying, and contractive feeling."[341]

The human body, in responding to conscious and active visual *stimuli* (a muscular activity denominated by Vischer as "scanning" [*Schauen*]), projects itself towards the object, or "objectifies itself in spatial forms"[342] according to a process denominated as Empathy (*Einfühlung*). The concordances and differences produced between the perceived phenomenon and the structure of the body are what allow to calibrate the different types of image, either as a fleeting phenomenon or as a concrete, purposeful perception. Yet the correlation between image and body has to be deferred from the purely corporal by means of imagination: "which does not always and necessarily lead to actual movement but always to the idea of it."[343] For now, this denial of the body signals its expressive demise in the name of its mental realization. The question is here about the primacy of the mental image; after all, a gesture goes outwards; it protracts the inner self beyond the skin. However, Vischer conceives imagination as a process of visual internalization flayed out of "the confusion and irrationality of nature"[344] where the disturbances of the flesh and its mode of perception are redeemed: "The form becomes (...) clarified —spiritualized— by being internal. This independence from the narrow constraints of reality (...) may also make the material stimulus doubly effective."[345]

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341    Vischer, R. (1873) On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics. In Mallgrave, H. (1994) *Empathy, Form and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893*. Santa Monica: the Getty Center for Arts and Humanities, p. 90.
342    (Vischer 1873: 92).
343    (1873: 99).
344    (1873: 102).
345    (Ibid.)

Internalizing a perceived object does not equal to its contact; this latter has been concealed, *purified* by the psychic feeling of imagination that allows humans to traverse the event of experience. The empathetic process of perceptual internalization is posited here as a grantor of social life; if the body assimilates the visual, the image can be unpacked within the realm of imagination; if the soul feels that phenomenon, *others* can feel it too. This chain of correlations is not only spiritual but a magical procedure where the perceiver becomes the possessor. Vischer's *Einfühlung* could be described as an operation of 'reverse sympathy' where empathy is less received than induced: "Thus I project my own life into the lifeless form, just as I quite justifiably do with another living person. Only ostensibly do I keep my own identity although the object remains distinct. I seen merely to adapt and attach myself to it as one hand clasp another, and yet I am mysteriously transplanted and magically transformed into this Other."[346] Nothing summarizes better the impunity of the purple than Vischer's description; a singular self that attains rights of ownership upon any form, *anybody*, insofar as it has been declared dead. The empathetic sense is here, before everything, the accomplishment of the individual that roams and consumes an empty world, that breaks into other lifeforms whose identity has been debased until its personhood is nothing but an eroded fossil. This passage also betrays a 'primitivist' stance in Vischer, where he sets a mimetic distance without peer (the necessary Other); it is rather the individual who feigns the presence of the Other by being its ventriloquist: "Primitive man knows nothing of real mechanical causes but only of a perpetrator or an instigator (...) Naive man accounts for such things by analogy to his own changeable behavior. Therefore, he assumes there is a person directing these things."[347]

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346      (1873: 104).
347      (1873: 110).

If the primitive humanizes nature, Vischer levels reality up to make 'lifeless' and 'alive' matter indistinguishable from an operative standpoint; Empathy actuates upon both by being its owner. One cannot help but speculate whether we may have before us one of the psychological foundations (leave aside the magical operation) of what articulates the German construction of *difference*: a body possessed by a mind whose envelope is a phantom limb; a personality that creates otherness in the name of its indebted identity. Further, the powers of Empathy have been cautiously delineated in order to prevent an 'excess' of embodiment, or even worse; a possession. Rather, this "religious personification"[348] that humanizes matter (or doubles other humans), differs from a mimetic operation, which is considered by Vischer as "acting"[349] because Empathy toward the static is continuous and pervasive.[350] In this regard, the relationship with the visual implies the transposition of a mental set of postures and feelings into diverse physical phenomenon; a cliff and its 'defiance' and 'passion,' a tree and its 'longings' are interfacial events where the inward domain of the mental is corroborated as surficial evidence; as a physiognomic recipient whose inspection equals to its possession.

Yet a close inspection to the notion demonstrates that *Einfühlung* sometimes is not exclusively under the command of the individual. If we trace the word back to its alleged source (Herder's *Philosophy of History* [1766-1778]), we can fully unpack the aforementioned possession by means of 'sympathy,'[351] "Whoever has noticed what an inexpressible thing one is dealing with in the distinctive individuality of a human being —to be able to say what

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348    (1873: 105).
349    (Ibid.)
350    It is, to use Vischer's words "physiognomic (...) a pure condition, an involuntary inclination and habitus (...) We seem to perceive hints and traces of attitudes, of emotions —a secret, scarcely suppressed twitching of the limbs, a timorous yearning, a gesturing, and a stammering." (Ibid.)
351    The term *Einfühlung* has been elusive in its translation into English language. In 1904, American psychologist James Mark suggested "semblant" or "semblance," and two years later the term"aesthetic sympathy" (to lack of a better term) was included in his *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*. In 1908 James Ward and E.B. Titchener suggested "empathy" as a more accurate correlative. See Lanzoni, S. (2018) Empathy: A History. Yale University Press. pp. 46-50.

distinguishes him in a distinguishing way, how he feels and lives, how different and idiosyncratic all things become for him once his eye sees them, his soul measures them, his heart feels them (...) yet so escapes the word (...) one would have first to sympathize with the nation (...)"[352] And so, the process of acquiring an identity requires nothing but *to possess the nation* by means of sympathy; the protolanguage of the modern. Although it may exist a nation for whoever wants it, including the "Indian nation (...)" destroyed by "(...) [Bartolomé] De Las Casas (...) who exposed the atrocities that his Spaniards perpetrated (...)"[353] one cannot choose whichever method for finding individuality. Every nation is "(...) in its place with everything that it is and has (...)" though one cannot help but find that "(...) Living domestic management [*Haushaltung*] is nature's concept."[354] Either case, Herder's and Vischer's 'sympathies' have been inoculated as the prerequisite for individuals and dwellings to exist.[355] Whichever nation, whichever race that has possessed a nation already bears a hypodermic stigma; the sense of the modern as *a priori*.

Tellingly, the access to the cognitive realization of nationhood "relates to statehood not through membership, but through legitimacy."[356] A legitimacy that, as you can see, it has been unilaterally declared in the name of humankind.

The importance of Empathy is denotative of the decomposition of the modern mind in regards to physical space; we can see how the very notion of *Einfühlung* can be grounded in the muscular, kinesthetic response of the eye (as we have seen in the case of Vischer), or as a

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352    Herder, J.G. (1774) This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity. In Forster (2004) (ed.) (trans.) *Johann Gottfried von Herder. Philosophical Writings.* Cambridge University Press, p. 292.
353    Herder, J.G. (1793) Letters for the Advancement of Humanity (1793-97) Tenth Collection. In Forster (2004: 387).
354    (Forster 1793: 395).
355    "Thus Herder's Ideen zur Philosophic der Geschichte der Menschheit (1784-1791) was a panoramic display of various cultures, each permeated by an inimical creative spirit, each accessible only to an observer who sacrificed his prejudices to Einfühlung." In Said, E. (1979) Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books, p. 118.
356    King, J. (2001) The Nationalization of East Central Europe: Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond. In Bucur, M. and Wingfield, N. (2001) (eds.) The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present. Indiana: Purdue University Press. p. 128.

disembodied version in which the aesthetic experience is anchored purely and completely in the

mind (a version defended and reworked by Theodor Lipps that anticipates Freud's notion of

transference).[357] Unlike Simondon's phanero-technics, these versions of Empathy do not equate

your bodily response with the object's usage; your emphatic actions are limited to the exertion of

symbolic motions (like a dramatic imitation), or to the realization of how certain images induce

somatic sensations,[358] or conversely; how a particular type of muscular motion matches the shape

of an object. The type of aesthetic experience described here presupposes a self-contained body

that does not express an autonomous bodily reaction, but merely *hosts*, as if a coffin were, the

empathetic operation. Be muscular or mental, the Empathy conserves a central feature; the

possession of the subject of empathy. If for Vischer this operation presupposes an array of

lifeless carcasses, the same goes for Lipps as he substitutes the object of attention by an inner

projection; as a result, the former vanishes. This is what occurs in his account of a spectator

staring an acrobat on a tightwire: "I am, according to my direct (unmediated) awareness in him; I

am there high up. I am transported there. Not next to the acrobat, but exactly within him, where

he is. This is thus the full meaning of '*Einfühlung*'."[359]

Moreover, the nineteenth-century Vienna is also the scenario of the diverse mental

contortions expressed by new ambits and scales, so in the same way as the wide *Ringstraße* is a

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357     "To Lipps, *Einfühlung* was not a matter of activating muscular sensations or stimulating actual movements but rather the projection of the self's inner sense of activity into the perceived object." In Lanzoni, S. (2018) Empathy: A History. Yale University Press, p. 33.

358     An ulterior body of work developed by Vernon Lee is convincing of this point, for the sensation never breaks with the necessity for a phlegmatic aesthetic experience: "The arrow through the throat of Sodoma's Sebastian ought to give me a slight sense of discomfort in my throat. The fact that it doesn't points to something else diverting my attention. What is that something? When I say to myself, 'The arrow cut into the flesh, crashed through the bone, and cut through the arteries,' I feel a vague sickness." Lee and Anstruther-Thomson, "Extracts from the Gallery Diaries," Beauty and Ugliness (1912), p. 281. Quoted by Lanzoni (2018: 35).

359     In Lipps, T. (1906) Ästhetik, vol. 1, p. 122. Quoted by Lanzoni (2018: 33).

source of *anomie* and *agoraphobia* for Sitte,[360] the old enclosed squares are for Wagner

*claustrophobic*[361] alongside with other manifestations elsewhere, such as Freud's *uncanny* or

Simmel's *hyperaesthesia.*[362] The rise of the city may be well the stage in which a number of

psychological states acquire a particular scale, as if the urban size was the necessary requisite for

accessing to a new psychic dimension. Considered in this way, the city is the scenario where the

purple deploys its semblance and its access to edges and contours, a plan where the mind unfolds

itself and gets trapped; the face that is a city has a mind in every pore, but every mind feigns its

own mimetic control; the other's experience is your own, lifeless objects denote a mental life like

yours, the movements of an object are mentally arrested by you, who also animate static objects,

or confer them with a temper, a quality or moral. Somehow, the modern Empathy becomes the

*Western* magic of solitude, a scenery of plurality in which all the vividness is enacted by a single

performer, a play that is a parody inland and a tragedy overseas, the city's white lie and the

colony's most obscene impunity. In *The Play of Men* (published in 1901), Karl Groos gets at a

fitting designation; "inner imitation"[363] is aesthetic sympathy where the act of association yields

"processes of fusing or blending, which is not the bringing of a succession of disparate ideas into

special relations, but rather a unifying process, in which the after-effect of past experience and

the present perception blends to an inseparable synthesis."[364] So the forgery of *a* mimesis that is

internal is also *a technique*, a metallurgy of mimicry in which the visual clue (the verge between

the backdrop and the camouflage, between the play and the script) can only be internalized

through a suspension of temporality. Given this unification, a secondary but crucial trait

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360    Schorske, C. (1998) Thinking with History: Explorations in the Passage to Modernism. Princeton
         University Press, p. 159.
361    (Frisby 2002: 26).
362    (2002: 26).
363    Groos, K. (1976) The Play of Man. New York: Arno Press, p. 322.
364    (Groos 1976: 323).

emerges; the empathy induced by objects supplants, in its form, its process of creation. So to inspect a jar triggers analogical responses that fit the object's form, but do not mimic its process of creation.[365] Such an empathetic condition produces also an *order* in which the labor of creating the jar (after all, the jar is composed by kinesthetic and motor drives), has been concealed through a debased embodiment in which the inner imitation does not mimic the jar's labor, but its perceptual consumption; if the melancholic is a classless individual, the empathetic is definitely not working-class, one who is partaking of reality from a prudent mimetic distance in which to imagine muscular labor is enough.[366] This instance of "adjustment (or *Einstellung*),"[367] in which one anticipates the thing being empathized presupposes for Groos "sounds, objects attitudes"[368] that can be perceived symbolically and not uniquely as a motor response, that is; that the present perceptual experience fuses with past experiences in the *actual* or inner imitation: "an independent, self-centered pleasure"[369] that outpaces the kinesthetic or motor-driven transference from one entity to another "toward spiritualizing the imitative impulse."[370]

And yet, the abstraction of the mimetic adjustment has been taken here as universal value, as if *sounds*, *objects* and *attitudes* were not specific in themselves. This is why Groos seems willing to declare:

> "In concluding, we are confronted by the question whether this faculty of inner
> imitation belongs exclusively to a special group of individuals—namely, the

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365  As it happens in the example conducted by Lee and Thomson: "one accompanies the lift up, so to speak, of the body of the jar by a lift up of one's own body (...) the jar's equal sides bring both lungs into equal play (...) this totality of movements and harmony of movements in ourselves answers to the intellectual fact, of finding that the jar is a harmonious whole." In Lee, V. and Thomson, A. *Mental Development*, pp. 554, 677. Quoted by Gross (1976: 331).

366  Consider Stricker's account: "When I am in good physical condition, (...) and take my stand at some distance from an exercise ground so that I can watch the company with ease but not catch the word of command, I feel certain muscular sensations quite as strongly as if I stood under the command and attempted to follow it." Quoted by Gross (1976: 329).

367  (1976: 333).

368  (Ibid.)

369  (1976: 326).

370  (Ibid.)

distinctly motor type. If this is so, then a very important part of the æsthetic satisfaction is confined to a fraction of the human race. One hesitates to affirm that we of the motor type labour under the disadvantage of taking intense pleasure in a state which is lacking in physical resonance, so to speak; and yet, if this is the case, we still can boast that fusion with past processes which after all leaves the plus sign in our favour."[371]

Although the German debunks his rumination immediately after "I am convinced, however, that no such sharp distinction of types is warranted by the facts," his reasoning contradicts the very core of individual empathetic experience: "Ability to observe such movements in one's self is no criterion."[372] For our purposes, suffices to highlight three remarkable aspects distilled from Groos: for one, *inner imitation* is a unifying gesture in which relations are cloaked in the name of a unilateral synthesis; then, the process of inner imitation points to mimetic pleasure as its destiny, but this is attained as long as the empathy is symbolic, not factual; we find the jar as enticing from its formal sympathetic consumption, and not from its production. Finally, kinesthetic transference may or not gain primacy over the object's symbolization, but until this last mystery is solved, I am of the opinion that aesthetic impressions postulate the exceptionalism of the consumer; the witness, the scientist or the historian who encapsulates the sense of an object, sometimes in spite of one's ignorance about the object's required labor, sometimes because one hallucinates another's labor from the armchair, the desk, the pulpit.


This empathetic state of exception postulated by the likes of Vischer, Lipps, Groos, Stricker, Lee and Thomson percolates to other areas of academic inquiry such as art history, in which the dematerialization of aesthetic experience and the univocity of *inner imitation* were

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371    (Gross 1976: 333).
372    (Ibid.)

crucial in order to exert ownership upon the value of aestheticized matter. The white magic of empathy finds more ramifications through the study of history, as they were expressed by Alois Riegl (1858-1905), Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945), and Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965). An Austrian, a Swiss and a German whose main commonality rests upon their belonging to the so-called Vienna School of Art History. The identity of this institution (which encompasses from 1852 to after the 1930's), was shaped by the Habsburg reform policies, the emergence of secular and bourgeois ideologies and also by notions of British liberalism and German cultural improvement.[373] Some of the School's everlasting achievements include the implementation of positivistic and developmental studies of artistic styles, the conception of visuality as autonomous, the advocacy for philological, nomothetic and idiographic methodologies, and the perusal of aesthetics *vis-à-vis* human psychology. From this framework, these three art historians led an anti-metaphysical turn from formalist historicism toward alternative ontologies which attempted to render particular historical worldviews which, to a greater or lesser extent, were contributions to the control exerted by the Austro-Hungarian state apparatus. They undertook different approaches to their subject matter; from Riegl's positivism to Wölfflin's purist formalism or Worringer's formalist psychology. Either case, the primacy of their analysis rests on a shared thought: the autonomous visual structure of artworks. And so: "The object that the art histories of Riegl and Wölfflin discuss is a dematerialised artwork, no longer an artefact but a visual appearance."[374] This assumption, which is key for the constitution of German aesthetics, indicates the transference of haptic information into the visual; a requisite for images to appear within consciousness. Here visuality defines less a number of perceptual traits than the

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373    Rampley, M. (2013) The Vienna School of Art History: Empire and the Politics of Scholarship 1847-1918. Pennsylvania State University Press, p. 10.

374    Ionescu, V. (2013b) The Rigorous and the Vague: Aesthetics and Art History in Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer. In *Journal of Art Historiography*, number 8, December 2013, p. 4.

characteristics that allow human cognition to enter into the autonomous realm of the visual. This matrix of visuality underlies every significant element of formalist analysis: materiality, iconography, iconology, and notions of 'origin' become subsumed by visuality.[375] At this point, we have a structure that locates 'history' at the surface of a deep visual realm, where the singularity of every artwork points to the expression of 'general' diagrams of Western visuality, and crucially; the primacy of this schema finds its concrete implementation in the very act of restoring and preserving material heritage.

However, the project of visual autonomy presents in itself a tension between the delineation of its visuality and its aesthetic effects; between the subject matter and the epistemology. Wölfflin dismisses stylistic change as by-product of cognition while describing how the path towards cultural stylistic change "leads from the cell of the scholar to the mason's yard."[376] The Swiss is not only acknowledging the lack of relation between the historian's sapience and the visuality being studied, but pointing in passing to the silent presence of the worker as inadequate 'source.' Far from being vague, Wölfflin relocates the value of the 'making' into a history that privileges the act of seeing, a *Sehgeschichte*[377] that it is physiognomic because it correlates visual and bodily experience as what gives access to the aesthetic. But the content that such visuality expresses is, ironically, less an image than a general *Stimmung* or 'mood' prescribed by the historian, so to approach the visual for Wölfflin requires its subsumption within the subjective domain of the intellect, the place where the knowledge that is owned is as much a displacement of the visual as of its material productive conditions. As Alfred Sohn-Rethel accurately points in his seminal *Intellectual and Manual Labor* (1978) "the

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375    "the categories of art history conceive the singular artwork as the realization of generative principles of
       visuality. Following this paradigm, the actual historical event (Botticelli's Venus) is subordinated to a
       virtual structure (the linear Renaissance as opposed to the painterly Baroque)." (Ionescu 2013b: 7).
376    Wölfflin, H. (1964) Renaissance and Baroque. London: Collins, p. 77.
377    (Ibid.)

intellect is equipped with instruments of cognition which, if employed in a suitable method, can yield a knowledge of nature from sources totally alien to manual labour. It is a knowledge ruled by a logic of appropriation, or, more precisely, by a logic of the reciprocal appropriation which rules in the market, as opposed to manual production."[378] Unlike the concrete human labor and its relations of exchange (between equivalents), the type designated by the historian is of exchange ruled by property. From this instance, it is small wonder to see Riegl's ideological itinerary,[379] one in which he incorporates also such *mood* in order to distinguish and reunite sensations in Japanese, Italian or Dutch artworks which mediate a uniform discourse. As it happens in his *Problems of Style* published in 1893, the intellectual labor seems varnished with an apophenic tone: "Even though the principle task of historical and art historical research is usually to make critical distinctions, this books tends decidedly in the opposite direction. Things once considered to have nothing in common will be connected and related from an unified perspective."[380] The pervasiveness of material labor becomes overshadowed by means of *Kunstwollen* or an 'artistic will' that designates the semblance of visuality as it is expressed by artworks. In his *Late Roman Art Industry* published in 1901, this 'will' is initially determined by a particular worldview in which (as we have discussed earlier), the historical time goes 'forward;' Roman art is not the decline of Greek art, but the forefather of medieval art. But shortly after, Riegl leaves this notion of 'will' as autonomous and not determined. Specific epistemic relationships are canceled and dismissed by the historian in the name of an unconscious *a priori*, thus betraying a

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378   Sohn-Rethel, A. (1978) Intellectual and Manual Labor: A Critique of Epistemology. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., p. 73.
379   "The conceptual mode of thought arose in history as the basis of intellectual labour inherently divided from manual labour (...) the timelessness of the separate intellect is necessary false consciousness which conceals the historical origin of its constitutive concepts and, consequently, their historical limit." (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 203).
380   Riegl, A. (1992) Problems of Style : Foundations for a History of Ornament. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 10.

transcendental subject that shuffles identities.[381] In Sohn-Rethel's terms, this points to how *social*

*synthesis* (the interrelation of social activity), is grounded in the commodity production so as to

articulate a type of cognition that emerges as an *a* priori: "although it bears the exactly contrary

appearance, that of obeying the principle of *ego cogito*."[382] Here the *order* is made by labor that

seems propelled by the intellect, but that in reality is constructing it; abstraction ceases to be

uniquely a product of the intellect and extends itself over every mental labor. Since it is time

what governs the *forms* of thought and of society, their processes cannot be anticipated within

the realm of the mental as detached from manual labor. At the contrary, it is through the

*exchange value* and its abstract set of relations that the concrete emerge as property, a premise

that Sohn-Rethel radicalizes by assuming it literally; value is real, the exchange abstraction is

also real since arises from "spatio-temporal activity,"[383] a dangerous discovery of Marx that

concerns, beyond economy, "the heritage of philosophy" and its primacy of the mind as the

absolute epistemology.[384]

Riegl's *Kunstwollen* is the pursuit of virtuality able to render visual and theological

values under flawed positivism that requires not only the introduction of an unconscious

tegument among visuality and spirit, but a *drive*, a *Drang* or *Triebe* that modulates any content

according to a visual output. As in Wölfflin's case, this mode of visuality is aesthetic inasmuch

as it is speculative: "with the *Kunstwollen*, Riegl conceives creativity by opposing 'ability' to

'volition.'"[385] One of the most remarkable consequences of this move is that Riegl approximates

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381    "A closer analysis would reveal that the 'transcendental unity of the self-consciousness', to use the Kantian expression for the phenomenon here involved, is (...) the form of exchangeability of the commodities underlying the unity of money and of the social synthesis. I define the Kantian 'transcendental subject' as a fetish concept of the capital function of money." (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 77).
382    (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 7).
383    (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 20) .
384    (1978: 21).
385    (Ionescu 2013b: 17).

whichever creative act at the core of an aesthetic 'satisfaction' or 'pleasure' within an imperial

project of normativity. It is not only that pleasure is an aprioristic condition for a visual creation

to exist, but also that the specificity of past periods and cultures becomes arrested by this very

criterion. In light of this, *Kunstwollen* is less an expression of visual autonomy than a

prescription of how visuality matches the imperial willingness to have a pleasant seen.[386] The

expansion of this volition into the realm of psychology is clearly rendered in the works of

Worringer, provided that his utmost interest relates emotional principles with artistic formal

emergence. Most notably in *Abstraction and Empathy* (1953), aesthetic pleasure can here be

conceived by either coupling bodily vitalism and 'empathy' or its repressive negation in the

guise of geometric 'abstraction.' What it was unsolved in Riegl's case becomes fulfilled by

virtue of Worringer's psychologically-centered manifestation of visuality. Either case, the

promise of aesthetic pleasure exists in both realms[387] thus rendering abstraction and empathy as

'general' categories detached from the dimension of material production.

