

Nous vivons dans l'oubli de nos métamorphoses...

Lemmy Caution reads Paul Éluard. "Nous vivons dans l'oubli de nos métamorphoses..."

This is how his poem *Our Movement* beings... This is how Lemmy's reading becomes Godard's and vice versa. The former's reading orbits the latter's reading, readings and authors are both connected and intertwined. But both are also connected to Paul Éluard, and Éluard is somehow connected to them, not here, not there, but wherever the encounter may take place.

The question becomes more complex. Lemmy sensed it, as Godard sensed it (and vice versa), and also Éluard did. Alfa-60 is destroyed by poetry, something complex and, as the guttural and metallic voice at the beginning of *Alphaville* (Godard 1965) says, "sometimes, reality is too complex for oral communication". There, in this assumption, also lies its endgame.

One thinks, writes, paints, builds, inhabits, one does whatever it takes in one's way or for the reason one chooses. We do not do it for the others, but with the others and thanks to the others. We are drawn, attracted by that *grace*. Gravity is inevitable. We draw and attract, we are drawn and attracted, and there is always a distance, an impassive and constitutive void that saves the distances and keeps us safe, orbiting (essentially that is what saves us). All the rest are orbits of collision or escape... A temporary flight marked by fatality and pure randomness. On the contrary, memory is something tormenting, constant and persistent, something made present, past and future without distance. Our eternity of joy and pain: *algumin* and *nepenthe*, as Joyce would say.

Atlas Ellipticalis has a technical *state*, a *machine* dimension, subterraneously branched and intertwined in a random-like appearance, maybe looking for cracks and minute photonic *glories*. But it is not interesting to see it only in that state, although I do it that way in certain moments because of my method, my way of reflecting and beginning to build artifices and thinking artifacts for others, to be inhabited, whereas for me (the remains)... I rethink them once again. That is the reason why I speak and speak, I write and write, I paint and paint, I mix everything, I do whatever it takes, and I mull over questions and matters that for me are remote but *attractive* and *attracting*. Once there, with all those materials, those sensed by others and turned into philosophical, poetic, plastic and visual approximations or abstractions that rule our universe with frightening precision, and there is something in me, yet to be deciphered, there is something in me, as I said, which can visualize ideas, forms, concepts and relations that in some unmentionable and undecided moment are materialized and can be seen in their transit to *god knows where*. I believe this dimension is discussed at length in the long text in which this brief prologue and this simple publication end.

But back to Lemmy...

The machine dimension has to do, as I have said, with gravitation, with the ways in which we have understood and visualized it, a kind of astrolabe or armillary sphere that allows us to know approximately where we are or where we go or what is the right route to go *back home and tell it...* anabasis. It does the same with those which treat materials as parts of a mnemonic device, *letting breadcrumbs or color marks* (Post-it). The essential dimension, *the species*, only came to me later, after the enthusiasm, but it was already there, like the *purloined letter...* it was always there (now closer and more visible). It was in that moment that the before was made present: *as empty as it was when it wasn't*. My concern was growing, the same as Lemmy's.

The present was *embodying* the ellipses. To take them in their abstract mathematical perfection and in their imprecision with their visual and plastic display. To make that geometry nurtured by what others might think and become, beyond the garden and the ornament or the dynamics of cosmic object: *totality does not encompass it, but contains it in the minimum* and its readings. And the others, who are always there and will continue to do so, will not hesitate to offer their reflections about the *natural* pair ellipse-ellipsis and thus save the simple and indescribable shape in order to take the human leap of thinking things, questioning them and building up facts and events charged by *intuition*, emotion, intellect and human sense. Suddenly, all the ellipses become *the same and different* at every step, in every stop of their journey. A point chased the other and relied upon its predecessor, focuses and radiuses, perimeters, tangents and bisecting lines, inertia, instant acceleration, times, areas, trajectories that became metonymic and metaphoric. On the one hand, the line incorporates both the voice and recurrent discourse that orbits on the abstract, its metonymic movement, on the other, the planned elliptical orbit its flattened and condensed on a background color, layer after layer, its metaphoric state: significant and signifier are *unread* after abandoning (momentarily) the continuity, the order and every attempt of superposition. Lemmy Caution sensed it.