As we have seen, the positivist, formalist and psychological endeavors of Riegl, Wölfflin,

and Worringer contributed to the construction of the 'Western'[388] normativity upon the visual,

designating this latter as a mediation among isotropic aesthetics affects. The primacy of taste

over concept (and over matter) not only congeals the effects of the visual within the domain of

Classicism. As in Wölfflin, it diverts the meaning of the creative act from its making toward its

mannered, acquiescent consumption.

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386     "All of men's will is directed towards the satisfying fashioning of his relations with the world (...) the
        visual Kunstwollen regulated the relationship of the men to the sensible (...) thus he wants to interpret the
        world so as to openly and obligingly fit his desire." In Riegl (1901: 401).
387     "there are also instances where Worringer describes the experience of abstraction in the same terms as
        empathy. Under the regime of abstraction people have 'an immense need for tranquility' (...) provided by
        geometrical abstract forms that bring about 'happiness' (*Beglückung*)." (Ionescu 2013b: 21).
388     A notion that nonetheless was in dispute. During the nineteenth century, the Habsburg Empire attempt
        to reconcile its position as mediator between "eastern and western Europe, and between Europe and the
        Islamic Middle East." In Rampley (2013: 164-85).

Throughout these instances, we see the figure of the historian as who is extracting intellectual labor from the intellect of material labor, a process in which the empathetic exceptionalism touted by the empire has to become grandiloquent in its uniformity, a situation that *Ringstraße*'s Vienna receives with a petrified smile that does not mean *something*, but *anything*, a *Gefühlskultur* or 'culture of feeling' that serves equally for the pre-revolutionary bourgeois culture or the 1880 Revolution against bourgeois authority,[389] for it reunites the analytic spirit of the former with the instinctual drive of the latter. The gauge that re-scales such gesture into history is provided by Riegl's *Kunstwollen* or will to accept; less a symptom than the verification of a protocol: what conflates 'access' with 'usage.' With Worringer, the folding becomes complete by overlapping style's form and content until such difference collapses.

In an attempt to solve the inherent tensions between psychological-driven aesthetics and the pursuit of art history as a positive science, the figure of the document emerges. The prescriptive and contradictory tone of Riegl continues with a positivistic determination of the 'artwork as document' as it posited initially by Moritz Thausing (1838 - 1884): " just as documents speak to us in words, so [artistic] monuments speak to us in visible forms."[390]  In 1902, Alois Riegl is appointed editor of the journal of the *Austrian Central Commission for the Investigation and Conservation of Artistic and Historic Monuments*, an institution created in 1850 in order to generate the administrative and legal basis for Austrian material heritage. After the revolutions of 1848 encompassing not only Austria but France, the Netherlands and the German Confederation, the Commission has a clear nationalistic agenda that includes the deactivation of subversive measures against the Habsburgs and the task of "recording

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389     (Schorske 1998: 127).
390     Thausing, M. "Stellung der Kunstgeschichte," in Schwarz, M. (ed.) *Wiener Jahrbuch für  Kunstgeschichte*, Volume 36, Issue 1, pp. 140-150. Quoted and translated in Rampley (2013: 33).

architectural and artistic monuments before they were destroyed."[391] Here, the emergence of

documents requires the potential destruction of monuments. In light of this, it results significant

that the first director of the Commission, Karl Czoernig, is a statistician whose key target is the

consolidation of a systematic and robust body of documentation. These documents exist insofar

as they have been rigorously formatted by using a "standard form"[392] based on categories where

information renders a content noticeable only by the art historian. "Things that the layperson

does not notice and that do not even exist for him are of great value for the expert."[393] As it is

clear in Riegl's case, the meaning of a monument is merely a *prodrome*: an 'early symptom' of

its legal administration.

Unlike the predominant French approach, the Viennese Commission prioritizes

conservation over restoration and focuses on built heritage before other artworks such as textiles.

By the time Riegl is appointed general conservator at the Central Commission in 1903,

no one has yet delved into the meaning and purpose of monuments *vis-à-vis* their legal

management. In *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin,* this mapping

consists on two main descriptive categories; 'intentional monuments' erected for

commemoration and 'unintentional monuments' invested with an ulterior artistic or historical

meaning after their construction, alongside with subcategories that particularize the previous

distinction: *memorial value*, *use value*, *newness value*, *present-day value* and *artistic value*. It is

noteworthy that, in following the relationship between the title (The Modern Cult of

Monuments…) and the categories written by Riegl, these latter are less descriptive of

monuments than the type of 'cult' they create, for the 'character' and 'origin' lie not within the

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391      (Rampley 2013: 189).
392      (Ibid.)
393      (Ibid.)

monuments, but in the Cult. It follows that their aesthetic 'effects' are less produced by the monuments than induced by the prescriptive powers of Riegl's documents.

The *historic value* of a monument is putatively an indicator of its order along the development of art history and its meaning is impervious to the neophyte. But in his attempt to denationalize the historic value of monuments, Riegl provides with its opposition; a universal *age value* and its correlative *ambiance value* which relate the subjective, individual perception of decay and temporality upon edifices. This compromised position of simultaneously providing a scientific method for assuring the governance of national patrimony *versus* an individual quality that overcomes the former construct becomes solved by deploying an implicit hierarchy. In 1905 he introduces a system of listing for monuments (where not all have the same importance)[394] whose selection criteria is based upon historical and artistic determinations. The layperson entering into the ambiance value of monuments "based on a sense of belonging to the entire world"[395] does so only after the 'historic value' has been set up. Since the prescriptive powers of the historical and its conservation works override the age value of monuments, its perception ultimately lies in a prefigured cognitive verification. Riegl speaking: "ambiance value depends neither on a historic date nor on the pleasure in form and color, but stems purely from the consciousness that we have something old before us."[396] Crucially, the very notion of 'ambiance value' as universal category extends the already aforementioned cognitive colonialism: the sense of the modern as *a priori*. The act of realizing whatever is 'old' as a given assimilates 'anything' into 'something' that is neither rational nor perceptual. For the realization of 'the old' requires a

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394     (2013: 204).
395     (2013: 203).
396     (Ibid.)

cognitive interstice devoid of aesthetic agency where the access to the historian's index (the

requisite for telling how old it is), has been equally foreclosed.

Propelled by the legitimacy of the document as the purveyor of aesthetic stability, the

modern methodology of Viennese art history understands the study of art as "universal and

multifaceted heritage"[397] which subsume monadic artifacts and fragments within its very singular

universality. Understanding art history implies depicting a temporality about temporality, a

"historicization of historical awareness"[398] which reunites the identification of both perception

and artifacts. For instance, Riegl conflates both values until the difference between artistic and

historic monuments ceases to exist "because the former is at once contained and absorbed within

the latter."[399] In so doing, he assimilates perceptual or 'expressive' traits that would escape from

the historical method (such as lines, colors or textures) subservient of historical periodization.

Dating monuments speak less about their identity than their belonging to the historical

matrix; they have an 'age' insofar as they are part of a general meta-temporality provided by the

method of art history. They have an artistic quality as long as the fitting between perceived age

and historical facts remains immutable. Artistic re-interpretation is a surficial expression of this

deep layout; it confirms the universality of the empire of the non-empirical.

Documents are the ultimate intention of monuments, their last *wollen*: they reunite the

perceptual, 'pictorial' incompleteness required for aesthetics to operate. For the connection

between the 'age value' of an edifice and the 'historic value,' a grantor of artistic value is

needed: otherwise, the contemplation grants no historical value to the building. This one has to

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397    Gubser, M. (2006) Time's Visible Surface: Alois Riegl and the Discourse on History and Temporality in
       Fin-de-Siècle Vienna. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, p. 124.
398    (Gubser 2006: 143).
399    Aloïs Riegl, Moderne Denkmalkultus: sein Wesen und seine Entstehung, (Wien: K. K. Zentral-
       Kommission für Kunst- und Historische Denkmale: Braumüller, 1903). Translation first published as
       Aloïs Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Forster
       and Diane Ghirardo, in *Oppositions*, n. 25 (Fall 1982), p. 2.

be actualized by fulfilling its artistic function: the actual perception of a building whose chronology differs from that of the viewer. Given this context, the discipline of art history results correlated; in its impartiality and objectivity, with the Habsburg monarchy; the documentation of the former reinforces its acceptance as an objective science while mirrors the ideological functions of the latter. Studies such as the inventory of medieval monuments of Dalmatia published in 1862 by Rudolf Eitelberger (one of Riegl's early influences), features the method of *Kunsttopographie*, described by Rampley as: "careful documentation of all notable artistic monuments of a particular region or area (...) through the production of systematic inventories of its object domain. Such publications also serve the interests of the state by identifying the built heritage that could underpin the construction of national identity."[400]

In a review written in 1887, Riegl expresses the importance of illustrations depicting visual forms within a work of art history. Illustrations and photographs are the sources of verification, the 'test' that allows one to evaluate the historian's argument. This claim results important because it signals Riegl's 'internalist' assumption that art follows an autonomous trajectory irreducible to material and technical causes.[401] More profoundly, the *locus* of such internalization is the document as such: "Riegl's stress on the stylistic value of illustration suggested an early concern with the relationship between visuality and attention even in the act

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400     Rampley, M. (2009b) Art History and the Politics of Empire: Rethinking the Vienna School. In *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (December 2009), p. 450.

401     Riegl contends against the primacy of a technical-materialistic drive that gives form to the human intellect, understood as either the mechanistic conception of the ornament as by-product of technological improvements (as it happens with Semper) or a Darwinist-minded prospect for evolution materialized in the urge for survival. Riegl's case breaks with linear causality propelled by technology as he finds a complex registry of ornamental ur-traces; it is not only the (technical) rectilinear ornament, but also Greek "curvilinear forms such as undulating lines, circles and spirals, etc., whose origin cannot be convincingly attributed to the weaving techniques as it can had to be called into action." In Riegl, A. (1992) Problems of Style: Foundations for a History of Ornament. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.22. Ironically, the consolidation of the document's rigor goes in hand with technical advances in photography and mechanical reproduction.

of reading."[402] As if the exposure to the historian's claims were conflictual with their material counterpart (i.e. the edifice located elsewhere), the document has to internalize the very visuality it describes. Correspondingly, the temporality that a monument embodies is not material, but physiognomic. It is not embedded in a discrete location, nor within matter hither and thither. The historical marks of an artwork, the 'traces of time' it bears are not in the monument but: "on the physiognomy —the visible surface— of an artwork, so that viewing and interpreting art were temporally and historically charged activities."[403] By accessing to its visuality, the viewer of a document is reloading historic value in its generality. This coordinates also with the modern role of the document, which coins in its *recto* and *verso* the scope of the visual. On the one side, the values of monuments are provided by the format of documents.[404] On the other, the materiality of the monument dwells in the perusal of its surface, a physiognomy whose ultimate destiny is nothing but to be inspected.[405] The visuality of the document is, in its *stasis*, not only an indicator of the document's internalist 'will,' but the material displacement it produces: "models are more easily transformed into metaphors than are realized projects. Once discourse turns on metaphor, it becomes a simple matter to substitute a photographic metaphor for an architectural one."[406]

Alongside with the emergence of ethnography and the notoriety of world exhibitions (notably the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873), the importance of architecture growths as much as the problems they create for the historian. Buildings contest in their spatial specificity the isotropic realm of the document, and overmaterialize aesthetics by bounding the creation of folk objects with pre-industrial economies of scale. The first complication finds its example in the

402     (Gubser 2006: 135).
403     (2006: 163).
404     At this point, a format defines "mechanisms for aggregating content. [where] a material substrate (...) converges with an aesthetic tradition." Joselit, D. (2013) After Art. Princeton University Press, p. 55.
405     Sekula, A. (1986) The Body and the Archive. In *October*, Vol. 39 (Winter, 1986), p. 18.
406     (Sekula 1986: 9).

imperial Exhibition of 1873, which featured in one of its main venues the trope of *Wohnkultur* or 'Culture of Dwelling' by means of combining displays depicting bourgeois and peasant housing picked up from diverse areas of the Empire. However, this rendition is not symmetrical due to clear material differences[407] pointing to implicit ethnic hierarchies. This comparative perspective has also a clear ethnographic tone subservient to the imperial grand narrative. As Rampley notes: "under the rubric of 'unity in diversity,' the monarchy presented itself as exercising a beneficent, supranational and impartial rule. The village (...) became the object (...) of an apparatus of ethnographic study comparable to imperial French and British attitudes toward the Islamic Middle East."[408] The selective criteria by which buildings are gleaned reinforces ideological judgments, where the 'excess' of material heritage may indicate lack of contemporaneity or the existence of domestic labor points to atavistic pre-industrial socioeconomic activities.

In his essay *Volkskunst, Hausfleiß und Hausindustrie* (1894), Riegl continues Rudolf Eitelberger's tone in his attempt to systematize descriptions of buildings according to a *Kunsttopographie*. From this perspective, the text highlights the disparity of normative methods employed by the historian. If *The Modern Cult of Monuments* (1903) equates perception and ideology according to documentary taxonomies, *Volkskunst*… not only parses the domestic creation of folkloric art through the optics of architecture and economy, but advances a proto-urbanistic implementation of its industrial production.

For one thing, Riegl protracts the trope of "house-industry" (*HausIndustrie*) as rendered by Eitelberger in his *Folk Art and House Industry* (1876) describing small-scale material production located within the domestic space rather than the workshop or the factory. This

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407    "between the 'prosperous' and 'orderly' cottages from the German province of Vorarlberg or the Saxon village of Transylvania and the exhibit from Polish Galicia, for example, while the Hungarian exhibits also confirmed the correspondent's prejudices about the 'oriental' basis of Hungarian culture." In Rampley (2009b: 448).

408    (2009b: 448).

activity is different although not fully detached from *Hausarbeit* or domestic work, and collides

with the idea of socioeconomic progress and the "political concept of nation."[409]

Seen in this way, it is worth noting how Riegl approaches the workers as a diagrammatic

category informed (albeit not reducible) by anthropology. The *Volk*, 'people' is less a historical

subject than the expression of scientific discourse.[410] The historian introduces the worker as

ahistorical subject, a ghost without machine that escapes the capitalistic mode of production

through the particularity of its labor. The status of the labor of the people enacted as 'domestic

labor' resists the imperial development in its non-convertibility to a universal. Rahman (2007)

unpacks the sequence which begins with work created (and understood) by the members of the

household, follows with the exchange of its material outcome according to tribal exchange and

may finalize it in its development as a 'house industry' (*Hausindustrie*). Riegl sees in the very

existence of folk arts a hindrance to the implementation of an international style provided by

uniform industrial development. As Rahman stresses: "In order for art to reinvent itself and

continue to prosper, folk arts must either be destroyed or assimilated."[411] The modern need for

novelty finds in the folk arts a deviance of prevalent artistic manifestations; Riegl goes on to

compare folk arts with the taste of champagne and spring water. For this reason, the leap from

household artisanry to house industry goes in hand with the division of labor, the update of

traditional motifs into international ones, and the industrial increment of production, something

that creates the meaning of the folk image: "This process (...) would allow for greater distribution

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409 (2009b: 454).

410 "The common people (Volk) ... is not the people in the political sense; neither (...) of the feudal era nor the fourth class of the contemporary social order; it is not even the folk in the strict ethnographic sense, (...) the "people." (...) our Society [of Anthropology] has set up as the object of study (...) includes all those whose lifestyle rests on mere tradition." In Alois Riegl, Das Volksässige und die Gegenwart. In *Zeitschrift für Österreichische Volkskunde* 1 (1896), p. 4] Quoted and translated by Rampel (2009b: 454).

411 Rahman, S. (2010) Designing Empire: Austria and the Applied Arts, 1864-1918. Doctoral Thesis. University of California, Berkeley, p. 2.

of this [folk] art throughout the empire, so that the objects in question, while retaining their unique visual features, would nevertheless become familiar to all other inhabitants of widely scattered regions."[412] A crucial implication is that the architectural layout has to be re-scaled accordingly. If we understand the *HausIndustrie* as a project, the domestic space of production has to be equally subsumed according to an urbanistic layout. Here, production matches taste according to a single constructive dimension.

However, Riegl's upgrade of household artisanry betrays an excess of determinism, as if notions of material specificity or domestic labor were antithetical to the capitalist mode of production. According to this view, the notion of *Hausfleiß* "work done within the household exclusively for and by its members,"[413] relies upon a type of exchange amongst clans that will eventually disappear with the implementation of the capitalist mode of production. Yet conflating *Hausfleiß* with the notion of 'folk art' (understood as a collection of common artistic forms known by the members of a culture and not subjected to change),[414] paves the way for the industrial upgrading of the former notion. The finality of Riegl's project points more to satisfy the demand for internationalized motifs than consolidating a robust network of *Hausfleiß* production. In an attempt to unify the cultural and ethnic self-recognition of Austro-Hungary, "seemingly traditional objects would be produced in an updated manner, and at the same time they could be used to enable a sense of both cultural and economic exchange across borders that are increasingly being defined by nationalism."[415] For the historian, the unification (and ulterior

412     Rahman, S. (2007) Industrializing Folk Art: Aesthetic Transformation in Alois Riegl's Volkskunst, Hausfleiss und Hausindustrie (1894). In *Kakanien Revisited*. First Publication, p. 3.
413     (Rahman 2007: 1).
414     (2007: 2).
415     (2007: 3).

discarding) of artisan motifs are the prescriptive steps that allow the upgrade of artisan

production according to the industrial scale.

We can see this process from a different angle, such as Mirko Lauer's *La producción artesanal en América Latina* (The Artisan Production in Latin America, [1989]), in which the Czech-Peruvian unpacks the characteristics of artisan production in places such as post-invasion Mexico, Colombia or Peru by following the historical patterns that yield the implementation of colonial artisan practice. For Lauer, such insertion not only extends the precolumbian given production, but does so according to a *urban*[416] mode of production that overlaps with a preexistent flux of crafts. In the case of the Inca empire, this production flows from "the domestic unit (...) to the state" or, as it happens in the Aztec empire, stratifies estranged labor.[417]

Lauer's hypothesis is that the implementation of European motifs results better 'assimilated' within the areas that have had a proximity to the (Inca, Aztec) imperial centers, a process that does not debunk neither the diversity of the production nor of the producers; we find here a simultaneous cohabitation of 'native' workshops and 'colonial' sweatshops, with 'original' and 'mixed' materials and techniques whose commercial destiny is either inland or overseas.[418] Following Lauer, the demand produced by colonialism (from within and without the colony), have as main effect a "reinforcement of the main features of the pre-columbian artisan map."[419] This standpoint debunks the notion of a static and original ur-style obliterated by the so-

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416    "the Europeans (...) bring a strictly urban craftsmanship conformed by ecclesiastical workers and by
        the producers of objects for consumption within the dominant culture (decoration, ritual and directly
        utilitarian uses.) Lauer, M. (1989) La producción artesanal en América Latina. Lima: Mosca Azul, p.
        25, my translation. "los europeos (...) traen una práctica artesanal estrictamente urbana conformada
        por los trabajadores de la construcción eclesiástica y por los productores de objetos para consumo dentro
        de la cultura dominante (decoración, rito y usos directamente utilitarios)."
417    (Lauer 1989: 25).
418    (1989: 22).
419    (1989: 27), my translation. "reforzar los grandes rasgos del mapa artesanal precolombino."

called 'modernity,' for the European styles also bear the mark of the 'tradition' and the 'archaic' whilst the Aztec and Inca empires never were culturally isolated.[420]

This process has been also analyzed by Lauer during the nineteenth century according to two interrelated situations; that of a urban artisan milieu marked with an excess of demand which has the ability to import and produce artisanry, and that of the enduring body of exchange practices within pre-capitalist practices within the gaps of capitalistic implementation.[421]

So if in Lauer's account we can discern the role of crafts within the fold of diverse imperial modes of production (and the diverse needs of colonial domination), Riegl's project lacks of the reflexive capacity to understand Austro Hungary's composition, for his delineation of what is 'domestic' and 'folk' attempts to create in passing a 'pure standpoint' safeguarded by nationalistic ideology. As it happens with Vienna's urban semblance, the empire is here an unstable but systematic seizure upon a conglomerate of places, architectures and bodies, a cluster of Slavs and Czechs lands, Slovene, Rumanian, Italian, German, Ukrainian, Serbo-Croats and Czech speakers whose unification rests by and large on the possibilities of 'unifying in diversity.' The high-handed policies of the monarchy toward its non-German subjects have been likened to a kind of 'internal colonialism' or *Binnenkolonialismus*, in which the works of the aforementioned art historians manifest an imperial outlook comparable to contemporary attitudes

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420    (1989: 24).
421    "Unlike the European, the process of Latin American industrialization in the nineteenth century does not obliterate crafts, but enters into coexistence with it. In the cities, the industrially reunited capacity to import and to produce cannot cope with demand and leaves the field open to the artisanal production of numerous objects (...) Since the nineteenth century, Latin America's norm has tended to be the survival of a differentiated exchange economy, neither natural nor commercial, which comes from the pre-columbian and colonial systems "frozen" by the Republic (...) It is not differentiation as the progress towards capitalism and the embryo of a division of labor, as in Lenin's vision for Russia, but a differentiation as a mechanism to stay within pre-capitalism, where there are no alternatives to it." (1989: 28-9), my translation.

toward Indian or Middle Eastern cultures elsewhere in Western Europe.[422] The many attempts to

fixate an ethnographic project for Austro-Hungary collides with a number of particular features.

Initially, its imperial semblance cannot equate easily with other Western colonial power

as it seems that this Empire has not colonies outside its internal, 'foundational' territory; its semi-

colonial, peripheral territories and the well recognizable case of Bosnia-Herzegovina rarified

notions of center-periphery.[423] More to the point, this is an Empire that lacks a single dominant

group: despite the prevalence of German language, its nationalism is forestalled as much as the

wealthy Italians from Trieste are politically suppressed. As a result, the ethnographic discourse is

polarized among radically disparate versions, such as Karl Czoernig's "Ethnography of the

Austrian Monarchy" (1857), or Wilhelm Riehl's "Ethnography as a Science" (1858), where the

identity of the empire oscillates between "the construction of an ethnically homogeneous nation-

state, on the one hand, and the maintenance of an ethnically diverse dynastic empire, on the

other."[424] Three years after the establishment of the Anthropological Society in 1870, The Vienna

World Exhibition of 1873 stages *Binnenkolonialismus* by utilizing urbanism and architecture as

primordial symbols. As a key feature within nineteenth-century European culture, "such fairs

served the promotion of public order internally, tutoring audiences into appropriate forms of

behavior."[425] One of the main themes of the Exhibition is the 'culture of dwelling' or

*Wohnkultur*, a theme that becomes deployed by displaying different typologies of bourgeois and

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422    (Rampley 2009b: 46).
423    After 1867, the monarchy "had two centers, but although Vienna may have been an economic, cultural, and
        political center, Budapest, and indeed Hungary, were economic peripheries. In contrast, Bohemia, which
        was a political "periphery," was economically the most advanced Crownland of the empire, with the
        highest rates of literacy and, after Lower Austria, the highest per capita income. (...) Galician workers were
        as likely to seek employment in Germany (or overseas) as in the empire, and hence their relation to Austria
        cannot be seen entirely as one of dependency on the imperial center." (Rampley, M. (2011) Peasants in
        Vienna: Ethnographic Display and the 1873 World's Fair. In *Austrian History Yearbook* No. 42 (2011),
        p. 124.
424    (Rampley 2011: 126).
425    (2011: 111).

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peasant housing according to a paternalistic exertion of 'unity in diversity' where notions of supranationality and impartiality made the so-called 'edge regions' or *Randbezirke*[426] cases comparable to French and British colonial operations in the Islamic Middle East. Following the study of Matthew Rampley (2011), controversy ensues upon several housing groups being exhibited, particularly the number 19 "The Bourgeois House and its Internal Furnishings and Decoration" and number 20 "The Farmhouse, its Furnishings and Appliances."[427] For one, observations on this Group 20 made in 1874 by Karl Schröer (professor of German literature at the *Technische Hochschule* in Vienna) about two adjacent German cottages from Transylvania and Hungary rosed the concern about the latter as it was made out of wood. A deviation from the customary Saxon house made out of stone signals for Schröer the phantasmatic apparition of the condemned *Helot* or "German slave."[428] Later on, the historian Anton Dachler (1841–1921) emphasized in his analysis of the farmhouse in Lower Austria the notion of the *Bajuvarisch* or Bavarian "in narrowly tribal, racial terms,"[429] while a subsequent study on peasant housing in southern Bukovina made by Elias Weslowski served as the occasion for conducting an inventory of "superstitions and beliefs in spirits."[430]

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426  "such as Bukovina (now in Romania and western Ukraine), Galicia (now in southern Poland and western Ukraine), Dalmatia, Croatia, Upper Hungary (modern-day Slovakia), and Transylvania (…)" In Rampley (2009: 449).

427  According to Rampley, the former group fails to reconcile the spatial separation between work, economic activity, and private life (signaled in the leap from the household as an economic site (Häuslichkeit) to the domestic as personal space (Wohnlichkeit), whereas the latter was conceived as was a tribal, ethnic and racial typification of a "different level of civilization" amongst diverse areas of the empire Rampley (2011: 123).

428  "Those living in Transylvania have kept their communal way of life and have preserved the most elevated German customs ("Gesitting"), and have not lost the spiritual connection to their land of origin (...) the Germans in the heart of the Hungarian uplands, from where the other house comes, form a contrast. We are presented with the condition of a German with the same origin, but one with the condition of a German slave ("Helot")." Karl Schröer, Officieller Ausstellungs-Bericht. Das Bauernhaus mit seiner Einrichtung und seinem Geräthe (Vienna, 1874), p. 9. Quoted by Rampley (2011: 122).

429  (Ibid.)

430  (Ibid.)

In part, this rather arid scholarly dispute have as subtext the utilization of conceptions such as 'peasant' and 'folk' by "'subaltern' groups that recuperated the meaning of folk culture, and the peasant house in particular, as evidence not of backwardness, but of ancient tradition and continuity with the past, and hence of historical legitimacy."[431] The shift underwent by the notion of "peasant" (from economic activity to ethnographic identity) denotes also the flexible of its functional boundaries; a brief outline of its role within the formation of Polish identity in Galicia will demonstrate this idea. The invention of Galicia by the Habsburg in 1772 after the first Polish partition is marked by recursive mimetic operations. For instance, Prince Wenzel Kaunitz justified the 'revindication' of Galicia on the basis of its annexation by Poland during the Middle Ages, the moment where Galicia was a Hungarian province. The partition is thus justified on the return of medieval accountability for declaring ownership upon the territory. The decade of 1780 is marked by emperor Joseph II series of ambivalent political measures (later labeled as 'Josephinism') and characterized, among others factors by the simultaneous existence of lassitude on censorship and state control over religious life, the legal protection of peasants and the administrative centralization of Vienna.[432] In 1786, Franz Kratter published a *Letter about the present situation in Galicia* as a travel account, where the brand-new territory was introduced into the public sphere beyond the imperial administrative circles. Throughout Kratter's adventure, we find the trope of *recasting* (*Umschmelzung*), which designates the assimilation of religious and class entities into that of the Habsburg empire. By virtue of such metallurgy, the Galician 'nobility' uncannily appears for the first time from within the empire, while the preexisting Polish nobility is derogatorily conceived as "barbarous wildness."[433] In parallel, the

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431     (2011: 127).
432     Wolff, L. (2004) Inventing Galicia: Messianic Josephinism and the Recasting of Partitioned Poland. In *Slavic Review*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (Winter, 2004), p. 822.
433     (Wolff 2004: 823).

Jews of Galicia are addressed in messianic terms, being the empire its unique teleology: "All Galicia wishes now to be placed in different relations with the Jews (...) These general wishes have reached all the way up to the ears of the government, which now is ready to recast *(umzuschmelzen)* the whole Jewish system, because, after all, there is no Moses willing to take pity on his fellow Hebrews, free them from the yoke of despotism, and lead them into a promised land."[434] At this point, the tailoring of Galicia as a colony requires the implementation of a new social stratification, yet the former cultural imago pervades simultaneously to such arrival. As if the reparation of a statue was made out of welded metal scraps, a complete subsumption by the empire fails and its presence is a duplicity of inscriptions, of 'welds' that cast sheer structure: primitive nobleman, prophetic state apparatus, and territories that vanish due to guidance.

This outline on the *Binnenkolonialismus* and its mimetic gestures can also be seen as the ideological reproduction of aesthetic *Einfühlung* or empathy, which lingers as the Western accountability for indiscriminate possession. Its by-product, the deferred Other, has cast its shadow in the duplicity that the Austro-Hungarian 'internal colonialism' reproduces; insofar as the nation becomes 'embodied,' the imprint of its repressed 'primitive' encrusts into materials in dispute: 'folk' architectures and modern urbanism, nobiliary ranges and calibers of progress, and their 'Eastern' hypodermic materialization under the surface of the West. This latter has to be also understood as a *synchronic* process whose gamut employs differential material dimensions which cohabit throughout the integration of the region into the national.

What prevails along this agglomeration of styles and constructions, of nationalities and households, access and usage is the *exchange* between what is concrete and what is abstract. In a

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434      Grodziski, S. "The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, 1772-1790," in Bartal and Polonsky, (eds.), *Galicia: Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians, 1772-1918*, p. 61. Quoted by Wolff (2004: 824).

similar path as Sohn-Rethel's work already discussed, Aureli (2015) examines the question of

exchange value within the interplay of the city's material reality and its abstract counterpart,

which includes "abstractions such as design methods, representational conventions (...)

proportions, functions, building codes, measurements, and financial parameters."[435] As the Italian

indicates, *abstraction* operates within architecture only after a certain industrial process has

entered into action, therefore abstraction annuls the division between the tangible and the

intangible, the concrete and the abstract as an indicator of a more or less 'presence' in the real.

Echoing the Marxist appreciation of labor as an abstract category measured by money,

every labor renders equivalent insofar as it has become a commodity, but this latter occupies

different instances; if within the *use* of the commodity time and space become inseparable,

during its *exchange*, time and space turn out to be homogeneous while becoming the measure of

value. Money's abstract status (value and equivalence) produces exchange as social intercourse

*and* the leap from material labor to abstract labor. As Sohn-Rethel emphasizes, the abstraction of

every process of exchange[436] determines the way in which producers of commodities

conceptualize the act of thinking. The categories of exchange coined by Marx (use value and

exchange value), are not only antithetical, but "mutually exclusive in time. They must take place

separately at different times"[437] while their material constitution remains unaltered, for the

change in question only concerns the commodity's social status or ownership.

Given this condition, the *restriction of use* appears as necessary in order to

institutionalize the commodity exchange that, from an economic standpoint, it is a by-product of

the laws of private property; if for the businessman and the consumer usage becomes *de facto*

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435       Aureli, P. (2015) Intangible and Concrete: Notes on Architecture and Abstraction. In *E-Flux Journal* #64,
          p. 1.
436       Either as an exchange of equivalents (when the product belongs to the producer) or as appropriation of
          unpaid labor (as it happens in capitalism). (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 23).
437       (1978: 24).

abstracted (not in the mind, but in fact), for the historian usage is erased by virtue of empathetic

access, a protocol of exchange in which the access to an object equals to its usage.[438]

There is no reason to think that the dismissal of usage (in favor of exchange) renders the

former platitudinous. Sohn-Rethel results specific by declaring that, whereas the exchange

forcludes *usage* (in reality, both are mutually exclusive), the inner cognition of the businessman

and the consumer are still involved within the latter, and crucially, the *magic* of exchange puts

matter *on hold*; a consumer may test the use value of a commodity, yes, although it only enters as

a reality when the exchange has been satisfied.[439] Furthermore, the fact that either the

businessman and the consumer are taken up with the exchange guarantees that the action is

abstract (abstracted from use); far from being a form of deferral, abstraction is summoned here

within the very execution of exchange, and not in spite of it. Abstraction is thus the *order* of

exchange and, as any good apophenia, it presents itself as a revelation that clones reality, thus

yielding delirium because it goes *in favor of* reality.

By tracing the division between manual and mental labor, Sohn-Rethel gets at his earliest

manifestations, for instance, in the transition from the Egyptian *harpedonapts* and their *manual*

measurement and partition of soil to the *intellectual* Greek geometry[440] is only the beginning of a

sequence in which, with the advent of modernity, human labor itself becomes abstracted as

commodity. The shift from the artisan's know-how to the technological means of production of

the modern worker illuminates also the leap from the practice of building to the discipline of

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438    "while exchange banishes use from the actions of people, it does not banish it from their minds."
       (1978: 21).
439    "Of a commodity in the market the empirical data come under reservations (...) material reality accrues to
       them when the object is out of the market and passes, by virtue of the money paid, into the private sphere of
       the acquiring customer." (1978: 26).
440    "the manual operation became subordinated to an act of pure thought which was directly solely towards
       grasping quantitative laws of number or of abstract space. Their conceptual content was independent not
       only from this or that particular purpose but from any practical task." (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 102).

architecture, highlighting the ancient distinction already posited by Vitruvius "between *fabrica* and *ratiocinatio*: *fabrica* refers to the practice of building; *ratiocinatio* refers to reasoning, the conception of the building before it is realized."[441] The emergence of architectural *form* arises from abstract conventions; Dürer's failed (and somewhat melancholic) attempt to educate craftsmen with his *Instructions for Measuring with Compass and Ruler* (1525), Brunelleschi's modularization of space by means of perspective (as it occurs in his *Portico of the Ospedale degli Innocenti*) where the building is conceived as a repeatable and "commensurate" system that correlates the *urban* primacy of exchange value[442] are renditions of a singular "true face as a form with no form, deprived of all the symbols and meanings of the traditional city (...) a plethora of symbols and meanings has become the generic curtain behind which the abstraction of capital operates."[443]

As we are witnessing, the *ratiocinato* of the space signals its detachment from its encounter with nature, a move sustained by the act of exchange that reinforces abstraction "for the objects of exchange are assumed to remain immutable for the duration of the transaction."[444]

The duration of the transaction (or delivery) also marks a skeuomorphic time of 'expectancy' foreclosed to use (exchange with nature) that accrues the value of time. Sohn-Rethel provides a clarifying illustration of this point:

> "in the market-place and in shop windows, things stand still. They are under the spell of one activity only; to change owners. They stand there waiting to be sold. While they are there for exchange they are there not for use. A commodity marked out at a definite price, for instance, is looked upon as being frozen to absolute immutability throughout the time during which its price remains unaltered. And the spell does not only bind the doings of man. Even nature herself is supposed to abstain from any ravages in the body of this commodity and to hold her breath, as it were, for the sake of this social business of man. Evidently,

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441    (Aureli 2015: 5).
442    (2015: 10).
443    (2015: 11).
444    (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 48).

even the aspect of non-human nature is affected by the banishment of use from the sphere of exchange."[445]

Some materials seem to exist in absence of matter until the exchange has been accomplished and the price has been paid. But, I invite you to imagine a transaction where the price has not yet been paid, for the currency (and its reification) have been forged so as to feign value. Under such spell, cutting or melting coins does not yield metallic purity as its outcome; their return to nature has been canceled so as to keep a currency without value, and a transaction without payment. Then, I would like to increase the temporal scope of Sohn-Rethel's spell, and to conceive a transaction whose exchange take hundreds of years to be accomplished; the transaction is still pending, but in the interim, the commodity's usage still is foreclosed, thus becoming "positively qualityless (...) the property of qualitylessness is what gives them their reality in exchange, while their use-properties are only stored in the minds of people."[446] Now, let us imagine that not only the currency in question has been forged, but also the transaction as such; from this standpoint, there is no way to determine whether the operation was based on forced appropriation or capitalist exchange. The commodity still has *no value* since the exchange has not been consummated: "value does not create the equality, it only applies to it *post festum.*[447] "Only when labour is translated into the formal terms of second nature, as abstract human labour, does it enter into the nexus under the term of 'value,' as value-in-exchange."[448]

What we obtain is, of course, a commodity without attributes, yet one without its status as commodity under exchange (after such timespan, we forgot the transaction) that nonetheless maintains, in its suspension, its *virgin* character of a commodity untouched by nature. What we have is, I believe, the patrimonial *protocol* of the empire; a unilateral appropriation disguised as

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445  (1978: 25).
446  (1978: 52).
447  (1978: 49).
448  (1978: 61).

an exchange not yet fulfilled, a messianic one, if you like, since there is always the promise of discharging the value of heritage, once and for all. But the exchange never ends, it does not so as to cloak the historical absence that began the day these buildings were seized, for it is not only that "The exchange abstraction excludes everything that makes up history, human and even natural history (...) Time and space assume thereby that character of absolute historical timelessness and universality which must mark the exchange abstraction as a whole and each of its features."[449] In these places *on hold*, history functions as *access* rather than *usage,* stemming from the 'will to accept' a unifying prescription of a temporal *order* that always flows from the seizure backward (provided that the opposite cannot exist.) You may dwell in these empty skeletal armatures holding ruins (that is your *Einfühlung*), or rather have a pleasant seen made out of maimed history (that is your *Kunstwollen*). Even more, you can even blend them as an act of unquestionable synthesis (that is your *inner imitation*). But before everything, you smile, because you already know that all this material heritage is the imperial rotting room; the place where time is disposed so as to keep the beauty of the purple. If your face is a city, then the ruins are your Dorian Gray's picture, the place where beauty and putrefaction are traded during thousands of years: "Beauty is a form of Genius—is higher, indeed, than Genius, as it needs no explanation (...) It cannot be questioned. It has its divine right of sovereignty. It makes princes of those who have it. You smile?"[450]

Meanwhile, the currency of our misleading transaction has been forged, thus losing it formal truth; you may melt all these tokens, but their form is still false. These imperial coins are mimetic insofar as their circulation keeps the usurpation (*Vertreten*); one that empathetically installs the imperial smile within the victim. The coins are forged because in so doing, the

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449     (1978: 48-9).
450     Wilde, O. (2006) The Picture of Dorian Gray. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 22.

victim's *order* (the estrangement of its visuality), results intensified not from its encounter (this would be exchange without finality, therefore valueless), but from a *production* that occurs as *human concrete labor*, at the level of *use value*. To forge other's spoils creates value without exchange, it supplants this latter for a univocal, abstract property based on the *use value* of forgery itself; the outcome of a forgery here is not to duplicate a commodity ready to be exchanged, but to execute the *use value* (the labor of forgery) as *exchange value*, as if material labor where assuming its intellectual semblance in spite of *exchange value*. This is why the empire requires, before everything, to forge seized spoils, and from this point onwards, also to equate them within a system of exchange in which forgery and robbery are both equated as qualityless, and in which forgery produces formal *deviations* that function as the quality seal of the purple. You forge, therefore you enslave the object with its imprint, rectifying it at the level of style (at the level of intellectual labor), so as to make it fit within the empathetic, skeuomorphic matrix of the empire. In the context of Aztec art, for instance, "Canonical works, whether fakes or not, are like forgeries in expressing in some extreme way our idea of what is authentic or meaningful in the pre-Columbian past."[451] For Pazstory, the mark of forgery is so prevalent that overrides even the material value, to the point that we can overtly speculate about "how much of South American gold is fake,"[452] or conflate, in its anomalous character, what is a 'masterpiece' with what is a 'fake.'[453] The production and conservation of forgeries is, in this regard, necessary for correlating the intellectual labor of the historian *vis-à-vis* its objects of use.

But, by the same token, forgeries are necessary for its disposable character, such as the collection of Aztec artifacts sponsored by emperor Maximilian stored in Vienna, and disposed to

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451    Pasztory, E. (2002) Truth in Forgery. In *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 42 (Autumn, 2002), p. 161.
452    (Pazstory 2002: 162).
453    (Ibid.).

a greater extent. Though one of the remaining fakes, a pitcher (yes, another type of empathetic jar) denotes the Viennese skeuomorphism of the Aztec culture:

> "the pitcher was likely to have a European form (...) and molded designs would be stuck all over it, making it very "complicated" (...) I was unprepared for its great size (...) and even more its weight. It is almost impossible to imagine carrying it full of liquid (...) None of these features was visible in the drawing, and only in life could I really understand this aspect of the nineteenth-century European view of the Aztecs—which was its own tasteless, overdecorated fantasy of primitive crudity (...) The crowding of these additions is for the European the very sign of backward taste, of barbaric splendor."[454]

The Hungarian goes on to question why if the pitcher seems clearly a fake, it has not been destroyed. Her answer is that it merits conservation not in spite, but precisely because such blatant deviations incarnate the smile of the purple: "though they were fake Aztec, they are genuine embodiments of a European vision of the exotic and as such documents of our history. (...) Forgeries tell us our fantasies about ourselves in shapes and forms that we take for granted, and of which we are largely unconscious."[455] Tellingly, the willy-nilly acceptance of forgery pointed by Pazstory is not an unfortunate inconvenience that, otherwise, would shed light upon the logic of forgery. To the contrary, it is what signals the operation of exchange without use[456] in which the purple sets up not only the perceptual condition of reality, but the limits of the reflexive capacity itself. As Sohn-Rethel remarks: "The abstraction belongs to the interrelationship of the exchanging agents and not to the agents themselves. For it is not the individuals who cause the social synthesis but their actions. And, their actions do it in such a way that, at the moment it happens, the actors know nothing of it."[457] From such a unified perspective, every emperor continues in the next by virtue of its qualitylessness, every artifact, now

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454    (2002: 163).
455    (2002: 164-5).
456    I am recalling again Sohn-Rethel: "the property of qualitylessness is what gives them their reality in exchange, while their use-properties are only stored in the minds of people (Sohn-Rethel 1978: 52).
457    (1978: 45).

indistinguishable of a forgery, can be exchanged in equal terms. We can see this operation at play in the attempt to extend the Austro-Hungarian empire upon Mexico.

By the year 1864, The young Maximilian has been crowned Emperor of Mexico by the grace of Napoleon III, the General Santa Anna, and his man in Europe, the Yucatecan diplomat José María Gutiérrez de Estrada. Maximilian sees himself as the continuator of the Habsburgs that once invaded and eradicated much of Mexico's inhabitants and culture. Shortly after his arrival to Mexico City, he astutely insists on installing himself at the Palacio Nacional, former residency of Hernan Cortés; an edifice made out of the remnants of Moctezuma II's dismantled palace: "As Hernán Cortés did, [Maximilian] was recognizing the landmarks of power and prestige existing both in the capital as in other cities of the country, and occupying them".[458]

In 1865, Rodríguez Arangoiti, chief architect of the Imperial House receives the commission for projecting and directing a new *Museo Público de Historia Natural, Arqueología e Historia*. The new emperor's plan supposes not only an expedition to the Yucatán, but the recollection of diverse emblems of power: alongside with Moctezuma's armor, Maximilian request to his brother Franz Joseph the lost letter or *Carta de Relación* written by Cortés in 1519 to Carlos V and an Aztec manuscript, both conserved at the Imperial Library in Vienna.

Maximilian's own letter advances the significance of such artifacts: "in Vienna they are nothing more than curiosities; here would be objects of great importance and even political value, being unable to deny the great effect that would cause upon the Indians: to know that their

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[458] "Como lo hizo Hernán Cortés, fue reconociendo los hitos de poder y prestigio existentes tanto en la capital como en otras ciudades del país, y los ocupó." Arciniega Ávila, H. (2008) La galería de las Sibilas. El Museo Público de Historia Natural, Arqueología e Historia de México. In *Boletín de Documentos Históricos*, Tercera Época, número 14, Septiembre - Diciembre 2008, p. 37.

new emperor brought these insignias of sovereignty from the ancient homelands of their Indian emperors".[459]

For the artifacts to be effective, both have to pertain to imperial hands, either Aztec or Viennese; so the suspension of value remains within the isotropic field constructed by the purple, one in which what is perceptual is unilateral, the material is disposable and the intellect has been foreclosed so as to not rely on the ultimate taboo of *use value*. The *messianic return* of these insignias offers an uncanny panorama which betrays Maximilian's apophenia of acculturation and breaks the circularity of the myth, rendering a portrait in which the new emperor brings for the first time the relics of a distant indigenous empire, namely: Austro-Hungary.

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459    Letter to Gregorio Barandiarán, Mexico's plenipotentiary minister before the Austrian Court, November 29th, 1865, AKMVM, r. 71, exp. 470, f. 21. In Arciniega (2008: 41).