The others by oneself and vice versa. They are all followed with respect, attention, curiosity and surprise. A woman artist after a male artist and after him another woman artist and a male artist: Mieke Bal and her Biblical journeys, the semiotic density of history and migrations, of peoples and meaning... her narratives and their logic. Kenneth Goldsmith, in the distance, for over 20 years, his texts and his immense and iconoclast poems, his actions and his cultural activism: the archive. The same with Agustín Fernández Mallo, reading and enjoying him for so long, his unexpected narrative that hides in the everyday life; his music, his climbing, his ramblings and unnoticed fetishism.

Tálata Rodríguez and her steady attitude: her full poems, direct, diaphanous and embodied. All of them had offered me their generosity, their voices and reflections. From Descartes, his reasonable doubt and his narration of the subject, to the musical and bodily geometry at a mathematical, gentle, social and political level, from grammar and its emoticonic and surreal dimension to arrive,

to the word pairings shot at point-blank range on bull's-eyes of meaning and a surrounded microphone. Their ellipses are my ellipsis and vice versa. I have already mentioned it at the beginning of this paragraph. I sensed this elliptical, (almost) infinite loop.

Something moves and goes after itself. Uneasily, it inhabits a vibrant universe.

That is why *Atlas Ellipticalis* is lost in a world of facts, in the constellations that show the dependence of all the bodies *emptying* themselves and that occupy what is *emptied* and, to a lesser extent, facts that inhabit what exists. But all this is relative, although it allows us to relax from time to time in the eternal drift of objects in alegoresis. However, what comes next is one of the emotional keys for having developed a dense, confuse and formally difficult project (yes). It is even not too attractive, but it is not naïve or witty or easy: human relations, reunions and goodbyes, again; absences and shared knowledge, human tensions and exposition to risk and failure. Coming back, coming back, coming back: the eternal return of the same made different... vision and enigma.

Opening up to the event and building up cartographies allow us to return home with family and friends or get lost in the treasure of signifier... And there, after many years, the polar star appears (Hokushin 1960), giving meaning (Akai 1962) to the weft that was being woven: Lucy Lippard and her *I See/You Mean*; my soul had just found solace in the rereading of this amazing novel and it sent me to an orbit from where I had the necessary perspective to feel *more* and try to give certain *transitory* appearance to the project. *I See/You Mean*, a novel or philosophical/literary essay that amalgamates meaning and send it, drifting, to collide against and from its actors- factors. It is twined and intertwined to non-fiction subjects, it unveils and hides, it stuns them... And they all touch, caress and transpenetrate in the distances of time and space, in the I-Ching, astrology, photography and social and political meteorological changes: they orbit in a mysterious dance (but inter_known to us), complex and helical. Every orbit is an orbit of orbits in orbits: the apparent movement should not deceive us, as it is a process of integration through a *series of powers* (Deleuze 1969) (Navarro 2017), depending on de-centering and de-centered focuses that tend to zero, which orbit, in turn, around a void to which they always depend... without reaching 0, *almost arriving*. The *plane* is not the reality, in the same way the *Atlas* is not the world or the firmament... But it helps, although the intended conclusions are not moments of respite, just that, I mean, we don't see symbols where there aren't any or where we don't try: they emerge, radiant and blinding in themselves.

$$\forall A \neq \emptyset, \exists B \in A: A \cap B = \emptyset_*$$

And in every set (i.e. Lippard's set or sets), whatever they are, there is an absolute otherness; that is, sets have an unknown element, Lemmy senses it, which makes *the set, the set and not a different entity that is not the set*, impossible, belonging to itself or coinciding with us in everything (another secret gift). There is no metaphor where the real identification is verified (Ortega 1924), and the *calm absolute minerality* is produced (Lot and his daughters). This impossibility, this incompleteness,

the undecided (Gödel 1931) (or drift) is what relates us to (the) existing other, not the calm (Edith). Everything exists in a conditioned format, a certain vacuity (Nāgārjuna), a movement (Bergson 1934), and therefore it lacks a nature of its own although it is in the middle of a starry landscape (Clarke 1968). In every set there must be an element that is disjointed from the whole and there is always an element that belongs to it but it is not included (or at least it has escaped) and it chases or it is chased: X cannot be based on A, and A cannot be based in X, or in B (Moreno 2017), I would dare to say, and vice versa (again).