The Mourning of the Road

A land without rivers has no sense of the end, but from within, time is carved as a hidden flux, an underground drive that makes the surface to breathe, wrinkle and collapse. In Yucatan, nothing really ends; its sunsets are middays in the long run, *in the last instance*, where one color does not die without giving way to another. The heat and the humidity unify the seasons, turning them into an indistinguishable continuum. In almost its totality, it lacks rivers and mountains; the directions are easily confounded and reverted; *some* place is *any* place in the midst of a jungle which is sufficiently low so as to not conceal, but high enough so as to infold the environment upon itself. Almost an island without being so, the Peninsula never closes the circle, and never finalizes its singularity, for it mimics its own uniformity.

Yucatan is a continuous sculptural work in which the mold is its surface and the chiseling its structure; its past as oceanic basin is the mark of its terrestrial surface, its role as the epicenter of the Chicxulub's asteroid impact, 65 million years ago, is the advent that simultaneously obliterates the reign of the dinosaurs and prepares the anteroom of the humans. Due to that, Yucatan is an aleatory and estranged semblance, marked by events that are phantasmatic, being always a positive reversal. Hence, it comes as no surprise that its interior is made of vacuum and flux, being a substructure of interconnected cavities of fresh water, a network of geological

catacombs in which life and direction, darkness and cessation cohabit within an aleatory diagram. This is a negative structural mark that percolates from bottom to top, as if were rain returning to the sky. The Peninsula is held by the emanations of the underground; under constant disintegration, irretrievably at the mercy of the currents that occur in the dark. This pierced land is variegated with sinkholes named *cenotes*, an adaptation of the Maya word *dzono'ot*[460] that designates the network of potable water that exists within the landscape of the Peninsula, a massive limestone slab carved by carbonic acid left by rainwater and decayed vegetation. The cenote provides water and also is the dwelling of *chaaks* or rain gods, thus complying with domestic and constructive functions (a cenote can also be a quarry), and with sacred manifestations as they suppose the entrance to the realm of the dead, the *Xibalba*.

The importance of the underworld is infrastructurally manifested at the surface level under forms of territorial delineation and ownership. It is not difficult to find Mayan toponyms that include the cenote as a landmark: Xcalak*dzonot*, Chikin*dzonot,* and *Dzonot*cauich.[461] Notions of access and usage here are crucial for it allows us to understand the pivotal role of the cenote network in Yucatan throughout time; by the fifteenth century "the Maya population had changed from a partly urbanised culture to one that was sparsely spread across the Peninsula in villages situated in close proximity to cenotes."[462] Such material scarcity decentralized the proto-urban semblance of the Maya, a process that was reinforced with the construction of cisterns or *chultunes*. By the time the Spaniards arrive to the Peninsula in 1511, its semblance accuses the shift from larger cities to a constellation of villages, but the lack of rivers is not only perceived as a scientific anomaly; it abstracts the very operation of conquest. Without rivers, there is no

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460    In Munro, M., Zurita, M. (2011) The Role of Cenotes in the Social History of Mexico's Yucatan
       Peninsula. In *Environment and History*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (November 2011), p. 586.
461    (Munro and Zurita 2011: 590).
462    (2011: 591).

direction to where the Baroque machine must go; without water, there is no continuity granted to every direction. As Munro and Zurita note "This was the 'age of sail' and the Spanish were unable to adapt their naval power to such an unfamiliar landscape. They never would. When Mexico gained independence some two hundred and fifty years later in 1810, much of the Yucatan Peninsula was still not under any form of government control."[463] In absence of major landmarks, the invaders took the determination of overimposing its own colonial grid according to the preexistent cenote network, a major gesture in which what has been *cloned* is not only the urban Maya layout, but the relationship between this latter and the notion of the sacred. The presence of churches and other colonial institutions in the vicinity of cenotes reinstates former connections between cenotes and sacred shrines; from now on, it is the constructive *typology* of the church what becomes sacred by proxy of the cenote.[464] Yet the very dispersion of the cenotes always offers, by the same token, the possibility of withdrawn and resistance, for in every cenote there is a complex stratification that comprises basic need such as water supply, the concretization of religious beliefs and the possibility of building a village.

This move has been a constant *leitmotiv* within the modern Maya resistance in a period that, for some, encompasses from 1847 to 1901, and for some others is still ongoing. The *Caste War of Yucatan* is the generic name of such conflict, and its origins are diverse. For one, it can now be conceived as the uprising of Maya communities against the presence of the *Yucatecan* or Ladino, or, in other words, to the regional representation of whiteness.[465] Centuries of physical and economic abuses, slavery and indenture fueled the uprising in a moment where the loss of

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463    (2011: 593).
464    (2011: 593).
465    Reed (1964) provides a description: "Ladinos were all those of Spanish or half-Spanish descent who considered themselves "white" and lived, dressed and thought according to a European heritage; they lived apart from the native, Maya, or Indios." In Reed, N. (1964) The Caste War of Yucatan. Stanford University Press, p. 5.

the corn crops or *milpas* and the privatization of cenotes is paving the way to new commercial enterprises linking the north-west of the Peninsula.[466] In addition to that, the denial of equality received by the Maya soldiers who fought next to the Yucatecans against the Mexican National Union reinforced the embitterment; as Munro and Zurita recall,[467] the execution of Maya soldiers ordered in 1847 by a Yucateco General may well be the propellant for the conflict. In the same year, the main roads in the Peninsula are developed, in part reflecting the new industrial development propelled by slave-driven progress, and in part as an attempt to unify the *patrias chicas* (little homelands) and ports such as Mérida, Valladolid, Campeche, Bacalar or Sisal.[468]

Meanwhile, the insurrection has just begun in the southeast area and the verge with the region that nowadays configures the Quintana Roo estate; under the war cry *¡mueran los blancos!* (death to the white men!), the municipalities of Tepich, Tihozuco, Ichmul, and Sacalaca among others are destroyed.[469] The core of the rebellion is composed by Manuel Antonio Ay (executed in Valladolid in 1947), Cecilio Chi from Ichmul (murdered by his secretary in 1849), Jacinto Pat, chief of Tihosuco (assassinated by his rivals in the same year as Chi),[470] and several antagonistic Maya factions: in the regions of Campeche (in the West Coast of the Mexican Gulf) and Quintana Roo, the *Pacíficos del Sur* (from Chichenha, Ixcanha and Mesapich), the *Cocomes* from Yaxcabá and Sotuta, and, in the northeast, the diehard community of the *Cruzob*.

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466 "Throughout the 1830's the all-important water rights had been protected. But in 1841 this protection was removed, and a cenote that had served as area from time immemorial suddenly became private property to be exploited for private gain." Reed (1964: 9).

467 (2011: 596).

468 The city of Mérida (arguably the peninsular center of the Ladino community) was, and still is "a city of light, of open sky, of white stone buildings" (Reed 1964: 11), whose prevalence of lime cement or albarradas (dry stone walls) makes the city an intriguing case of what could be described as *Caribe de Piedra* or Stone Caribbean style. I am indebted to dancer and choreographer Verónica Santiago Moniello for this brilliant denomination.

469 In Villa Rojas, A. (1987) Los elegidos de dios: etnografía de los mayas de Quintana Roo. México: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, p. 95.

470 (Reed 1964: 287).

In 1848, the city of Valladolid (Yucatan's second largest city), is ransacked, while other important enclaves such as Ticul, Izamal or Bacalar have been taken over; near Campeche there are the Chenes and the Puuc, while the central area has been the territory of the Cocomes. The Eastern Coast and Southern areas are dwelled to a larger extent by the Huits.[471] Three-fourths of the Peninsula appear now under the control of the Maya, and the downfall of Merida seems imminent, yet the city saves the day just by chance; the campaign is interrupted due to the imperative of the corn planting season.[472] This is the opportunity that the whites need for accruing food and ammunition from New Orleans, Havana and the help coming from the Mexican federal government. The counterattack of Merida's *Dzules* pushed back the Maya army towards the eastern area of Quintana Roo, creating new hideouts near to cenotes and caves. The Mayan resistance is here geological, and it seems to mimic its pace; during the next fifty years, the Caste War endures as a constant shift of powers; myriad of skirmishes, sieges, and executions in remote hamlets and villages engulfed by a green sea of vegetation, rocks, and heat.

In this scenario, the white armies are scattered over multiple frontlines, advancing and retreating toward enclaves whose ownership is always at stake, always adrift: "The Ladino armies (...) were operating in a terrain that had no front, no rear, and no vital objective, against an enemy who was far from through. It was a dull and maddening war of attrition. Victory seemed

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471 (1964: 96).
472 "They had beaten the Dzul [foreigner or white man], taken thousands of rifles and loot beyond counting, and that was good; but now it was time to plant corn. The habits of a lifetime, the sense of religious duty and family responsibility commanded." (1964: 99) See also Ancona's account: "as in Yucatan the immense majority of the Indians is dedicated especially to farming, almost all the rebels were in the need of abandoning the campaign so as to hastily take care of their sowings, after the first downpours of the season had moistened the earth." In Ancona, E. (1880) Historia de Yucatán desde la época más remota hasta nuestros días. Tomo Cuarto, La Guerra Social. Mérida: Imprenta de M. Heredia Argüelles, p. 138, my translation. "como en Yucatán la inmensa mayoría de los indios se haya [sic.] dedicada especialmente a la labranza, casi todos los sublevados se vieron en la necesidad de abandonar la campaña para correr al cuidado de sus sementeras, luego que los primeros aguaceros de la estación hubieron humedecido la tierra." Interestingly, Ancona describes also the Maya army as *bárbaros* or barbarians, whereas the Maya from the metropolitan area who remained loyal to the city were conferred the title of *hidalgo*, a Spanish title of lower nobility.

impossible, but defeat was unthinkable, and little more than survival was the prize for the side that could hold on the longest."[473]

In its countermove, the Ladino fight back against the menace of the majority (those who were the minority),[474] with the help of the religious apparatus and its images. In absence of saints, a blessed cross is the preferred religious emblem of the Maya, an object of atonement and inheritance. The pantheon has been invaded by Christian gods, and although the prayers were the same as any other Christian, the worship presents certain differences. For one, the figure of the *Maestro Cantor* or Master Singer, a Maya able to repeat a memorized stock of prayers ceaselessly, for hours, without understanding their meaning.[475] We have here an executory aspect of the liturgy in its bare truth; one whose divergence with the canonical Christian rite, *if any*, has less to do with the act of understanding than realizing how the meaning of the prayer has been always foreclosed.

As Ancona points out, the absence of "material signs of divinity"[476] begins to exert a demoralizing effects amongst the Maya insurrection, to the point that, in certain places, religious beliefs were finding their matter in non-Christian apparel[477]...and then, the revelation occurs. In 1850, a renegade ladino (and former lieutenant of Jacinto Pat) named José María Barrera finds *by chance* (remember: some place is any place) a cenote with a majestic mahogany tree (as Munro and Zurita declare), or maybe is a water spring emerging from a grotto (as in Ancona and

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473     (Reed 1964: 131).
474     "now the lowest clase, the vast majority, was the enemy." (1964: 61).
475     (1964: 41).
476     "signos materiales de divinidad." In Ancona (1889: 314), my translation.
477     "In 1850 the Maya were losing (...) their priests, their wonder-making images, the vital elements of their spiritual life. Attempts were made at replacement. A clay figure surrounded by candles and decorated with flowers was found by a Ladino patrol at Kancabdzonot in the early days of the Cocomes rising. The soldiers called it an idol, saying that the savages had gone from treating holy images as idols to using idols if fact." (Reed 1964: 133).

Villa Rojas' versions). In that particular place (that it is any place), Barrera either marks three

little crosses in the tree, or he carves them, or perhaps finds just one carved cross. The presence

of water and the proximity of the enclave to Ascensión Bay (far from the ladino frontlines and

close to the area controlled by the British), encourage the arrival of the Maya and the

construction of a settlement. Regardless of the version you prefer, there is a crucial commonality

in all these stories; the Cross is a sacred object with the ability *to speak*. Barrera, realizing the

potential of the miracle, decides to *clone* it by incorporating Manuel Nahuat, a ventriloquist, into

the endeavor. The enclave, safeguarded by the vegetation, is baptized as *Chan Santa Cruz* (Little

Holy Cross), and very soon starts to attract new Maya devotees. By now, Barrera has already

three carved crosses, all sacred, all talkative about the need for the redemption of the Maya. The

messages they deliver have their own monumental counterpart as transcripts elaborated by loyal

scribes, so you can listen by reading:

> "So, my dear Christians, I command everyone, small and great, to know that the
> day and the year in which my born Indians have risen, against the whites again
> (...) I am commanding so as to have it present in their heart and in their mind, no
> matter how much they hear and see the fire of the white men's rifles upon them,
> no harm will come to anybody, because the time and day for my Indians to enter
> the fight against the whites have come anew, as when fighting aforetime, because
> you must know, Oh Christian peoples! that I will always be with you at all hours,
> I will always be the one who goes to the vanguard, before you, in front of the
> enemy, so that no harm will happen to them, my dear Indians."[478]

This cult does not emerge out of thin air; the existence of talking idols had been popular

in the region even before the Spanish invasion.[479] The case of the island of Cozumel is relevant;

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478    In Villa Rojas (1987: 97-8), my translation. "Así, pues, mis queridos cristianos, yo ordeno a todos,
       pequeños y grandes, que sepan que ya ha llegado el día y el año en que se levanten mis indios nacidos,
       contra los blancos de nuevo...Ordeno para que lo tengan presente en su corazón y en su ánimo, por más que
       oigan y vean el fuego de los fusiles de los blancos sobre ellos, a nadie le ocurrirá ningún daño, porque ya
       llegó la hora y el día de que entren a la pelea mis indios nacidos contra los blancos, de nuevo, como cuando
       se peleó antiguamente; porque habéis de saber ¡Oh pueblos cristianos! que yo estaré siempre con vosotros a
       todas horas; yo seré siempre el que vaya a la vanguardia, delante de vosotros, frente al enemigo, a fin de
       que no les ocurra ningún daño, mis queridos indios."
479    Reed elaborates a brief summary: "A hollow figure had been built into a temple wall at Cozumel with a
       secret passage for the priest. Another endured with the pagan Itza at Tayasal until it was destroyed, along

there the priest occupies a hollow idols made out of clay, thus becoming its voice.[480] As the belief

became more popular in the Peninsula and the number of devotees increases, the cult finds

material expression in the figure of the road, the infrastructural semblance of the religious

revelation. The very importance of these roads cannot be considered as merely instrumental,

López de Cogolludo goes as to compare these roads with *El Camino Real*, the road connecting

missions, *presidios* and *pueblos* in Alta California since colonial times.[481] A road thus outpaces

the utilitarian functionality of the path[482] while its significance may well find its locus in the

Mayan notion of *beh*, which stands for 'road,' 'path,' but also 'destiny,' 'matter,' and 'affair.'[483]

The term *sakbeh* (white road) designates either a stone road and the Milky Way, so the

direction that has been materialized is, simultaneously, a direction to a physical place and to a

destiny fixed by the stars. This is why the notion of length of the *sakbeh* results ancillary, or at

least perfunctory compared with its *width*, for the main aim seems not simply to connect two

distant places, but the process of giving way to someone. Keller[484] includes in her study notions

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with the town, 130 years before the Caste War. The books of Chilam Balam, well-known in 1847 and guarded to his day by the Mazehualob of Quintana Roo, were dictated to the Chilam, or prophet, as he lay on the floor of his house, by a spirit voice coming from that thatch roof. After the Conquest, in 1597, a native of Sotuta named Andres Chi continued in the same tradition, announcing himself as Moses and claiming to be guided by the voice of the Holy Ghost (...) There is no certain record of voices among the Yucatecan Maya after that, but it is most probable that they continued to speak in a whisper too low for white ears." (Reed 1964: 134).

480    See Villa Rojas (1897: 98).

481    "These roads were, like *caminos reales*, that guided without suspicion of getting lost in them, so that they could arrive in Cozumel to fulfill their promises, offerings of sacrifices, to ask for the remedy of their needs, and the wrong adoration of their feigned gods." López de Cogolludo, D. (1688) Historia de Yucathan. Madrid: Juan García Infanzón. Vol. I, p. 547, my translation. "Estas calzadas eran, como caminos reales, que guiaban sin recelo de perderse en ellos, para que llegasen a Cozumel al cumplimiento de sus promesas, a las ofrendas de sus sacrificios, a pedir el remedio de sus necesidades, y a la errada adoración de sus dioses fingidos."

482    "Paths and trails may be described as "vernacular," utilitarian constructions with basic economic functions, whereas roads are understood to be "more permanent political features" often with some symbolic and ceremonial significance." In Keller, A. (2006) A Road by Any Other Name: Trails, Paths, and Roads in Maya Language and Thought. Prepared for *Landscapes of Movement: Trails and Paths in Anthropological Perspective. Penn Museum International Research Conference*. May 30–June 1, 2006, p. 2.

483    (Keller 2006: 4).

484    (2006: 16-7).

such as *mis beh* (to sweep the road) or *haw beh* (to open a road so that religious people will pass), which augment the significance of the road as an initiatic work of infrastructure.

The emergence of the road articulates processes of Mayan pilgrimage, religious cult, political and military organization, truly serving as the blood vessels or *u beel k'iík'*, literally, the "road blood"[485] through which the War can be sustained as an everlasting crusade. In January 1851, some prisoners captured after the attack to Kampocolché shed light upon the existence of Chan Santa Cruz. In March, colonel Novelo led an ambush in the sacred shrine and seized the cross, with the ventriloquist Nahuat being one of the fatal victims; the leader Barrera managed to escape, thus giving the cult a second wind. Now deprived of voice, the cross assumed the written form as its favorite format, with Barrera being the medium. Alongside with a secretary named Juan de la Cruz Puc (who authored a number of writings emanated by the sacred object), they penned the Cross' command, one in which the object seems *cloned* into three Crosses or mysterious characters as the letter describes them: "Because of the sacrilegious murder of Nahuat, the Crosses will never speak again, except to the Seraphim and the Apostles (...) the Mazehualob must now rise and take vengeance for the spilt blood; their avenging horde must go to the church of Yalcoba, where the Crosses now are, assemble the inhabitants of Chan Santa Cruz and the neighboring villages, and reach an agreement with the Governor, who lives in the ruins of Chichen Itza."[486] In May, another colonel named González attacks the new congregation.

As it happened before, Barrera escapes alongside with his 1,400 devotees. In every attempt, Barrera is not only surviving but refining the aesthetic architecture of his cult. After this

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485    (2006: 6).
486    "A reference to the legendary Itza King promised in the books of Chilam Balam. (...) The hour has struck in which the Mazehualob will put the gavilan (the rooster windvane) in the heights of the cathedral of Merida [and act symbolic of conquest.]" (Reed 1964: 137).

second failed attempt, he finds a church with an inner room called "La Gloria"[487] in which he installs the three crosses upon a safeguarded altar. Then, "a pit was dug behind the altar, and there crouched a hidden spokesman who used a wooden cask as an echo chamber to amplify, project, and give resonance to his voice. those who heard it said that the words of God seemed to come from the middle of the air."[488]

Throughout the insurrection, what confers the powers of the Cruzob religious movements is the Speaking Cross, the object of authority that is no longer exogenous to its devotees.[489] The Cult has a monument which is simultaneously intangible and concrete, a voice and a multiple; the milieu it creates encompasses not only its shrine in Chan Santa Cruz, but a well defined structure composed by a priest (*Tatich*), soldiers, *maestros cantores* (chanting masters), the interpreter (*Tata Polin)* and the "Organ of the Divine World"[490] who is arguably the one "crouched in the pit, projecting is voice into the sound chamber of the sunken barrel."[491]

Endowed with the powers of the cross, Barrera managed to maintain control over the eastern side of the Peninsula "from Valladolid to Bacalar"[492] although the North and the South remained inimical to the powers of the three Crosses. Instead, he marched to Guatemala so as to verify the rumors of a peace treatise, but the final result was not a treaty. Instead, Barrera abandoned the Guatemalan meeting and marched to Chichenha "burned the village (...) this ended the treaty and started a war."[493]

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487    (1964: 139).
488    (Ibid.)
489    "The spiritual life of the other tribes was controlled, in large part, by foreigners: by the Bishop (...) and itinerant missionary priests." (1964: 160).
490    (1964: 161).
491    (Ibid.)
492    (1964: 140).
493    (1964: 141).

By 1850 the bellic tension decreases as more Maya defectors move toward southern areas, including the Petén District of Guatemala and the border of British Honduras (now Belize). On February 1852, General Vega seizes Chan Santa Cruz; the shrine is devastated in two separated military drives. The mahogany tree from which the crosses were carved out is now turned down by the ax; the war seems to be over. A large portion of the Maya territories that had been uprisen are by now deemed "reclaimed"[494] and Jose María Barrera, the maker of the speaking cross, is dead by the end of the year.  In September 1853, an official treaty is signed at the Government House in Belize between Jose María Tzuc (representative of those who fought in the south for the Cross), and Gregorio Cantón as representative of the state of Merida.

However, not everyone seems content with the treaty. A day before another federalist uprising led by General Vega had started, then, a Mayan foray hither in Tiholop and thither in Xcabil, and then, cholera appeared as the Maya polluted the water of Chan Santa Cruz,[495] stopping the fourth raid. The federalist troops are scattered among diverse columns, and by the end of the following year, they are still in the jungle. According to Reed, by 1855 fifty percent of the troops deployed were killed, wounded or fallen prey of cholera.[496] The decomposition of the Yucatecan troops goes in hand with the apparition of new ceremonial centers that replicate the cult. In the north, the municipality of Mabén is identified as *Chan Santa Cruz del Oriente*, and by March still maintains activity although it has been burnt for the seventh time.[497] In 1857, references to a new center are to *Nuevo Santa Cruz Kantuni*, in the northeast; 1864, the year in

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494     (1964: 146).
495     (1964: 153).
496     (1964: 155).
497     In Dumond, D. (1985) The Talking Crosses of Yucatan: A New Look at Their History. In *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Autumn, 1985), pp. 296.

which a second rival center, *Santa Cruz Xtulmul* (Tulum) is reported; 1895, *Chancah Vera Cruz*; later on, in 1897, *Santa Cruz Chunpom*.[498]

Despite the belligerent emphasis of the Ladino troops, the main shrine of Chan Santa Cruz resumes occupancy every time the turmoil ameliorates.[499] Even more, by 1857 the church of Chan Santa Cruz keeps evolving. Formerly being nothing more than "an open-air pole altar on the slope of a hill fifty paces east to the grotto" and its ulterior upgrade as "a two-room thatched hut,"[500] the church, now the *Balam Na* or House of God, partakes of a layout that it is overimposed onto the former Maya settlement pattern and *clones* the Ladino town plan.[501] In this environment, the layout of the Ladino city is assimilated upon the Maya remnants, as if the stronghold of the *Cruzob* rebels were a material overidentification enacted at the urban level. The village as shrine can thus be *cloned* as an urban model in which "The village was the basic unit.

It had its own chief, The Maestro Cantor; its own church, a thatched duplication of the temple of the Speaking Cross on reduced scale."[502] More to the point, Chan Santa Cruz continues this operation of *cloning* at the level of human labor: "there were white slaves (...) 500 prisoners were taken in 1859 (...) It was a complete reversal of roles: the master had become a slave and the slave a master, with whip and gun in hand."[503]

The city-shrine of the *Cruzob* Maya materializes their effort to supplant the material diagram of the colonial endeavor. Consider how, for instance, the city reunites the Ladino urban features around the pivotal landmark of the Crosses, which is unitary and trinary; furthermore,

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498    (Dumond 1985: 296-302).
499    "By 1872 Tulum rivaled Santa Cruz in influence, both military and religious, and a subsidiary center of force and sacredness had appeared at San Antonio Muyil. These three centers persisted into the 1890s, when both Tulum and Santa Cruz were effectively depopulated, with the most vital centers of worship appearing in Chunpom and what is probably the site recently known as Dzonot-Guardia." (Dumond 1985: 302).
500    (Reed 1964: 173).
501    (1964: 173).
502    (1964: 219).
503    (1964: 175).

the Speaking Cross, although not being a unique emblem of authority,[504] signals the execution of

religious beliefs in absence of colonial supervision,[505] and according to an internal religious

hierarchy; the Great Father, the Priest, the Interpreter of the Cross and the ventriloquist or the

"Organ of the Divine Word." All these figures are not simply unauthorized copies of the colonial

models, but a *true forgery* in the sense of their radical immanence. The Organ of the Divine

Word is not in the need of concealment, for the Cult does not suppress its existence. The Organ

delivers its message beneath a silent Cross, the ultimate revelation; the sacred is transmitted

through the muteness of the Cross, and what is revealed here is the structure that instills activity

to the executory dimension of the sacred.[506] The operation of *cloning* comes here into play as

what diverts any attempt to project the sacred *beyond* its very locus. Without 'outside,' nor a

remote influencing machine yet to come, the cult is nothing more, nothing less than *the making*

*of the belief*, or as Laruelle indicates: "The Cross thus understood is a machine that is already

running before our interpretation takes place; and it is this machine that produces the clone of the

generic subject or the fusion, as Christ, of contraries (...) The cloning is the (...) immanent

operation of the production of Christ or of the Faithful as mediate-without-mediation (…)

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504     Rugeley (2001) diminishes the importance of the Cross by considering the persistence of the patron saints
        and icons "For all its powers, the Speaking Cross never enjoyed an absolute monopoly on supernatural
        authority (...) Some of these [Mayan] generals had their own santos, for the most part taken from plundered
        churches." In Rugeley, T. (2001) Of Wonders and Wise Men. Religion and Popular Cultures in Southeast
        Mexico. Austin: University of Texas Press, p. 137.
505     "Other tribes of North and South America adapted Christian beliefs and Western ways to their own
        patterns, but they did so always more or less under the master's eye (...) Only the Cruzob acted
        independently enough, and on a sufficiently large scale, to give us a full picture of real synthesis on more
        than the village level." (Reed 1964: 209).
506     "The (...) Organ of the Divine Word (...) was the man who did the actual speaking. The fact that his
        existence was admitted in a year when the Cross was still speaking suggests that the Cruzob didn't
        believe that the voice came physically from the Cross, but rather that the words of God were given sound
        through the medium of a possessed man." (Reed 1964: 215).

Cloning is a physical concept of Incarnation, and cannot be explained by way of philosophical or theological operations of divine transcendence."[507]

In this sense, the Organ of the Divine Word can be seen (or more, precisely, listened) as the refusal of instrumental mimesis. Unlike Reed (who presupposes a possessed ventriloquist), the Organ speaks neither by occupying the Cross, nor on its behalf; this would disintegrate the singularity of the Organ, or its labor (being this latter well known by the devotees). Since the sacred has been cloned; it is co-produced rather than induced by an external field foreclosed to thought. To repeat: it encompasses *the identity of immanence without unity and the duality of transcendence without distinction*. The practice of the Speaking Cross clones the drive of the Christian crusade by enacting a sleight of hand, *un escamoteo*, as Mariana Botey describes in *Zonas de disturbio: espectros del México indígena en la modernidad* (2014). If the Organ is supplementary, it is so only as long as it stands hollow and interrupted by the very activity of the Cross, since the muteness of this latter makes the Organ speaks, but only as an absence:

> "here it would be more precise to not think much about a model of subjectivity in resistance, but to trace a model of de-subjection (disidentification), which is activated in (...) practices that resist, or are excessive to translation; precisely, under a cloak of secrecy, they conjure a manifestation that becomes coated anew as a watchword for a sleight of hand. And also, to think how these effective practices are operative within the center of the representational regime that the Europeans imposed with a violent war inspired by the figure of the crusade."[508]

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507    In Laruelle, F. (2015a) Christo-fiction, the ruins of Athens and Jerusalem. New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, p. 24.

508    In Botey, M. (2014) Zonas de disturbio, espectros del México indígena en la modernidad. México: Siglo XXI Editores, p. 40, my translation. "aquí sería más preciso no tanto pensar en un modelo de subjetividad en resistencia, sino trazar un modelo de de-sujección (desidentificación), el cual es activado en prácticas (...) que resisten, o son excesivas, a la traducción, que precisamente bajo un manto de clandestinidad conjuran una manifestación que se recubre de nuevo como contraseña para un escamoteo. Y también cómo estas prácticas efectivas son operativas en el centro del régimen de representación que los europeos impusieron con una guerra violenta inspirada por la figura de la cruzada."

Without ceasing to be Christian, the Cross is Satanic because there are many; a *legion* of

scattered crossed with differential degrees of importance, an *order* that stratifies power, from the

base composed of an individual owner, escalating to family inheritance, to village crosses and

regional crosses that dwell in shrines.[509] Throughout this aleatory distribution of the sacred (as

material and value), notions of patrimony and space mingle together according to spatial

dimensions that are by now familiar to us; the geologic substructure, the road, the village and the

urban. One may conceive the configuration of the cult of Chan Santa Cruz as the artisanry of the

sacred; as an act of composition in which every hamlet, every shrine, every Organ and every

Cross partakes of a general arrangement.[510]

From this perspective, one can see *the road* like a much disputed object for *cloning*, one

that is coveted by the Ladino, the Empire and the Revolution. In November 1900, the Governor

of Yucatan, Francisco Cantón, inaugurated the train station at Peto and, at the same time, the

wager of *Ferrocarriles Sudorientales de Yucatán*. During October and November, the

construction line was extended Southeast "moving at about ten miles per month."[511] This railroad

is here deployed under the constant struggle between the Cruzob Maya and the federal soldiers,

and conducted by the ghost-engineer General Bravo. The extension of the railroad depicts a

creature which has the military as its avantgarde, a mouth with its own appetite; Chan Santa

Cruz: "the slow, deliberate movement, the cleared road pointing at the shrine city, straight and

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509     (Dumond 1985: 295).
510     This approach could be developed further by looking at a different practice; that of the Aztec *amantecas* "a
        group of craft specialists responsible for making a variety of feathered objects." In Filloy, L., and Moreno,
        M. (2017) Precious Feathers and Fancy Fifteenth-Century Feathered Shields. In Nichols, D., Berdan, F.,
        Smith, M. (eds.) *Rethinking the Aztec Economy*. University of Arizona Press, p. 168. In their procedure, the
        amantecas "all make an image together, and dividing among themselves the figure of the image, into so
        many parts, however many there are, each one [artisan] takes his piece to make it at his house, and
        afterwards each one returns with it [the finished piece], and they all join together, and in this way the
        perfect and completed image results, as if one artisan had done the work." [(Torquemada 1969, vol. 3: 210;
        translation and bracketed interpolations by Frances Berdan [Berdan et al. 2009: 152] Quoted by Filloy
        and Moreno (2017: 179).
511     (Reed 1964: 239).

wide through forest untouched for forty years."[512] The Mayan forces are, at this point,

decimated.[513] Under the command of Bravo, the federal army was extending the railroad

unswervingly until they arrive to the shrine on May 1901; the road here is, literally, the

prolongation of war by other means.[514] Upon victory, the city was renamed as Santa Cruz de

Bravo, but the baptism did not endure longer. The re-election of Porfirio Díaz (and ulterior

escape plan outside Mexico) rose turmoil, leading to new Maya armed rebellions in Valladolid,

Peto, Temax, and Yaxcaba. In Santa Cruz de Bravo, the troops of the new president Madero

arrived in September of 1912, liberating the prisoners and assigning the territory to a new

governor who fell prey of the revolutionary purge in Mexico City. As a result, the city of Santa

Cruz de Bravo passed over the hands of the Maya, becoming again Chan Santa Cruz. Tellingly,

all the infrastructure previously built was purified: "The locomotives, coaches and platforms

were burned, the railroad tracks torn up in several places (...) telegraph lines cut; the new market,

the pump, and the reservoir were dynamited, and the former schools flanking the temple (...)

were burned."[515] The Cross returns to its place, worshipping resumes and, under the aegis of the

new leader Francisco May, the region ventured into the chicle production to a great success.[516]

But only four years later, prices drop drastically, the concession stops and the area

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512     (1964: 240).
513     "3,000 to 1,500 at the beginning of the campaign; now it was said that no more than 800 obeyed the
        generals Pat, May, and Ek, 200 men have been lost in combat and the rest by desertion." (1964: 240).
514     Interestingly, a similar endeavor had been dreamt before, but by deploying a railway. Before 1897,
        Rodulfo Cantón had attempted to convince the Secretary of Communications of "a railway that would
        extend beyond Peto to Bacalar on the Belize border, with a trunk line cutting through Chan Santa Cruz and
        terminating on the Caribbean at Ascension Bay. (...) Canton redrew the plans to link Peto and Valladolid,
        the southern and eastern outposts of "civilization," with the Belize border. Three lines, totaling 450
        kilometers through the heart of the jungle, Canton argued, would facilitate the deployment of troops and
        chase the Indians from their secure position." In Wells, A. (1992) All in the Family: Railroads and
        Henequen Monoculture in Porfirian Yucatan. In *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 72, No. 2
        (May, 1992), p. 183.
515     (1964: 250).
516     "Production multiplied , from 45,000 kilograms in 1917 to over one million by 1925, reaching a peak of
        roughly two million in 1929." (1964: 253).

becomes surveilled once more by the Mexican army. For some, the situation in Mexico is untenable; the loss of half of the territory to the United States, the uprisings of the Yaquis and the Maya, and two foreign invasions convince them to find a new emperor for Mexico. At home, the ownership upon artifact is the playground for tensions between federalist and centralist projects of the nation,[517] a tension that ultimately leads to the *Guerra de Reforma* (1857-61) in which the nation is partitioned into two main factions, each one with its own government; a conservative one represented by Félix Zuloaga, based in Mexico City, and the liberal faction of Benito Juárez with the capital located in Veracruz. Upon victory of this latter, a moratorium of the external debts was set up,[518] and the regime of Napoleon III sees in this gesture the opportunity to seize the Mexican Isthmus of Tehuantepec. In the midst of this new upheaval, Juárez still has time to commission the *Proyecto de Ley Relativo a la Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos* of 1962, which not only details a comprehensive list of antique materiality (encompassing from pyramids to coins of the War of Independence), but delves into the regulations pertaining to the excavation of sites, the conservation of their findings and their juridic framework.[519] But in April 1963, French General Ellie Frédéric Forey takes over Mexico City, and Juárez flees to San Luis Potosí and Chihuahua, where he prepares the counteroffensive.

For the Mexican monarchist Jose Manuel Hidalgo, 1861 is propitious for the advent of a king; the willingness of the French emperor Napoleon III of constructing a French empire in Central America, and the American Civil War and the suspension of the external debt promoted by Juárez propels the Old World to collect its debt; *Latin America* is coined in France for the first

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[517] In Achim, M. (2017) From Idols to Antiquity: Forging the National Museum of Mexico. University of Nebraska Press, p. 127.

[518] "specifically, 750,000 francs procured from [Swiss banker] Jean Baptiste Jecker." (Achim 2017: 206).

[519] (Achim 2017: 208).

time as a result of such indebtedness,[520] and Mexicans residing in Europe begin to ruminate the

creation of a regime. Since it mimics nature, the specter of the purple always returns, like a rainy

season or a drought; its persistence, its urge to return can be traced (back and forth) way after the

times of the Spanish invasion. Already in 1783, the Count of Aranda had proposed to the King

Charles III the creation of Spanish kingdoms upon Mexican territory; Charles X of France also

dreamt of installing the Duke of Cadiz (the youngest son of Charles IV), in a Mexican throne.[521]

In 1821, Agustin de Iturbide emerges from the Mexican War of Independence (and from

the vacuum created by the Spanish Constitution of 1820) as the first modern Mexican emperor;

even the Republican General Santa Anna goes on to desire a constitutional monarchy.[522] It is the

Yucatecan José María Gutiérrez de Estrada, a "Campeche boy"[523] living in Europe since the

1840's, the one who in 1854 results first commissioned by Santa Anna to look for an imperial

candidate (an endeavor that fails due to the rise of the liberals). But later on, Gutiérrez resumes

the task.[524] Ironically, he finds a candidate in a printed directory (the *Almanach of Gotha*),[525] as

one would find a Dalmatian medieval monument cataloged as *Kunsttopographie*. After two

interviews with the unemployed candidate (one of these along with the Pope), the new emperor

results appointed with the acquiescence of Napoleon III of France as well. By now, Ferdinand

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520    Jimenez, G. (2012) De Miramar a Querétaro, Maximiliano de Habsburgo y su proyecto de nación, 1861-
       1867. In Acevedo, E. (Coord.) (2012) *Entre la realidad y la ficción. Vida y obra de Maximiliano*. Ciudad
       de México. INAH - Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, p. 15.
521    Jimenez, G. (2012: 13-4).
522    (Jimenez 2012: 14).
523    As Reed recalls (1964: 168).
524    Yet he is not alone in such endeavor. "Of the ten men comprising the mission, four —José Manuel
       Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, Tomás Murphy, Ignacio Aguilar y Marocho, and Joaquín Velázquez de León—had
       either held government positions as director of economic projects or were· members of banking families, in
       addition to their membership in the hierarchy of the Conservative party." In Tenenbaum, B. (1991)
       Development and Sovereignty: Intellectuals and the Second Empire. In Camp, R. Charles A. Hale, C. and
       Zoraida, J. (eds.) (1991) *Los intelectuales y el poder en México: memorias de la VI Conferencia de
       Historiadores Mexicanos y Estadounidenses*. Los Ángeles: Colegio de Mexico, University of California, p.
       84.
525    (Reed 1964: 186).

Maximilian Joseph Maria or Maximilian I is the young, romantic and unrealistic new emperor of Mexico.

Maximilian of Habsburg sees himself as the heir of Carlos V, ruler of the extinct Spanish Empire and viceroy of the Americas. While traveling in Spain, he visits the royal tombs of Queen Isabel I and King Fernando II in Granada and requests a mass beside the latter's remnants, then Maximilian writes: "In all of Spain I was like the legitimate relative, the closest to the poor dead, closer than the sovereigns and princes of the country: there I felt that the feeling of being a relative still holds after centuries, and a melancholic feeling moved my soul, how the great dead are thus abandoned, how the new tribe does not remember them and how I, wrapped in simple clothes, I am next to the coffins."[526] The he dedicates a poem entitled as *Granadas Königsgräber* (The Royal Tombs of Granada) to his imperial ancestors:

> *Like the devout Aragon*
> *Defeated Granada declined,*
> *transfiguring its throne*
> *A new part of the world was signaled.*
> *(...)*
> *Then it hears from the tomb,*
> *Whisper from the rotten post.*
> *It was broken here, the golden rod,*
> *Shines plus ultra for you in the east.*[527]

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526    In Lughofer, J. (2012) El poeta como precursor del emperador Maximiliano. In Acevedo, E. (Coord.) (2012) *Entre la realidad y la ficción. Vida y obra de Maximiliano*. Ciudad de México. INAH - Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, p. 30, my translation. "En toda España yo era como el pariente legítimo, el más cercano a los pobres muertos, más cercano que los soberanos y los príncipes del país: allí yo sentía que la sensación de pariente agarra todavía después de siglos, y un sentimiento melancólico movía mi alma, cómo los grandes muertos así están abandonados, cómo la nueva tribu no los recuerda y cómo yo envuelto en ropas sencillas estoy al lado de los ataúdes."

527    (Lughofer 2012: 30), my translation. "Como a Aragón devoto/ Granada se baja vencido/ transfigurando su trono/ un nuevo continente se señalaba./ Entonces se escucha de la tumba,/ susurra del poste podrido./ Él se rompía aquí, el dorado bastón,/ brilla plus ultra a vosotros en el este." "Wie dem frommen Aragon/ Sich besiegt Granada neigte/ Zu verklären seinen Thron/ Sich ein neuer Weltteil zeigte. (…) Da erdröhnt es in dem Grab/ Flüstert as dem morschen Pfosten,/ Der Hier brach, der gold'ne Stab,/ Glänzt plus ultra euch im Osten."

The imperial poetry confirms the magic of the purple; the Viennese is by now another

*viracocha*, the legitimate emperor of the Hispanic world, ready to brandish the last sword to get

the first crown.[528]

His administration, encompassing from April 10th, 1864 to May 15th, 1867, can be

equated in duration to the timespan of other Mexican presidents;[529] in some respects, the emperor

mimics his much-admired Benito Juárez (consider the *Ley de Tolerancia de Cultos*, the

nationalization of the Church's properties, the *Ley de Cementerios* or the *Ley del Registro Civil*).

In some others, he seems fond of exerting capital punishment over former members of

armed bands, as if does in his decree of 1865.

The young Viennese establishes the *Academia Imperial de Ciencias y Literatura*, and he

is also fond of infrastructure; his former administration in places such as Venice, Milan, and

Trieste yield a number of hydrographic installations, arsenals, shipyards, and a dam.[530] Under

Maximilian's aegis, and informed by Vienna's *Ringstraße,* Ferdinand von Rosenzweig begins

the construction of Mexico City's *Paseo de la Reforma*; a major public work that, eventually

would inspire Camillo Sitte to write in 1889 his key volume on urbanism, the one that, as we

know, has the power of recalling 'ancient' architectures and 'primitive' monuments disguised as

snowmen made by children.

Like his ancestor Carlos V, Maximilian also enjoys collecting; a foundational imperial

gesture that finds its roots in the medieval notion of *Schatz* or treasure, and that continues in the

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528   In his visit to the Royal tomb, Maximilian gets at the imperial insignias; the crown and the sword of the
      Reyes Católicos. He writes "It would be a beautiful, brilliant dream for the nephew of the Spanish
      Habsburgs to swing the latter [sword] to win the first [crown]." (Lughofer 2012: 30), my translation. "Ein
      schöner, glänzender Traum wäre es für den Neffen der spanischen Habsburger letzteres zu schwingen um
      ersteres zu erringen."
529   According to Jiménez, during most part of the nineteenth century the Mexican presidential period
      comprised four years, and some presidents, such as Anastasio Bustamante, Melchor Múzquiz, Manuel
      Gómez Pedraza or Valentín Gómez Farías were active one year or less. (Jimenez 2012: 17).
530   (Jimenez 2012: 15).

project of the *Kunstkammer,* an arrangement of objects according to symbolic significance allegedly invented by Ferdinand I of Austria.[531] By the time he arrives to Mexico, Maximilian already had accrued a collection of about 1,930 Egyptian artifacts stored in the Miramare Castle of Trieste.[532] But this time, the idea of configuring a collection has more of a self-construction.

Following Martínez, "he tried to form his own history, in which he combined the Mexican one and the inherited by his European lineage; for that reason, he wanted to surround himself with objects that project this duplet, and in this sense his efforts as collector were also oriented: towards the construction of a historical discourse."[533]

In 1865, his inaugural speech at the *Academia Imperial de Ciencias y Literatura* summons the *grandeur* of the prehispanic cultures and, more than their recovery, their messianic advent: "the pyramids of Teotihuacan, the gigantic ruins of Uxmal, the admirable calendar that exists in our beautiful capital, the few writings that the old fanaticism let us preserve, show that there was a day of triumphs of science and art in this soil; that there were geniuses who had risen in many places to a higher position than the very old Europe. These facts are comforting, because they show us that after the night, the day can arrive in this country, a brighter day than yesterday."[534] A recovery that, as you can see, is evacuated of everything except anonymous

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531     In Martínez, P. (2012) Maximiliano y su tradición coleccionista: las "antigüedades prehispánicas para el Museo Nacional. In Acevedo, E. (Coord.) (2012) *Entre la realidad y la ficción. Vida y obra de Maximiliano*. Ciudad de México. INAH - Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, p. 56-8.
532     (Martínez 2012: 63).
533     (Martínez 2012: 63), my translation. "pretendió formar su propia historia, en la cual conjuntaba la mexicana y la heredada por su linaje europeo; por ello quiso rodearse de objetos que proyectaran esta doble vertiente, y en ese sentido también se orientaron sus esfuerzos coleccionistas: hacia la construcción de un discurso histórico."
534     "Apertura de la Academia Imperial de Ciencias y Literatura", *El Cronista de México*, México, 8 de julio de 1865, p.1. Quoted by Martínez (2012: 66), my translation. "las pirámides de Teotihuacan, las gigantescas ruinas de Uxmal, el admirable calendario que existe en nuestra hermosa capital, los pocos escritos que nos dejó conservar el viejo fanatismo, muestran que hubo un día triunfos de ciencia y de arte en este suelo; que había genios que se habían encumbrado en muchos puntos a una posición más elevada que la misma vieja Europa. Estos hechos son consoladores, porque nos demuestran que después de la noche puede en este país llegar el día, día más luminoso que el de ayer."

archaeological remnants and intellectual labor lost in the depths of time. Yet the discourse is thus executed, and a month after Maximilian visits Teotihuacan, and further plans of visiting Yucatán are thwarted; it is only Empress Carlota who departs for the Peninsula on November 6th, 1865.