When metaphor acts, a sense of retroactivity and retrospection (retro-adjustment) is produced, but also juxtaposition and collapse; backwards or forwards, it is indifferent (time becomes another state (Feynman 1949), it is a dependent function (—), an orbit, whether at a basic degree, two or three bodies, or we dare to raise the complexity to n-bodies... But here, Lemmy Caution begins to sense that complexity hides something that we are not made for and something that we are. So, it seems we are dependent (Freud 1939) and this is as mysterious as it is attractive, and always distressing. It is a saying *carved* in stone, or in a recording tape, an imperative and repressing saying (Freud 1939).

Following the argument, it is possible to think that every single identification is a signification process that draws the signifier from its lexical connections, but there is a primary order, its_position, of the signifier (simple letters, colors, geometry, ellipses in a canvas and some coordinates or an envelope on a table or blackboard... in bed and in sex), where the subject (or whatever we want to *subject*) is separated, not subjected—it falls—and it is different from its qualities, and therefore it is not only signification, it implies an alignment of signifier (Lacan 1956) or its *excommunication*—exconjunction!—. That is why, when we discuss symbolism in general, we overlook the dimension and state referred to a linked to the presence of signifier and its syntactic organization. It is impossible not to see the phenomenon of the signifier (West 1991): a contiguity. The signifier is, therefore, an instrument with which the lost significant is expressed (not *subjected*)... The signifier is not everything... But it is in its place, willing to be condensed, but not to be wrongly placed, became something else (and thus the importance of assuming the difficulty of reading it...) for seeing the place and is co_responding void, recognizing it and accepting a momentary variation, a shoot of the state in which the signifier moves correlatively *breaking the law of conservation* in that exact moment and not in a different one (that is a different story). The signifier is not everything, but it is less if it does not move with its trail, trajectory and drift (everything is the signifier, that is the importance of the accent, the shade or de style and, of course, of the background figure (Diezma 2001) and the *fuscum subnigrum* of the monad (Leibniz / Deleuze): problem of style or integration, and also problem of expression or derivation).

Without the structuration of the signifier and its *pseudo_movement*, no transfer of meaning is possible and, therefore, the important thing is the opposition/position, or the non-predicability between the internal ties and anchorages of the signifier: the positional (or propositional) and the similar, which is linked to the indefinite possibility of the substitution or transformation function

(*Change operations*. Cage). This can be only conceived as the foundation of the already mentioned positional relation (Lacan 1956) and the trajectory of positions, tangents, areas and speeds... of the instant acceleration present in every orbit movement. At the beginning of the metaphor (ontology) there is no signification but is placement in (one) position after another, in the place in transit, the subject in the proposition... Everything in *Atlas Elipticalis* is about a phenomenon of signifiers... It's about that stuff and enjoys it. The metaphor is maintained through a positional articulation, because the important thing is not that similarity is maintained through meaning, but that the transfer of meaning is only possible because of the structure that we call language. Every language is metalanguage thanks to its own register. Positional coherence is everything, and yet (Lacan 1955), the sky and all the stars will fall, perhaps, on the heads of the generations to_come. Lenny senses it. Éluard senses it... Godard senses it.

If it is so necessary to use word (Lippard) *is is for finding or for not getting lost, given our inclination to break down in the presence of the other... I love you*: an ending as fitting for this presentation texts as it was, disturbingly, for the end of *Alphaville* (Godard 1965)...

José Maldonado. April 2018

This text is a brief introduction to a series of aspects which are sketched but not developed in detail in the theoretical text included as a lengthy reflection of the formal and technical aspects that the last paragraphs of this introduction point out.

Notes

* In set theory, the axiom of regularity or axiom of foundation is an axiom that states that certain sets, for instance, a set containing itself as an element, cannot exist. It was established by Von Neumann and Zermelo between 1925 and 1930.

An equivalent way of presenting the axiom of regularity is by affirming that every set is regular, that is, the relation of belonging (\in), seen as a partial order, has a minimum element in every set. In particular, this prevents the existence of an infinite succession of sets according to the formula $x_1 \ni x_2 \ni x_3 \ni \dots$. This way, it is easy to understand that the axiom of regularity prevents the existence of "pathological" sets —non-regular—, such as:

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- o A set that is its only element, for instance $x \ni x \ni \dots$
 - o Two sets, y and z , in which $y = \{z\}$, $z = \{y\}$. Therefore, $y \ni z \ni y \ni \dots$