Shortly after, on December 4th, 1865, the short-lived *Museo Público de Historia Natural, Arqueología e Historia* was established in the *Palacio Nacional*. In reality, the 'foundation' of the Museum was more an upgrading, for the institution had been functioning since 1925, and the Museum's collection, (which is bound to looting and forgery), renders a genealogy of displacement and concealment. In 1824, the Minister of War, Manuel Mier y Terán, orders to bring the artifacts stored at the *Isla de Sacrificios* (Island of the Sacrifices), a tiny enclave near the port of Veracruz whose name is given by Juan de Grijalva in 1518, after reporting the presence of sacrificed, charred corpses in the island. In 1826, Italian architect Francisco Vecelli arrives and recalls Grijalva's account; he finds almost no trace of the victims, but manages to recollect obsidian arrowheads, coins, vases and figurines.[535] The island had been a convenient berth for Spanish invaders, British pirates, and corsairs; also it was a republican garrison settled between 1824-25, a cemetery for French soldiers, and the scenario of multiple archaeological findings that eventually were sent to The British Museum, the Parisian Quai Branly, or the American Philosophical Society.

On the other hand, the museum's genealogy of forgery can be located in the figure of the Sheffielder William Bullock (1773-1849), who ventured on a museum of curiosities in Liverpool in 1801 and gained reputation in London mounting impressive exhibits on antiquities and curiosities.[536] After his first visit to Mexico, he published *Six Months' Residence and Travels in*

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535    López, L. (2013) La Isla de Sacrificios y la arqueología en los albores del México independiente. In *Arqueología Mexicana*, n° 124, noviembre, 2013, p. 81.
536    (Achim 2017: 36).

*Mexico* (1824) accompanied by an exhibition in London in which, besides a selection of models and casts of the most representative Mexican artifacts he "had imported from Mexico a native Indian, José Cayetano Ponce de León."[537] As for the formers, they obtained them thanks to the guidance of Lucas Alamán (1792– 1853),[538] minister of internal and external relations, co-founder of the Conservative Party, and the driving force behind the creation of the *Museo Nacional* in 1825. Its initial venue would be the mathematics classroom of the university, flanking the Palacio Nacional on its southern side. Throughout its first decades of activity, the Museum tried to overcome financial scarcity by contracting "would-be explorers, invariably foreigners"[539] in places such as Palenque or the Yucatán. The interest of collector of antiquities, mainly from Europe, and the urge to verify the ancestral, continental basis of the *Manifest Destiny* in the United States were impulsing diverse expeditions, commissions and Prizes that served for touting the Mexican heritage as either a continuous conundrum (there is always *more* to be discovered), or as fragile stock, always in the risk of vanishing due to the idleness and the corruption of local officers. As a consequence, "is the sense of the museum as a vanishing object, one that moves out of focus as one gets closer to it, that most of the time seems to be offstage.

The drama of exploring and collecting (...) was happening elsewhere— at the ruins and in New York, Philadelphia, London, and Paris, where political, commercial, and antiquarian alliances were forged; objects, shipped; letters, exchanged; books, published; and prizes, meted out."[540]

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537     (2017: 38).
538     "In the School of Mines, Bullock copied manuscripts pertaining to Dupaix's antiquarian expeditions. Castañeda showed him drawings still in his possession. At the same time, Alamán enabled Bullock to make casts of some of the more emblematic Mexican antiquities: the Calendar Stone, the sacrificial altar of Tízoc, and the statue of the goddess Teoyamiqui." (2017: 40).
539     (2017: 126).
540     (Ibid.)

But now, Maximilian decides to actualize the Museum in a new enclave. He is not only

following his previous experience as explorer and collector, but trying to consolidate a position

of ownership upon the Mexican heritage; an urgent task in the light of the French plundering that

does not pass unnoticed to José Fernando Ramírez, the one at the helm of the *Museo* between

1852 and 1865.[541]

Maximilian is also a diffusionist who suspected of the shared origin of Egyptian and

Prehispanic cultures had dispatched his curator, the egyptologist Simon Leo Reinisch (1832-

1919) to Egypt, where he acquired valuable pieces from XII and XIII dynasties, sarcophagus and

animal mummies; an expedition whose agenda seemed more ambitious than simply gleaning

artifacts. For Reinisch, the decipherment of Prehispanic cultures could suppose a 'scientific

conquest,'[542] the unearthing of an imaginary and abstract identity for Mexico. While Reinisch is

overseas, the political instability at Mexico increases; Napoleon III withdraws, the Empress

departs for Europe and Maximilian is left vulnerable, although not idle. In June 1866, he decrees

the *Museo de Arqueología y Artes de Yucatán* or *Museo Yucateco* on the basis of keeping control

over the material heritage of the region, thus encouraging the museographic decentralization of

Mexican artifacts.[543]

Meanwhile, the task of moving the Museum's collection to its new venue increases in its

complexity. The architect José Ramón Alejo Rodríguez Arangoiti (1831-1882) is facing the

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541     "Ramírez (...) was undoubtedly disturbed by the sheer mass of stuff that was leaving Mexico for Paris at
        the end of every month." (2017: 229).
542     (Martínez 2012: 71). The use of science and conquest equates the former with epistemic violence, as if
        choosing a scientific conquest were the last option before physical violence comes to play. A similar
        instance is made by Victor Duruy, French minister of public instruction and impulsor of the *Commission
        scientifique du Mexique*, (the copy of the former *Commission scientifique d'Egypt*.) In an attempt to hire
        Mexican scientist for the Commission, Duruy invited members of the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y
        Estadística (smge) declaring "The [French] emperor, who has not wanted a conquest by arms, has the
        noble ambition to finish conquering your great country by science. (...) Our savants will march once again
        behind our soldiers." (2017: 214).
543     (Martinez 2012: 75).

challenge; alongside with sheer logistical challenges (such as moving the 421-kilogram

Yanhuitlán meteorite gifted to the emperor), Arangoiti has to organize the transportation of the

artifacts and the books virtually in absence of any preexistent inventory. By January 1866 the

architect has succeeded in moving a large part of the collection, though no more funds are

discharged; before the end of the month, Arangoiti has to suspend the activities.[544] Six months

later, the Museum is inaugurated with its archaeological galleries empty of content; al the items

were still in their boxes; and here; beyond the lack of funds, or in spite of what would be a signal

of imperial preference (because the museum's 'natural' section was fully operative),[545] I see a

manifestation of the imperial *order* of heritage embedded into the museum; a gesture in which

ownership forecloses visuality, and the *access* to the national patrimony never leads to *usage*;

where the logic of the archive can be eradicated in favor of sheer museographic accumulation of

absences. In short, another *escamoteo* or *sleight of hand* as Mariana Botey remarks: "Wherever

the space has been emptied (hollowed out), it signals what has been expropriated, suppressed and

expelled in the violent process of formation and foundation upon which modernity has been

established."[546] The *ideology* of the museum (what remains after cloaking the visible), is the

collapse of the institutional visage of the empire; with the imperial treasure empty, the persistent

pressure coming from Juárez, the renewed surveillance stemming from the United States, and the

closest imperial agents fleeing to Europe, what is left is Maximilian's attempt to fight the

republican armies in Querétaro, the place where he is ultimately executed alongside with his

generals Miguel Miramón and Tomás Mejía, on June 1867. Less than a hero, the purple

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544     (Achim 2017: 243).
545     "a sizeable collection of mineralogical samples; a herbarium containing over ten thousand plants; a good number of mammals and birds; and over two thousand Coleoptera, Lepidoptera, reptiles, mollusks, and crustaceans." (2017: 244).
546     (Botey 2014: 44), my translation. "Allí donde el espacio ha sido vaciado (ahuecado), señala lo que ha sido expropiado, suprimido y expulsado en el proceso violento de formación y fundación sobre el que se ha establecido la modernidad."

disappears here as any other scapegoat, and not because "he sacrifices himself for the people or to obtain the blessing of the people."[547] In one of his last aphorisms, *Kronen* (Crowns), Maximilian advances the following:

> *Guided by the people's blessing,*
> *He sacrifices himself.[548]*

However, there is no blessing in this death; nor paroxysm that could satiate the hunger of an unknown god, a Mexican Mars yet to come.[549] The leader is simply deceased, thus disposed of; a curious fate for someone who carries the precept *be cool* in his pocket[550] and signs pro-Indian legislation as *Huei tlatoani*, a title reserved for Mexican emperors before the Spanish conquest.[551] But the emperor exits the scene without achievements to his 'Indians,' in lack of a tragic silence that could pass over the community. The purple is here destroyed, and the emperor fails because, simply stated, he is language without *physis*; he is a prophecy without prophet.

What we have here is any given baroque plot, a *Trauerspiel* that occurs "like a change of scenery on the open stage, so minimal is the illusionistic intention, so obtrusive the economy of the counter-plot."[552] A plot in which the narration, the *history* is delivered by the intriguer, the

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547 (Lughofer 2012: 36).
548 "Acompañado por la bendición del pueblo,/trae como víctima a sí mismo." "Geleitet von der Volkes Segen,/ Dem er sein Selbst zum Opfer bringt." (Ibid.)
549 "The tragic death has a dual significance: it invalidates the ancient rights of the Olympians, and it offers up the hero to the unknown god as the first fruits of a new harvest of humanity. But this dual Power can also reside in tragic suffering, as Aeschylus depicts it in the Oresteia, and Sophocles in Oedipus. If the expiatory character of the sacrifice stands out less prominent in this form, all the clearer is it transformation, in which the subjection of the hero to death is replaced by a paroxysm which just as surely does justice to the old conception of gods and sacrifice, as it is patently clad in the form of the new conception. Death thereby becomes salvation: the crisis of death." (Benjamin 1998: 107).
550 Maximilian is fond of travelling with a list of written precepts and moral reminders. This one, written in English language, was discovered in his archives by Conte Corti. Quirarte, V. (2012) El primer Maximiliano: retrato del viajero como joven noble. In Acevedo, E. (Coord.) (2012) *Entre la realidad y la ficción. Vida y obra de Maximiliano*. Ciudad d e México. INAH - Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, p. 45.
551 (Achim 2017: 241).
552 (Benjamin 1998: 75).

"schemer" as Benjamin indicates,[553] the one who suddenly disappears halfway the end, but leaves scattered remnants of memories that elude time; for the baroque there is no afterward, only a suspension of the historical depths in the guise of secularized monuments, reproducing the pious so as to forget nature's hunger. Once more, Benjamin speaking: "History merges into the setting.

And in the pastoral plays above all, history is scattered like seeds over the ground. In a place where a memorable event is said to have taken place, the shepherd will leave commemorative verses in a rock, a stone, or a tree. The columns dedicated to the memory of heroes, which can be admired in the halls of fame erected everywhere by these shepherds, are all resplendent with panegyric inscriptions."[554]

Maximilian does precisely so; the most embarrassing achievement of his late administration is the proposal for a monument without *physis*, a column that by now exists as a decree; an archival monument. Promoted by Pedro Regil y Peón,[555] it was written seven months prior to the execution of the emperor, in an attempt to symbolize Maximilian's visit to Yucatan (one that he never managed to make), with the construction of a commemorative monument. The reasons exposed by Regil y Peón deserve exposure for it unveils the Yucatecan point of view regarding the Caste War, while summarizes the symbolic aspirations of Regil y Peón and his circle in light of the imperial proximity:

> "Out of anarchy and revolution, a horrible Caste War was born in 1847 that
> endangered the existence of the entire Peninsula, as the aboriginal population rose
> in mass against the descendants of the conquering race, with all the hate and
> frenzy engendered during three centuries of domination, took possession of four-
> fifths of the country, sowing devastation, ruin, and massacre everywhere.

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553    "Baroque drama knows no other historical activity than the corrupt energy of schemers" (1998: 88).
554    (1998: 92).
555    A Yucatecan of Spanish ancestry, Regil y Peón was redactor of the newspaper *El Pensamiento* (1856) and
        later on, in 1875, member of the commission for the creation of a bank to finance the henequen industry. In
        Varguez Pasos, L. (2002) Élites e identidades. Una visión de la sociedad meridana de la segunda mitad del
        siglo xix. In *Historia Mexicana*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Apr. - Jun., 2002), p. 834.

All the overflown passions of barbarism found pabulum in those moments of horrible crisis in which, being the civilization threatened with death, it seemed sure that it would yield its way to the most dreadful chaos, burying itself amongst the smoky debris of the homeland. (...) Seventeen years have lasted that horrible fight induced by the antagonism of two enemy races. Face to face, civilization and barbarism have fought, and the fields of Yucatan are watered with the blood of their children, which are witness of innumerable combats, in which the flower of the youth has succumbed in defense of its law. (...) Thanks to their efforts, hardships and penuries, this part of America was saved, the work of three centuries and the fruits of Christianism that the audacious soldiers of Montejo and the humble missionaries of Saint Francis introduced in Yucatan. (...) No more pleasant memory could leave His Majesty to the Yucatecans, that of his visit to these regions, that an act of justice in favor of his noble defenders, that forever consecrate in a faithful way the titles, that with the services they acquired, to the gratitude of the Fatherland.
For the reasons exposed, I believe I will fulfill several of the objects of the mission that I owe to the goodness of His Majesty, proposing to his Imperial approval the attached draft decree."[556]

For the Yucatecan, the war is another crusade against the 'Indians' in which notions of modern kinship are displaced, thus giving way to the *cloning* of the *Reconquista* (the preservation of civilization, the "fruits of Christianism," the menace of barbarism). Further details about the monument in question round up the intentions of Regil y Peón. His draft decree, dated in November 1865, renders a "a simple column of stone that, from its base will have, at

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556   "De la anarquía, y la revolución nació en 1847 una horrible guerra de castas que puso en peligro la existencia de la Península entera, pues alzándose en masa la población aborigen, contra los descendientes de la raza conquistadora, con todo el odio y frenesí engendrados por tres siglos de dominación, se posesionó de las cuatro quintas partes del país, sembrando por doquieres la devastación, la ruina y la matanza. Todas las pasiones desbordadas de la barbarie encontraron pábulo en aquellos momentos de horrible crisis, en que amenazada de muerte la civilización, parecía seguro, que iba a ceder el puesto al caos más espantoso, sepultándose entre los escombros humeantes de la patria. (...) Diecisiete años ha durado esa lucha horrible inducida por el antagonismo de dos razas enemigas. Frente a frente la civilización y la barbarie se han combatido, y los campos de Yucatán regados con la sangre de sus hijos, son testigos de innumerables combates, en que la flor de la juventud ha sucumbido en defensa de su ley. (...) Merced a sus esfuerzos, a sus penalidades y fatigas, se salvó en esta parte de la América, la obra de tres siglos y los frutos del cristianismo, que introdujeron en Yucatán los audaces soldados de Montejo y los humildes misioneros de San Francisco. (...) Ningún recuerdo más grato, podría dejar Su Majestad a los yucatecos, de su visita a estas regiones, que un acto de justicia en favor de sus nobles defensores, que consagre para siempre de una manera auténtica los títulos, que con sus servicios, adquirieron, a la gratitud de la Patria.
Por las razones expuestas, creo cumplir con varios de los objetos de la misión que debo a la bondad de Su Majestad, proponiendo a su Imperial aprobación el adjunto proyecto de decreto." AGN Archivo General de al Nación. Inventario del Fondo Segundo Imperio, caja 46, expediente 16, México, 1865. Transcription and translation into the English language are mine.

least, twenty five meters high, and whose socle will bear in golden letters, the following

inscription, "To the memory, always glorious for the homeland, of the chiefs, officers and

soldiers who, in defense of (the Homeland) the civilization, have succumbed since 1847 in the

war against the rebellious Indians." Maximilian, Emperor 1865."[557] To my eye, the draft remains

unsigned by the emperor, although a final line saying "Fulfilling the instructions of His Majesty

that the Chief of the Civil Cabinet informed me on Se(...) 4 (...)"[558] opens up the question of

whether the emperor already gave the thumbs up prior to a formulaic signage that never came, or

if it was simply written by an optimistic Regil y Peón. Either way, the unsigned document and

the unrealized monument are still sustaining the much expected arrival of the emperor to

Yucatan, the place in which he dreamt of constructing his crepuscular empire in retreat.[559] Until

that day comes, the wager of the Yucatecan elites is still legitimate in its archival monumentality,

suspended as a reasonable doubt, a case not yet pondered by history in which, as any other

*influencing machine*, its effects (recasting the *Reconquista*) are preceding the material

incarnation of the column.

At the same moment, the roads of Campeche are blocked, the Caste War is still

happening, and the valuable exports of the *henequen* fiber[560] forestalled as a result of the War.

For some 'barbarians,' the destiny of the Caste War is announced by a Cross without

voice; from a voice without body; for the other 'barbaric' faction, the salvation will come from a

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557   "una sencilla columna de piedra que desde su base tendrá cuando menos veinticinco metros de altura, y
      cuyo zócalo, llevará en letras de oro, la inscripción siguiente, A la memoria, siempre gloriosa para la patria,
      de los jefes, oficiales y soldados que en defensa de (la Patria) la civilización, han sucumbido desde
      1847 en la guerra contra los indios rebeldes." Maximiliano, Emperador 1865" (Ibid.) Transcription
      and translation into English language are mine.
558   "Cumpliendo con las instrucciones de Su Majestad que el jefe de Gabinete civil me comunicó el 4 de Se
      (…)" (Ibid.) Transcription and translation into English language are mine.
559   "On his more ambitious days, Maximilian envisioned the construction of a Central American empire, along
      the lines of the old Mayan ruins, as he interpreted them." (Achim 2017: 236).
560   A type of agave whose fibers are suitable for rope and twine.

document without signature; from a monument without shape. Both parts will recognize the importance of constructed matter as the field for historical redemption.

In Yucatan, the imperial department had implemented measures that seemed borrowed from President Juárez in his visit to the Peninsula in 1861, such as recalling political exiles and putting a non-Yucatecan Governor at charge. Various significant improvements in the Peninsula's infrastructure began in 1864 during the administration of José Salazar Ilarregui, imperial commissioner of Maximilian. Salazar quickly developed the first telegraphic lines in the Yucatán, artesian aquifers and planned additional railroads.[561] In the same year, Empress Carlota arrives at the port of Sisal where she is received by Salazar and his wife Julia. Touted as "the salvation of Yucatán"[562] by her supporters, Carlota becomes one of the first visitors and cartographers of the ruins of Uxmal. This imperial visit was coincidental with that of the reputed French archaeologist Brasseur de Bourbourg, who violates the prohibition of conducting excavations in the Peninsula, ultimately reinforcing the protection upon the remains of Maya 'empire'.[563]

Meanwhile, the Empress began to lose her mental sanity, accusing her husband of intoxicating her; rumors claimed that, while looking for an aphrodisiac, she had been poisoned in Uxmal with *toloache* (Datura inoxia).[564] José Fernando Ramírez, (who besides being the curator of the National Museum occupies high posts within the imperial cabinet), accompanies the

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561    In Richmond, D. W. (2015) Conflict and Carnage in Yucatán: Liberals, the Second Empire, and Maya Revolutionaries 1855-1876. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, p. 82.
562    (Richmond 2015: 79).
563    As Achim indicates, this protective gesture was the result of the emperor's direct instructions, "a sign of Maximilian's position vis-à-vis the French emperor; the French on the ground in Mexico perceived him as little more than a puppet of Napoleon III, on whom he depended for troops and money (...) This explains Maximilian's suspicions and resentment toward the French initiatives to study Mexico and his outright refusal to support French exploration projects." (Achim 2017: 226).
564    (Richmond 2015: 80).

empress in her baleful visit to Uxmal. The curator includes in his diary a section entitled as

*Popular Traditions Relative to the Ruins,* in which he includes "some strange beliefs associated

with the empress's presence in Yucatán. Among them was the legend that under one of the

pyramids at Uxmal there was a box that held a rope, which, on a specific day, would be stretched

out in the air, east to west, across the peninsula. Everyone would traverse the peninsula by

holding on to the rope, and whoever fell would be devoured by the snake sculpted on a

monument at Uxmal."[565] For some, the connection is made between the imperial newcomer and

the arrival of the first telegraph wire uniting Sisal and Mérida. For me, it reiterates the Viennese

gesture of casting the ancient as by-product of the modern (as it happens with Camillo Sitte).

Less a finding that a casting, the modern is resting *beneath* the pyramid, serving as its

support in such a way that, similarly to a cenote or a catacomb, utilizes hollowness as its main

structural recourse; like a wire holding on thin air. This subterranean *locus* of the modern is also

the place of an infrastructure that is thus playing "a police function, materializing not through

liberal universals, but proliferating distinctions and comparison along the lines of community,

nation, race, gender, caste, and respectability."[566] The path of imperial infrastructure is prescribed

in such a way that any deviation flips the path over the ancient; the unknown, the ruined, the

isolated.[567] If the logic of the cenote included *width* as its main dimension (a gesture of

inclusion), the imperial infrastructure relies on a teleological *longitude*; in the hope of keeping

the line afloat by restricting its width.

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565     (Achim 2017: 238).
566     Karuka, M. (2019) Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental
         Railroad. University of California Press, p. 40.
567     "Mexico resulted in a continental railway network largely conforming to U. S. infrastructure standards.
         Imperial powers built rail networks over neighboring territories in idiosyncratic gauges, the distance
         between the rails. At the junctions of tracks built at different gauges, goods and passengers had to transfer
         from one train to another. Imperial railroads often constricted people and goods within a specific imperial
         network, producing economies of isolation." (Karuka 2019: 41).

By the time Porfirio Díaz visits Mérida in 1906, the Caste War has been almost

'suffocated' and the event results promoted as nationalism based upon regionalism. Part of his

agenda was oriented towards the corporate environment supported by the infrastructure of the

railroad; an *imperial* way of centralizing and accruing economic value[568] that was well depicted

by the faction of the *Cientificos,* who "encouraged the importation of Positivism, Spencerian

Social Darwinism, and liberalism (...) Cientificos such as Limantour and Justo Sierra used these

theories to rationalize the inferior treatment of workers, as we have seen; they also equated

European and North American ideas with modernization and progress."[569] However, under the

canopy of rationalized progress there is a system of racialized exploitation in which the workers

were assumed as the necessary evil within an extended family controlled by the *hacendados*; the

practice of debt peonage secures here the extension of the railway insofar as it is almost the only

alternative (besides the plantation) to the rather mandatory *tequio vecinal* (road construction) or

the *fagina* (national guard service).[570] The gloomy destiny of the Yucatecan worker is manifested

as a full circle:

> "*Campesinos* in the *zona henequenera*, many of whom had lost their lands as a
> result of the liberal reform laws that broke up their *ejidos*, had only a few,
> disagreeable options: unemployment; underemployment and immiseration in the
> village, (...) lifelong indebtedness and brutal working conditions on the estate,
> cutting and carrying 1,000 to 1,500 henequen leaves a day (...) or an equally
> arduous job with the railway, hammering spikes, building embankments, or
> cutting firewood at menial wages with the uninviting prospect of an eternal debt.
> Small wonder railway workers lacked "aspirations.""[571]

The very existence of the railway system was elevated by some, such as Yucatecan

entrepreneur Manuel Dondé, to the state of a "prophecy"[572] of a homegrown endeavor. In its

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[568]   Wells, A. (1992) All in the Family: Railroads and Henequen Monoculture in Porfirian Yucatan. In
        *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (May, 1992), p. 206.
[569]   (Wells 1992: 204).
[570]   (1992: 192).
[571]   (1992: 194).
[572]   (1992: 162).

origins, it was even perceived as the correlate of the imperial *Caminos Reales;*[573] as if, after a certain material degree has been crossed, the empire would have become summoned anew.[574] In the Yucatán, the figure of the railroad recasts former logics of colonial exploitation, uniting *haciendas* with urban centers and ports, being Mérida-Progreso-Izamal (1875-81), Mérida-Valladolid (1880-1913), Mérida-Campeche (1879-1904), Mérida-Peto (1878-1912) their principal lines.[575] In this regard, we cannot dissociate the existence of the railway without taking into account the development of the monocrop demands of the *henequen* plantation; the reversal of the former primacy of corn plantations under the aegis of a handful of entrepreneurs and *hacendados*; Francisco Cantón, a former supporter of Maximilian and favoured by Porfirio Díaz (whose son partnered in the business), or José Rendón Peniche (and all their family *copies*), tried to centralize and perpetuate the ownership upon the Yucatecan railway infrastructure. The houses of *Escalante e Hijo*, *Molina y Compañia* and *Urcelay y Compañia* were the camarillas that crystallized under the heyday of henequen. With the emergence of the Spanish-American War (1898), the United States was forced to find an alternative to the Filipino manila fiber, being the henequén fiber its most reliable substitute.[576]

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573     "By 1848 no fewer than 18 different [rail] roads converged on Merida. John Lloyd Stephens and B. M. Norman, two foreigners in search of pre-Columbian ruins, marveled at the quality of what were euphemistically called the caminos reales." (Wells 1992: 167).

574     On 1891, Juárez granted Antonio Escandón the concession to construct the railway Veracruz-Mexico City, the one who shortly after becomes reintegrated within the Compañia Imperial Mexicana in 1864 and one more time, in the Compañía Limitada del Ferrocarril Mexicano (1868), this latter in association with, among others, the tycoon Thomas Braniff [In Orellana, M. (1972) The Mexican Railroad. In *Artes de México*, No. 156, El Ferrocarril Mexicano (1873-1973), p. 96] who made the leap from associate to the Second Empire (for instance, advising the engineer Luis Bolland Kuhmackl in the leveling of the Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City, or escorting the Empress to Veracruz) to accionist and director, in 1874 of the Compañía. Braniff was also responsible for commissioning the construction of railways stations of San Luis Potosí, Aguascalientes, Monterrey and Mérida to Charles James Sculthorp Hall. In *Grandes Casas de México*. January 9th, 2013. Casa Braniff–Ricard en Paseo de la Reforma. [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://grandescasasdemexico.blogspot.com/2013/01/

575     (Wells 1992: 176).

576     "The production of henequen increased furiously during the Porfiriato as exports rose from 40,000 bales of fiber to more than 600,000 bales" [from 9,600 to 144,000 tons] (Wells 1992: 162).

In addition to this impulse in the deployment of railway infrastructure, Porfirio Díaz focuses his agenda on the promotion of monuments. In the capital, the former imperial *Paseo de la Reforma* is by now variegated with antagonistic renditions, ranging from "Cuauhtémoc (1887) (...) to Christopher Columbus (1877) (...) and [the monument] to independence (1910) (...)"[577]

The figure of the monument during the *porfiriato* implies the consolidation of a symbolic pantheon whose cohesion surpasses the commemorative functions. The monument points toward either economic reproduction and the articulation of *progress*, understood here as the bound of Mexico with the shadows of its colonizers.[578] As Garrigan (2012) astutely remarks, the monument acquires concrescence precisely because of its contradictions: "It's not that patrimony wasn't sacred but rather that it had undeniable connections precisely to those very conditions it was supposed to transcend."[579]

In 1906, the reception of Porfirio Díaz reception in the capital of Yucatán (being the first time in which a Mexican president visits the state), is framed by a historical parade with twelve ephemeral, *monumental* triumphal arches. One includes a modified version of *Chac Mool*, the god of rain, featuring a truly Porfirian mustache instead of fangs. For some it comes as no surprise, provided that Díaz "believed in gods, saints, and naguals. Even the French traveler Charles Etienne Brasseur, described the by-then military Diaz as 'the most beautiful indigenous

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577    In Garrigan, S. (2012) Collecting Mexico: Museums, Monuments, and the Creation of National Identity. University of Minnesota Press, p. 108.

578    Garrigan examines the case concerning the monument to Christopher Columbus in Mexico City: "it is not so much the national monument itself but rather the implications that can be drawn from the conditions of its production that occupy the narrative foreground of this letter: the upcoming year of Columbus's centennial in which two different European cities will host world's fair events; the international cooperation between Mexico and Italy demonstrated by this transaction; and the possibility of greater future commercial arrangements." (Garrigan 2012: 120).

579    (Garrigan 2012: 113).

type that I have seen so far in all my travels; I thought it was the appearance of (…) Guatemozín.'"[580]

The construction of the arch, which basically copies the frontal area of the Nuns' Palace in Chichén Itzá, was directed by Leopoldo Batres (1852–1926), a notorious archaeologist and inspector of monuments who is also author of the first archaeological map of Mexico, where 110 archaeological sites are overimposed onto a railway map. Underneath these prototypical "joined metaphors"[581] of the 'ancient' and the 'modern' we have an infrastructural plan that renders the background from which ruins emerge. In the same fashion as Camilo Sitte's urban rendition, or the prophetic rope of Uxmal, the modern comes *first*. The gesture of Batres is, of course, an economic one, although the implications surpass its usual understanding as a marker of progress.

We see here again the *sleight of hand* of the modern, its urge to carve a primeval history of the current below the mapping of the ancient, whose discovery is nothing more than the continuous recovery of the modern. More to the point, this mapping summarizes in the crimping of its symbols (an infrastructural Mexico City, therefore an urban one, therefore with ruins, therefore with patrimonial value), the *order* of the Mexican nation; to express so as to conceal what the expression feigns. Botey results clear in this regard: "Sovereignty in modern Mexico is authoritarian and violent because it expresses repressed content."[582] Though the cartography of Batres creates a secondary degree of expression; you look at the ruins, but there is nothing repressed in there, only the *order* that allows you to not look at the repressed, for this latter's

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580    In Victoria Ojeda, J. (2010) De la imagen, el poder y la vanidad. Porfirio Díaz en tierra de los mayas (1906). Mérida: Instituto de Cultura de Yucatán, p. 21, my translation. "creía en dioses, santos y naguales. Incluso, el viajero francés Charles Etienne Brasseur, describió al entonces militar Díaz como "el tipo indígena más hermoso que hasta ahora he visto en todos mis viajes; creía que era la aparición  de (...) Guatemozín."

581    Bueno, C. (2016) The Pursuit of Ruins: Archaeology, History, and the Making of Modern Mexico. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, p. 191.

582    (Botey 2014: 140).

presence lingers "as a subterranean force under the guise of the repressed."[583] As farcical as it may sound, what is repressed (the minority, the victim, the women, the workers), is here sandwiched between the urban and the ruin; from one side, buried by the ideology of its alleged heritage; from the other, excreted from the infrastructure as the reproduction of the antique.

In Yucatan we can find an operation that seems to explode Batres' diagram into a different horizon; one in which its prevalent category (the messianic) unfolds the map into *a periplus* that gives the Maya the body of its prophet. Back to Mérida, Marco A. Guemez summarizes in *El arte monumental del socialismo yucateco (1918-1956)* its ideological horizon by 1906, which rests upon the construction of a uniform identity based on the notion of Maya culture, Mexican nationalism, and the will to utilize public infrastructures as monumental signs.

In 1916 the *Partido Socialista de Yucatán* is founded with the acquiescence of the Constitutionalist provisional governor, Salvador Alvarado, who in the same year has also created the feminist party of the Yucatán. The Party's nationalist revolutionary program, which has been renamed in 1921 as *Partido Socialista del Sureste*, follows a socialist agenda informed by communist labor, the socialization of healthcare and communications and the appropriation of preexistent modes of production, though the Party's rejection of the Third International in favor of a local formula mirrors its coetaneous aesthetic project, described by Guemez as "vernacular avantgarde,"[584] whose main aim is the *redemption* of the indigenous Maya.[585] In *The New Yucatán: A message to all Americans from the martyred Maya leader,* Felipe Carrillo Puerto, (1874-1924), envisions the indigenous *imago* of the revolutionary project: "The revolution in

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583     (2014: 65), my translation. "como una fuerza subterránea bajo el disfraz del reprimido."
584     Within this project of reification of the Mayan past we highlight the dramaturg Ermilo Abreu Gómez, the writer Antonio Mendiz Bolio and the architect Manuel Amábilis, who propelled the Neo-Mayan monumental aesthetics.
585     In Güemez, M. (2014) El arte monumental del socialismo yucateco (1918-1956). Doctoral Thesis. Mérida: CIESAS - Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, p. 80.

Yucatán has one main objective —to give the Maya Indian his status as free man, to save him

from the (...) cultural and spiritual stagnation which slavery has gradually imposed upon him.

The success of the revolution here must be ultimately measured by that standard."[586]

Carrillo Puerto, a former train driver, is always fond of the people coming from the

Yucatecan countryside, speaks Mayan since early age, and is recognized by his supporters as the

"apostle of socialism in Yucatan, sacrificed because he loved and redeemed the Indian

Mayan."[587] This heroic dimension of Puerto becomes fulfilled with his execution alongside with

three of his brothers and some of his supporters during the uprising of Adolfo de la Huerta. Not

by chance, the village-shrine of Chan Santa Cruz (the stronghold of the Cruzob), ultimately

changes its name to Felipe Carrillo Puerto in 1975. The project of revolution exists in virtue of a

shattered soul which can be redeemed and restored as any other monument. The primacy that the

Party confers to *ejidal* lands subserves the production of a uniform society;[588] as if matter and

society were staring each other in their most granular state. During his term serving as governor

of Yucatán (from 1922 until his execution in 1924), Carrillo Puerto focuses on three main

actions: reforms in education, the delivery of *ejidal* lands and the construction of roads: from

Motul to Telchac, from Dzitás to Chichén Itzá, from Mérida to Chuburná and Kanasín. In this

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586    Güemez, M. (Ed.) (2016) La estética de Felipe Carrillo Puerto y su aporte al arte revolucionario y vanguardista de Yucatán. (Ed.) Mérida: ESAY, p. 16.

587    In Escalante, E. (1938) De la Huerta y el fusilamiento de Carrillo Puerto: habla un jefe militar. Entrevista con el Gral. Hermenegildo Rodríguez, Jefe de la Guarnición de Mérida. In Cirerol, M. (1938) *Yo no asesiné a Felipe Carrillo Puerto*. Mérida: Talleres gráficos "Guerra," p. 56, my translation. "Apóstol del Socialismo en Yucatán, sacrificado porque amó y redimió al esclavizado Indio Maya."

588    "The post-revolutionary project of the Socialist Party of the Southeast built a corporatist regime (...) The model (...) that it used was the "resistance league", with which it not only managed to bring together practically all workers and rural laborers, but also professionals, landowners and yeomans, merchants, docents and entrepreneurs. Before this unified mass, Carrillo Puerto made use of cultural nationalism to imagine it as a homogeneous society to what he called maya." "El proyecto posrevolucionario del Partido Socialista del Sureste construyó un régimen corporativista (...) El modelo (...) que utilizó fue la "liga de resistencia", con la cual no sólo logró aglutinar a prácticamente todos los jornaleros obreros y rurales, sino también a profesionistas, medianos y pequeños hacendados, comerciantes, profesores y empresarios. Frente a esta masa unificada, Carrillo Puerto hizo uso del nacionalismo cultural para imaginarla como una sociedad homogénea a la que calificó de maya." In Guemez (2014: 82), my translation.

latter case, the end of the road leads to a monument devoted to the "emancipation of the Maya indian"[589] whose basement includes two carved triangles honouring the memory of Jacinto Canek, the 18th-century Maya revolutionary who crown himself king, and Cecilio Chi, one of the main figures in the organization of the Yucatán Caste War.

The road leading from Mérida to Chichén Itzá is the most renowned public infrastructure built by Carrillo Puerto; to the point that its inauguration encompasses two days (July 14th-15th, 1923). During that time, a number of events succeed each other: chants of Mayan thematic, speeches, poetic compositions and a 'Mayan dance' denominated as *La Danza del Sacrificio* (The Sacrifice Dance).[590] In the final speech made by Carrillo Puerto, he stresses the importance of the road as primordial element that makes concrete the connection between diverse temporalities: "The road to Chichen Itza, more than a material improvement, represents for me a sociological bridge between the splendid past of the Mayans and the current conditions of their descendant. That bridge will lead to the resurgence that we long for, for the best consolidation of the socialist reforms."[591] What the material extension of these infrastructures denotes is the concrete unification of metropolitan with monumental areas; the road Dzitás-Chichén Itzá links Mérida with the Socialist monument of Kanasín and the archaeological zone of Chichén; here the road finalizes just a few meters before the *Juego de Pelota* (Maya Ballgame) and 300 meters before the highest building in the zone, *El Castillo*; being these landmarks no longer isolated edifices, but endpoints subsumed by material infrastructure. Underlying this (or perhaps hovering it), the road traces an ideological itinerary composed by a metaphorical sequence,

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589     (2014: 103), my translation.
590     (2014: 152).
591     (2014:153), my translation. "La carretera de Chichén Itzá, más que una mejora material, representa para mí un puente sociológico tendido entre el pasado esplendoroso de los mayas y las condiciones actuales de sus descendiente. Ese puente conducirá a los veneros del resurgimiento que anhelamos, para el mejor afianzamiento de las reformas socialistas."

where the redemption of the Maya is accomplished by unifying the urban, Neo-Mayan

nationalism with the ruins of a Mayan advent. In this regard, the dimension expressed here is

*messianic*; a time that has been suspended.

Weaving ruins and cities with roads posit a double conundrum, for being both cities, both

partake of the same organizative principle (structure) although by using different materials. Thus

construction and destruction are allocated at the extremes of this messianic trajectory in which

the itinerary is always occurring (for it suspends history) and is always being deferred (towards a

future that never comes).[592] To drive from the ruins to the city makes the past ruinous; to attain

the converse leaves the city in shambles. A path that has less to do with temporality than to

irreversibility; the road here distributes forgetfulness and silence along its immanent extension

insofar as it denotes the limits of its own allegory. By duplicating the presence of 'the Maya' as

the absence coming either from the ruins and the presence of its monuments, the role of the

indigenous "it has not had the indigenous as its object of study, but the nation itself as its truly

essential object."[593]

Botey articulates in her exposé *a disturbance* in which what the messianic does (to render

its faithful subjects as equal), debilitates the constitutive powers of the nation, whose structure

assimilates its bodies like fragments in a ruinous embrace. Yet a fundamental distinction has to

be made here; you belong to the state in your quality as a *believer*, you follow the messianic due

to your *faith*. In the former case, you belong to a transcendental representation, an imperial

grimace whose scale surpasses yourself; in the latter case, you partake of the messianic by virtue

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592      I am here indebted to Norman Bryson and his discussion of the messianic. Bryson, N. (2014) A Manera de Introducción. In Botey, M. (2014) *Zonas de disturbio, espectros del México indígena en la modernidad*. México: Siglo XXI Editores, pp. 11-5.

593      (Botey 2014: 101), my translation. "la forma específica del discurso que [la antropología mexicana] ha generado —el indigenismo mexicano— no ha tenido al indígena como objeto de estudio, sino a la nación misma como su objeto verdadero y esencial."

of its immanency.[594] Faith is *the last instance* in which the faithful and the messiah are equalized; the faithful is not external to the messianic, for it dwells in *idempotence* with the messiah,[595] the latter is no longer external to faith, but "a deindividualized messiah, one that destroys the world-form beliefs of theology."[596] In *Christo-fiction, the ruins of Athens and Jerusalem* (2015), Laurelle advances the notion of the messiah who may well be the reversal of the purple, for "The messiah that "I" am is the generic feeling of flowing across one transcendence to another, across dogmas and beliefs, without stopping at any as "last," since the generic is the movement that goes from man to man "under" the world or under the waterline, as if through a tunneling-effect."[597] If the emperor had in the urban its surficial grimace, the messianic circulates the underworld of cenotes, caves, and tombs that are all empty because the victims have resurrected, they have made themselves idempotent through *insurrection*; the messianic interruption of purple time.[598]

For the believer, the messiah is someone who is recognized or dismissed; for the faithful, the opposites are reconciled or *superposed within immanence* as long as this latter is not destroyed.[599] A dilemma of recognition, then; for to reckon is to tell an absence that allows you to recognize; you are aware of such absence and its existence, but its portraiture has been suppressed. The ability to recognize (namely, to exclude by means of visualization) is, to use

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594     Laruelle, F. (2015a: xv).
595     Idempotence is a linear immanence, (...) Idempotence signifies that the messianic lived is constant whatever term may be added to it." (Laruelle 2015a: 107).
596     (2015a: 68).
597     (2015a: 183).
598     ""Re-surrection" is not a repetition of a living being or of creation, nor even of life, but a re-sumption of the lived, an insurrection of the generic Christ out of the world. Christ is the insurgent of the Tomb of the world." (2015a: 211).
599     "Whether total or even partial, identification remains an operation that overflies immanence, neutralizes nothing, or destroys everything. On the other hand, out of two terms—here, two Laws (Logos and Torah)—superposition makes one, one sole Law as interference, but on condition that it is immanence, of a lived nature, and wavelike, and that the mediations between them are neutralized, not suppressed or denied." (2015a: 107).

Benjamin's expression, "a weak messianic power"[600] that executes the historic image according to a dingy rendition of kinship, but this latter is here negative; you belong by not recognizing others. Accordingly, the obscurity of recognition holds a past that returns lambent, being flare only in part, fleeting as the realization of the recognition; like the scintilla that deviates your gaze. This "moment of danger"[601] of the past is also the mark of inheritance; *History* is fixed as an overexposed image that embeds its spectral absence (of bodies, of stories) like a sunburn.

Dangerous is the *disorder*; to look more, and in so doing, to lose the reference that articulates exclusion; to be incapable of distinguishing between kinship and otherness, between victor and loser. The former is always in good terms with history, for the victor accumulates destruction for succeeding. Remember: the victor gets *the spoils*. It accrues fragments of history, but it does so *structurally*. Destruction is the fiat currency of history, the access to the flare of its 'past,' the reproduction of historic time under a layout of ruins; even more, it makes the *sleight of hand*; it mimics the consumption of what is human by nature without being neither of those.

This is why the messianic cancel all the debts, its advent brings the *superstructure* of destruction, therefore of mourning, of an allegory that only exist in allegory.[602] The road is a "terminal denotation"[603] of where the redemption of the Mayan ends; it breaks the past history into a macadam of silence, while it fractures the project of a uniform identity. The access to the intangible Maya past reproduces in the infrastructure of the road the access to tangible goods; a past made out of ruins feeds the current flux of bodies and products along the road, creating in passing a double scission: for one, the differential degrees of access to the archaeological zone of

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600　Benjamin, W. (2003) On the Concept of History. In Eiland, H. and Jennings, M. (Eds.) *Selected Writings*, Vol. 4. Harvard University Press, p. 390.
601　(Benjamin 2003: 391).
602　"Allegory (...) exists only in allegory." (Benjamin 1998: 233).
603　Following Botey "The messianic, then, could be the "strong use" or limit denotation (image) of the allegorical form as it is formulated." (Botey 2014: 101), my translation. "Lo mesiánico, entonces, podría ser el "uso fuerte" o denotación límite (imagen) de la forma alegórica como está formulada."

Chichén Itzá for merchants and artisans, and its consequential fracture of an allegedly unified, Pan-Maya identity.[604] Here, the project of uniformity will break up into a mimetic outburst: a redemption of the Mayan in the name of its martyr Felipe Carrillo Puerto, the *indigenista* leader who claims to be descendant of the rebellious monarch Nachi Cocom,[605] or the socialist road that feigns to be a *sakbeh*, a Maya 'white road,' are indexes of how aesthetic uniformity demands mimesis about mimesis; here we would have a messianic *Darstellen* in which mimesis demands belief, and destroys faith's superposition.[606] Moreover, to pursue a non-particular figure of the faithful has less to do with depersonalizing it than to determine it *in the last instance*; for the messianic renders its individuals idempotent; those who will not return.[607] In spite of the tension created by Carrillo Puerto's project (between the sense of a unified identity *versus* the ulterior stratification of such identity along the infrastructural path of the road), what I consider remarkable of this story is the inversion it produces in the face of the imperial infrastructuralism.

In a way, the Motulen is echoing part of the liberal discourse upon monuments; "To have confidence in the future (...) one needs to have a cult to the past,"[608] and in part overriding what such discourse produces; the type of *forgetting* that the perception of monuments produces, which is based in the "absence of lived experience."[609] But, no one can deny the *lived experience* of the road to the Maya, those who have constructed it by force, under gruesome and excruciating conditions. In this case, the sense of messianic kinship (idempotence) is not projected by means of *access* to a disembodied *Einfühlung*, a remote possession of what is

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604  See Armstrong-Fumero, F. (2012) Elusive Unity: Factionalism and the Limits of Identity Politics in Yucatán, Mexico. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, p. 168.

605  (Armstrong-Fumero 2012: 53).

606  "belief is ultimately what destroys faith in its superpositional essence, and the Messiah himself. (Laruelle 2015a: 77).

607  "Only generic subjects (rather than those who return) are "last" in the eschatological sense, that is to say, "prior-to-first." (2015a: 108).

608  El Partido Liberal (1889). In Rodríguez Prampolini, *La crítica de arte en México en el siglo XIX*, 3:246. Quoted by Garrigan (2012: 125).

609  (Garrigan 2012: 126).

coveted; it is rather the *usage* of what has been constructed from the body, the ownership of the monument in its full archive of material memory. This road shatters the belief in the nation (to share things in common so as to forget them), and in turn it gives us the horror of a monument that always remembers what is lived, that is introduced to the public *discourse* as an ongoing endeavor, one that does not finish in the materiality of the path; for what is needed is its *usage*, the grantor of a membership that may or may not outpace the constricted, racialized version of nationalistic belonging. Yet tragic silence reigns in these roads, one that keeps aloof the resolution of the prophecy that has not yet been articulated, for the immanence of this path has not yet changed;[610] the inheritance of silence (the death of Carrillo Puerto) has become a silent patrimony, or as Benjamin remarks: "The content of the hero's achievements belongs to the community, as does speech. Since the community of the nation denies these achievements, they remain unarticulated in the hero. It is the achievement of his physis alone, not of language, if he is able to hold fast to his cause, and he must therefore do so in death."[611]

Death is just the commencement of a road whose messianic markers (beginning an end) are unified by mourning "which is at once the mother of the allegories and their content,"[612] the true apophenic sound of the monument whose voice, unlike the crosses of Chan Santa Cruz, has been gifted to the community enveloped in silence. And this is the narrative suspension that Carrillo Puerto creates indirectly due to his assassination; the prefiguration of a destiny that has remained dispelled until now. If the Viennese emperor was a prophecy without prophet, here we have its reversal: a prophet without prophecy, a sheer messianic wave whose trajectory has been

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610    "superposition alone responds to their superposition." (Laruelle 2015a: 53).
611    (Benjamin 1998: 108).
612    (1998: 233).

dispersed like dirt, leaving us with the barbaric promise of a silent road which renders itself

oblivious and limpid.

Postscript on Subheritage


This Postscript has to be read as an architectural inquiry whose practical scope is the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico and several locations in Puerto Rico. In these areas I have had the opportunity to inaugurate a process of research denominated Subpatrimonio (Subheritage); a notion that was imagined in 2011 during my season as guest researcher at UADY - Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (México). By then, my aim was to establish an inventory of material culture not yet assimilated within the prevalent patrimonial discourse so as to reconsider some of the foundational premises that shape heritage: the value of the places where it appears, the modality of time it uses, and the sense of its architectures.


Among other things, subheritage (*subpatrimonio*) is a pair of textured glasses for overseeing, and perhaps to squint before the constitutive uses of material heritage, which are characterized by a frozen appreciation of what is historical narrative (the *order* of discourse) and its *ideological* use (concealment of perceptual circulation). Subheritage remains latent, beneath the patrimony; it takes advantage of the relationships between material heritage, urban and infrastructural developments, and reintegrate them through the problematization of their recognition and staging.

By addressing patrimonial issues somewhat neglected, which are occupying insular or 'banal' positions regarding the sociocultural context, the practice of subheritage occupies *an instant* in the present time, one that is being traveled right now, alongside with areas of intermittence of the patrimonial; gaps amongst fragments. The agglomeration of patrimonial discontinuities is not completely infilled. It has interstices, *spaces* in the etymological sense; *spatium* is the space between two adjacent ribs, where the patrimonial phenomena are not yet heritage. In these subpatrimonial areas, history has been flayed out of narration and time has been deprived of style. These patrimonial gaps exist amidst the litigation between national affirmations upon heritage and the private interests on these resources. In this way, the identification of heritage is not so much structural but contextual; it is geolocated ideology.

Part of the semantic tension amongst form and value, place and site, labor and meaning finds its *locus* in the notion of heritage; one that reunites abstraction and concreteness, endurance and absence, kinship and loss, fantasy and sense. Any patrimonial object connects with the present insofar as it bears a historic account that, regardless of the sources employed, it is inextricably enacted in the present. Subheritage proposes, then, a conceptual framework able to narrate the tensions between the sense of matter *vis-à-vis* the canonical preservation of patrimonial materials, weaving our discussion from the material 'evidence' (the 'object,' the 'place') without dismissing at all the 'intangible' of heritage; an *aesthetic* dimension that can be understood here as the perception of *ideology*; which is the perception of the *order* of the visual, namely; the apprehension of how the perceptual circulation has been concealed by privileging only one factor. The -*Sub* particle appeals to what is subterranean in regards to the patrimonial canon; what can be subtracted, perhaps salvaged, from the bureaucratic, hypodermic

administration of material heritage. But by the same token, one attempts to propose a shift from notions such as 'subaltern;' unlike 'externalities,' a subpatrimonial operation produces the conditions for its own existence by creating the identity of what has to be identified; a description that is being enacted simultaneously with its required labor.

Accordingly, my artistic practice has been modeled according to the interplay between *order* (hypodermic concealment of an *image*), and the *image* (the dispersion of the *visual*, of perceptual circulation ruled under the *order*). This armamentarium articulates a sculptural excavation that pays heed to silence; to the stratification of subsequent concealments required for making sense and history. Silence mediates the dynamic tension between the *image* and the *visual*; between the dispersion of the perceptual circulation and its order, to put it more obscurely, between gestures of *extrusion* and *hyperthelia*; of elongation and variegation.

These notions have been related emblematically, tracing a diagram whose cohesion requires a silence that it is indebted to the narratives unveiled by my archival and academic research; a twofold envelope in which sometimes the practice is visualizing theory, sometimes the act of writing is illuminating directions for art practice.

We thus start from the middle; in the midst of a given humanist project that attempts to testify on behalf of matter and their prevalent notions 'heritage' or 'patrimonial' that I will use indistinctly henceforth. Ideologically, heritage can be defined here as a mediated designation exerted from (federal, state, *ejidal*, domestic) institutions whose descriptions stem from the intersection history-politics, understood as the examination of causal relationships between the (re)production of juridic documentation and its effective implementation within concrete locations.

This intersection can be located, for instance, in 1895, on occasion of the International Americanists Congress that held an extraordinary session in Mexico City. The decision to relocate the event, from Stockholm to Mexico City, reflects the impact produced by the World Columbian Exposition in 1893, where series of Mayan artifacts were exhibited in U.S. This chain of events is not exempted of effects within Mexican territory,[613] for it induces the leap from the concept of 'antiquity' to that of 'heritage.' Furthermore, we encounter the shift from the touristic extraction of artifacts as by-product of the modernity toward the identification of such artifacts not merely as 'heritage,' but Mexico's "national property".[614]

The period that spans from the Irak War (1991) to September 11th attacks in 2011 delineates a historic transition from the national ownership of heritage to its decentralized management. After the TLC *(Tratado de Libre Comercio)* in 1994, this process becomes reinforced according to the neoliberal imaginary legislated by institutions such as the UNESCO, the World Bank and the BID *(Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo)*. This coalition and its outsourced versions nurtured the emergence of private interests which were beneficiaries by the use and usufruct of heritage, now touted under the logic of open access and private profit. The juridical modelization of heritage in Mexico can be traced back in series of subsequent proposals[615] that render a cultural horizon variegated with ambivalent denominations.

The concept of culture no longer equates with constitutional rights to work and education, among others, but rather signals the access to culture as something that has been evacuated from

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613    On the contrary, it led to a political turmoil between porfiristas and non-porfiristas, identified by Palacios (2014: 11) also as the confrontation between "científicos versus anticientíficos." (Ibid.). Palacios, G. (2014) Maquinaciones neoyorquinas y querellas porfirianas. México: El Colegio de México.

614    (Ibid.)

615    Franco (2007) identifies the process under a particular timeline, which starts with the foundation of CONACULTA *(Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes)* in 1998 under presidential decree, the *Propuesta para el Parlamento de la Cultura* (2005), the *Ley de Fomento y Difusión de la Cultura* (2005), the initiative of *Ley de Desarrollo Cultural* (2006), the *V Congreso Nacional de Arquitectos en San Luis Potosí* (2006), or the *Plan Nacional de Cultura* (2007-2012), In Franco, I. (2007) Los proyectos neoliberales sobre cultura y patrimonio cultural en México. Mérida: Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.

individuals. To promote the access to culture implies, by the same token, to relocate it outside

the domain of the individual, habitant or citizen[616] while heritage stands as mere by-product of

international transactions which conflate patrimony with cultural fetishes. In so doing, the

medium of heritage and its expected benefits are funneled to private economic profit, and its

further investment oriented toward infrastructural and touristic endowment or 'foment'.[617]

Meanwhile, the realm of material heritage becomes 'digitized' or 'discretized' according

to protocols, making 'usage' and 'access' seemingly indistinguishable.[618] The evacuation of

subheritage (from 'bodies' to 'institutions,' from 'ownership' to 'access,' from 'governance' to

'usage'), finds its procedure in protocol itself, where access becomes equated with an

embodiment that is less executed from within that actuated from without.


We can argue that the physical configuration of heritage is also logistical as a by-product

of its infrastructural condition. The materiality of heritage acquires form within an urban-

patrimonial plan, and the execution of this blueprint is fulfilled insofar as the logistical process

comes to the fore. The logistical struggle starts with the delamination of the archaeological site:

in Chichén Itzá (Yucatán), the place becomes reconfigured into a hodgepodge that features

gardening styles resembling golf courses, it follows with a long-termed consolidation of

hierarchy among site's custodians based on kinship and provenance and the distribution of

commercial roles within the site, to name a few.[619]

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616    (Franco 2007: 13).
617    This word has been a recurrent trope throughout Mexico's neoliberal regulation concerning heritage. Franco (2007: 79-80) distinguishes CONACULTA's Artículo IX on the "fomento y difusión de la cultura" versus Mexico's Constitutional "fortalecimiento y difusión de la cultura." (Artículo 3º, fracción V). Tellingly, 'fomento' and its archaism fomenta designates either the process of bathing a body with medicinal remedies and the combustible used for warming up the bath; it is the remedy and its disposable combustible *at the same time.*
618    Galloway, A. (2004) Protocol: how Control Exists After Decentralization. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 218.
619    Breglia, L. (2006) Monumental Ambivalence: The Politics of Heritage. Austin: University of Texas Press, p. 107. The establishment of Cancún as a main touristic center after 1970 affected Chichén's layout,

Being its implementation paradoxically additive and subtractive, the functions of heritage are logistically distributed according to differential scales of representational magnitude: archaeological sites located within private parcels which are supervised by federal entities, fragmented buildings, and land parcels reused and managed by heirs o member of a community, archaeological artifacts relocated from small hamlets to municipal museums or federal institutions, digital captions of domestic and foreign tourists dispersed and stored under disparate formats, architectural, religious and secular objects that travel from one institution to the other for being displayed, researched, and eventually, re-captured. Conscription in the name of decomposition.

A question arises: how we can parse the differential degrees of visibility and opacity that material heritage acquires? This puts into doubt the fundamental notion of territorial specificity; the image of heritage overlapping over a given, fixed terrain. Conversely, my intention is to describe material heritage as a process that stratifies sites and bodies by means of material and semantic displacements.[620]

In my long-termed project *Reología* (2012-2019), I have transposed the notion *rheology* (the branch of Physics that studies processes of material deformation and fracture), as a way of finding the limits and contours (of meaning, recognition and value) that delineate the current notion of material heritage. These notions are not, say, embedded into heritage, but actuated

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modifying its operative scale and the role of its custodians. In the meantime, the site stands as an international infrastructure that conflates the paradoxes of touristic development with perfunctory narratives about "Mayan culture."

620    Lucia Breglia (2003) describes how the consolidation of archeo-tourism in Chichén Itzá "displaced both cattle ranching and agri-business from the area. In contrast, the archeological ruins of Chunchucmil and Kochol have only begun to be excavated since 1998 and are located on former haciendas devoted to henequen production. These are now communal ejido lands devoted to agricultural production." In Breglia, L. (2003) Docile Descendants and Illegitimate Heirs: Privatization of Cultural Patrimony in Mexico. Doctoral Thesis. Rice University.

upon by virtue of a discourse whose origins are bound to European processes of colonialism and the construction of the modern. As I have exposed elsewhere, the meaning of heritage is subservient of definitions of national property as a result of colonial 'inheritance;' its recognition has been framed by a univocal discourse (in which perception and empathy are the magic of the empire); and where patrimonial value is linked to processes of material implementation of the project of modernity, one in which the infrastructure provides the basis for the project's narrative and material coherence. The materiality of heritage reasserts the configuration of its value thanks to architectures devoid of immanent constructive meaning; whatever the heritage does to the mind is only after the time of its erection. So, to privilege the sense of heritage from its given reception conceals other inscription that is lurking behind: the meaning during its construction.

Because from *verso* to *recto* we have a discontinuous, vaulted itinerary that reunites construction and reception, order and sequence, imprint and image.

From this perspective, Reología comes to terms according to a logic that dismantles the stability of these notions. In part, the project examines the notion of *mimesis*; which is understood as the distance (of recognition and existence) between *orders* and *ideologies*, between the concealment of a dispersed visual and the concealment of perceptual circulation.

Throughout the project's life, I have been removing physical parts of Mexican heritage buildings which are subsequently pulverized, encapsulated and gifted to third-parties. The gesture thus problematizes the fundamental designations of heritage from a material standpoint; a chunk of patrimonial building, has still such value once it is detached from the alleged source?

Further; once pulverized and encapsulated, does the sample retain any patrimonial quality at all? These questions seem to mingle with the fact that, throughout their circulation as encapsulated powdered dust, these items prove valuable to those who swallow capsules, those

who keep them stored, and collected; those who ascribe particular qualities or effects to the capsules. And so, the value of heritage seems to percolate through the fissures produced by rumors and the preexistent importance consolidated upon patrimonial buildings through the eras.

In Reologia, heritage is reformulated as stuff whose circulation employs a single formal posology (capsule); a one-in-many object that destroys the sleight of hand of heritage (access in the name of usage) by reverting this sequence, that is; usage of heritage in the name of its access through the gradual removal of its material cohesion. Furthermore, the apperception of heritage creates the *verso* of European aesthetic empathy; for it is no longer a body who occupies an object by means of *Einfühlung*; conversely, it is the patrimonial object (in its most prosaic aspect) the one which, literally, enters the body of the empathetic.

We have dirt that is uniform, although with diverse origins; that is one compound distributed amongst a plethora of clones, an item that enters the body of who is interested in it, an object that is not any longer preserved by means of exclusion, but operates, first and foremost, under the logic of the gift and the impure.

In DXIX Projects (Venice, CA), Reología was presented as a work-specific project, displaying Mayan artifacts taken from archaeological sites in Mexico after enduring a long-term process of removal, subtraction and distribution as capsules. The intervention was located within the gallery's domestic space, where patrimonial artifacts are sustained by dedicated furniture that draws upon the imaginary of the scientific cabinet and the drug kitchen.

By presenting also modified documentation images, I reused the project's evidence in the guise of decorative patterns or portraiture of stones. Meanwhile, the material heritage moves between the structure and the content. The architectural and monumental locations produce the

possibilities that might displace their own status as patrimonial entity. This eventual process of becoming patrimonial (or not) speculates with artifacts considered representatives of a culture, *any* culture. These objects relate one another through physical interventions; restoration works, archaeological excavations that *a posteriori* induce other physical considerations, such as urban changes, commercial transformations of historical centers, or the creation of new narrations about the national and the local; appreciations in the name of apperceptions which percolate mainly toward tourism and the service industry. Heritage is here considered as an operation of dovetailing that knows its destiny, for it prefigures the semblance of its change. In order to define the extension of material heritage, an area is cut out into puzzle pieces, each one being an archaeological site with the potential to generate wealth; the reproduction of a fixed economic exchange.

This move includes gestures of delimitation and decomposition exerted upon a milieu that suddenly will cease to provide *other* narrations and contexts, which sometimes preceded these operations. The reclaim of these places continue from the historical as a prefiguration of the environment. Consensual narrations of history are applied in advance, from its most general level, to their territorial, local, and particular divisions which have latent -*sub* possibilities.

In 2017, Reología was also introduced in Puerto Rico. There I had proposed to install a makeshift workshop within Hidrante, an artist's run space in the *barrio* of Santurce. The workshop was composed by two main situations; a conversation revolving around projected images and texts, and a working session in which we produced a number of capsules. I am including here some notes taken shortly after the experience:

"The form of heritage has owner. We listen to the echo of a speechless inscription, buried under named contours. The value is always compared; it points to a general index, to the briefest relation of the infamy. I subtract stones in valise, we disintegrate materials of history, we obtain pulverized rock. To search the inscription is to draw vacuum, is to nail new acts in old rocks, grider cuts, dated carving. *Gestology.*

A fridge with magnets is the archive of the tourist, it safekeeps consumption with the seals of banality. They possess a weak magnetism, they can only attract themselves while they rotate on hinges. Meanwhile, stones and beers cool in the fridge. Outside, the dust covers everything, turning clothes and bodies into marks of an absent prospection; that of a kitchen made terrain. Disorder breaks the sequence of objects on a table, it disorganizes the narration into ludic frames, into cooking remnants: minced, sieved, pressed, encapsulated, pouched. Suspension of rock and of an event that sometimes is conversation, laboratory, dispensary of pharmacopoeia's dust, smoke and sweat; *crying Medallas*. All are in or out, everyone chops and mills. The baggies with the product are given out and away. The dust continues on its extension, it ramifies towards terse taste, the intestinal sculpture, the coiled snake. *Gastrology.*

During the same period, I decided to parse the case of three Puerto Rican infrastructures whose existence is bond to their value as heritage, but in this case, my approach would be mainly audiovisual. The resultant video-essay *Turbonada* (2017) interrelates infrastructure and material heritage through the examination of three case studies: the San Cristóbal castle, the fortress of San Felipe del Morro and the Arecibo radio telescope. In so doing, my attempt was to effectuate a superposition or *montage* between the remnants of Spanish military architectures with more recent colonial milestones, such as the U.S. radio telescope. Interestingly, all of these cases are nowadays touted as either historical or scientific patrimonial elements, which seems to maintain the colonial gesture as a grandiloquent endeavor, one that is reinforced by the scale of its architectures. For one, the castle of San Cristóbal is the biggest fortress built by the Spaniards in all Latin America. Technically informed by the French model, the complex follows the logic of an artificial slope that hindrances access and visibility. During the sixteenth century, the fortress was crucial in the defense of the island against Dutch and British pirates; its abundance of

sentries (configured as minarets with vertical slits), allowed to frame and discern a horizon that surpasses human vision. After the 'transference' of the island to the United States in 1898, the castle remained as a remarkable sighting point against the potential menace of nazi incursions.

New sentries were built (in this case building bigger bunkers with horizontal slits) and modified cannon platforms allowed for the substitution of U.S. for Spanish weapons. And yet, the horizon seemed to not change at all. The fortress of San Felipe del Morro supposes the prolongation of the former castle as a fortified promontory (a hundred and thirty meters above sea level), with walls of up to sixteen feet height and one and half feet thickness, with six different levels and a maximum of a hundred and thirty feet.

This complex, whose large courts were used for shooting, now endures as a U.S. National Park and a mandatory touristic experience in Old San Juan, being a privileged vantage point from which one can detect the arrival of new cruise ships to the island.

The Arecibo radio telescope is another colonial achievement in the island (until 2016 it was the biggest radio telescope in the word). Although this structure seems to not have been conceived for the human vision, nor for producing images, its original aim (to track ballistic missiles), may well be a continuance of the Spanish colonial gesture. More than producing visual information, the radio telescope hindrances the visibility of the terrain that occupies, with its reflecting radio mirror that is 1000 feet in diameter.

But let us go back to the castle and the fortress. After the transference to U.S. hands, these military infrastructures were materially modified; building new sentries, and repurposing the cannon platforms. Despite their tourist and patrimonial significance, they don't renounce to their primordial functions of surveillance. Either case, the human gaze is also constructed as an architecture that forces the visitor to stare a horizon void of historical context; without pirates nor

nazi submarines. And it is precisely because they do not bound meaning and visual functionality, that these buildings still exist as machines that militarize the human vision, standing as places where the notion of heritage is conflated with that of protocol: access substitutes usage.

In parallel, the Arecibo radio telescope radicalizes this agenda, for it is not a place built to use human vision, but to construct the visuality of the Other. The inception of the radio telescope during 1960's is, to repeat, contextualized by the urge to intercept missiles and radio transmissions, or to explore the possibility of alien life; the Other far beyond every conceivable horizon. In so doing, the radio telescope is ironically continuing with the Spanish colonial project (militarization of the visual, construction of the otherness from its absence, the infrastructural scale as what designates the scale of the surveillance), while conceals, in its material excess, its status as colonial landmark. If the castle and fortress occupied San Juan in the name of the pirates, the radio telescope maintains such occupation in virtue of a presence even more remote and inhuman. In this sense, either the castle of San Cristóbal and the radio telescope materialize in their infrastructural dimension the execution of *apophenia*; the visualization of an *order*.

Throughout my approach, my aim has been to emphasize the endurance and materiality of these infrastructures. As a result, the format of video-essay utilizes transitions and superimposition, highlighting the plasticity of these place and their shared condition as project and memory. At the same time, the video introduces deliberate *anomalies*.[621] These audiovisual materials are the result of careful observation and bodily contextualization; they insist on the materiality that still exists. The resistance of these infrastructures to be used (one can only visit them), the survival of their ideologies as if dirt were, passing from one place to the other,

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[621]    During the expropriation of the neighboring island of Vieques by the U.S. navy, the term 'anomaly' was used for designating archaeological remnants without identification. Moreover, these blurry stains featured in the video essay are an unintentional reference to Richard Artschwager *blps* series. I owe gratitude to James Dean and Aitor Lajarin for pointing to this latter connection.

spreading their meaning instantly, under the logic of montage. Somehow, the video's title points to its own internal logic, for a *turbonada* is thus a storm that does not achieve the status of hurricane, yet it maintains intensely the expectation of that absence.

The *ambiance* of a patrimonial area consists of its extension beyond the physical and constructive. It is an elongation of the heritage site that modifies the materiality and symbolic value of its surrounding areas, siphoning them within the historical narration that had been induced to the site. After that, it seems that the place exudates history, that it 'floats' in the air.

However, the material heritage is neither permeable nor receptive to our perceptions and ideas, but rather anticipates its appreciation from the historical narration, for it supplements contemporary relevance to structures that did not offer such narration to their discoverers, nor their builders. Its environmental value is, in this way, irreducible in terms of planning; historical surplus value is what determines where the space-time of heritage begins and ends.

In order for this environment to be operative, the introduction of a (functional and factual) silence is required in places that can be revisited *a posteriori.* At this point, the recognition process required by every heritage site generates a qualitative difference produced by the passing of time. By supplanting the initial content of a place, (the cultural moment of its construction) by the relevant historical account, the building emerges and connects with a time that has been deferred from that of its construction; it rises as historical monument, serving as a reference and tool for measuring time. The objectivation of the patrimonial space becomes redundant, for its inclusion in the historical fabric requires a retroactive construction where the traces of its 'history' predate its own fundamental description as visible content. If the objectification of things require a previous step, the symbolic incorporation of *primordial events,*

the historical constitution of the monumental (that is, its status as heritage) is, big surprise, the result of a hallucination. This hallucinatory dimension of the material heritage guarantees also the extraction of these monuments from their surrounding environment, by virtue of criteria whose basin are stylistic notions ascribed to the univocal time of history. For want of use, heritage is inactive; it has succumbed to the entropy that its patrimonial importance generates.

Heritage has not outlived the period in which its cultural narration was recognizable within the societies that built them. These values that once generated social context cannot survive beyond the end of their societies, except as the minimum degree of historical enunciation.

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