

The Proletarianization of Sensibility

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What happened to Marcel Duchamp between 1912—*Nude Descending a Staircase*—and 1917—*Fountain*? And why should it matter to us?

Between 1912 and 1917, Duchamp was increasingly concerned with the question of reproducibility that, starting with photography and chronophotography, leads to Frederick Taylor—that is to say, to the readymade. The readymade is born from the serialized production for mass markets, which open up a new question of proletarianization in a new age.

In my book *Symbolic Misery*, I tried to show that at the time of Henry Ford and Edward Bernays, the development of the culture industries led to a *proletarianization of the sensibility* of the consumer through the apparatuses for the canalization and reproduction of perception. Bernays, who was Sigmund Freud's nephew, invented the basics of marketing by organizing the captivation of the consumers' attention, and thus of the libidinal energy that marketing must seek to redirect from the consumers' primordial

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objects toward the commodities. This process of proletarianization mirrors the way in which the industrial machine era made possible the proletarianization of the producers. I use the term *proletarianization* to refer to a *loss of knowledge (savoir)*.

For Béla Bartók, it is this loss of knowledge that is at stake in the birth of the radio. Like the phonograph, the radio enables one to listen to music without needing to know how to play music. In an interview that Bartók gave in 1937, he says that one should only be allowed to listen to music on the radio if one is reading the musical score at the same time. For him, it is evident that those who do not know how to read or play music cannot really listen to it.

In 1759, Anne-Claude-Philippe de Tubières, Count de Caylus, says in his debate with Denis Diderot—and Goethe will say the same at the end of the eighteenth century—that it is impossible to talk about a canvas that one has not copied.

If one looks at the canvases in which, in 1796, Hubert Robert is painting the Louvre—which had become a national museum accessible to all just three years before—one can see that the visitors, who are most definitely almost all artists, mostly reproduce paintings there. Paul Cézanne will do the same in the nineteenth century. As he explains in a letter to Émile Bernard, he thinks that one cannot *see* that which one cannot *show* by *painting* it, for example. One only *sees* to the extent to which one is capable of *painting what one sees*.

One would have to show that what is happening here is a transformation of Jakob von Uexküll's sensorimotor loop. From this moment onward, it starts looping through artificial organs, thus making possible a noetic expression of sensibility that becomes exclamatory and sensational as a result.

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Throughout the twentieth century, the development of technologies—of what Walter Benjamin calls “mechanical reproducibility”—led to a *generalized regression of the psychomotive knowledges* that were characteristic of art amateurs.

This regression was made possible by a *machinic turn of sensibility* that led to a proletarianization of the amateur so that the latter, having lost his or her knowledges, became a *cultural consumer*—at times even turning into what Hannah Arendt calls a *cultivated philistine*.

These questions—and the questions that the *an-artist* Duchamp

raises about the aim of the artwork in what he characterizes as the time of the proletarianization of the artists themselves—confront us today in an entirely new context that is almost the inverse of the time that Duchamp is talking about, namely, a time in which a *second machinic turn of sensibility* is taking place.

This second turn is made possible by digital technologies, through which just about anyone can access technologies of captivation, postproduction, indexation, diffusion, and promotion—technologies that were, until now, industrial functions that were hegemonically controlled by what I have called the *psychopower* of marketing and the culture industries.

This new machinic turn of sensibility—which is no longer analog but digital—leads to a renaissance of the figure of the amateur, that is to say, to a *reconstitution of libidinal energy* which, after being systematically canalized and rerouted by consumerist organization, ended up putting in place an economy of drives—that is to say, a *libidinal diseconomy*.

What is an amateur if not a figure of a libidinal economy? The *amateur* “loves” (*amat*, from the Latin verb *amare*, “to love”): that’s what makes an amateur an amateur. Art amateurs love works of art. And insofar as they love them, these artworks *work on* them—that is to say, the amateur is *trans-formed* by them: *individuated* by them.

These are the questions that I will approach in this text. To do so, however, I must first turn to Kant.

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In order for a work of art, any work of art, to present itself as such, namely as a work of art, one must believe in it: believe in it as a work, and as a work of art. The work of art only works as art to the extent that one believes in it.

In a way, Kant was already saying this: the reflectivity of aesthetic judgment, as a judgment that cannot be proven, and that could therefore never be apodictic, is, at least from this point of view, something that presupposes a kind of belief. It’s as if each work of art were in a way its own (deictic) revelation, and could only manifest itself as work by presenting itself as such a revelation, thereby forming a sort of dogma—which in some cases has constituted schools, chapels, churches, and has even led to schisms.

When I consider a work to be beautiful, I necessarily think that everyone *should* find it beautiful, Kant says; however, *in the intimacy of my thoughts I know* that this is not the case, and that it will *never* be the case.

This is also to say that the work's beauty will never be recognized, if to recognize means to *establish* as true, as in "to prove" or "to demonstrate." Aesthetic judgment will always remain a state of my belief, which could possibly be shared more largely, for example, by my friends, or even by my "age," as fashion, or as a received idea. The object of aesthetic judgment, however, will always and literally remain improbable, unprovable.

Whether it is individual or collective, the aesthetic judgment is always of this order: it's a *reflective* judgment, and not a determinate one, which means that it is of the order of a belief, which is also the mode of being of the experience of art in general.

In the twentieth century, this belief develops a new but essential link to a sort of scandal, that is to say, to a sort of trap and reversal (*skhandalon*). This link is formed from the nineteenth century onward, with *Olympia*—the title of the famous painting by Édouard Manet, and also the name of the animated doll in Ernst Hoffmann's *The Sandman*, the story that is of central importance to Freud's analysis of the uncanny. And the link becomes explicit with Dadaism. This new kind of belief—which one could call *reverse belief*—expresses itself in competing churches and chapels—some are more dogmatic than others, and a few are schismatic, even—that one can call tastes or movements. However, these tastes or movements are *transindividuations of the social*, to the extent that one understands the social as the process of a psychic and collective individuation.

It seems to be the case, then, that reflective judgment is not only shared but also constructed—that it comes about through various artifices, and that *this artifactual formation of judgment and its reflectivity can become a dimension of art itself*: not only a dimension but the very form of art's workings even: it can become a sort of *social sculpture*.

It's in the same way that art becomes a part of the global development of highly speculative marketing. One can thus see appear marketing techniques like the "buzz," which is also the modality of psychopower; such marketing techniques exploit the reflective and inevitably autosuggestive dimension of individual as well as collective judgment. The mystagogy of art thus finds itself threatened by that to which, in this case, it comes very close: mystification.

All this follows from what one could call a *pharmacology of the social sculpture*—from a mystagogy that always confronts the risk of mystification, a mystification that this pharmacology turns into its working material. And this confrontation does not start with Joseph Beuys but with Duchamp.

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All this raises a question about the instrumental and technical conditions of the noetic act that is called, very generally, a belief. This question needs to be asked anew in a time when contemporary art, like religion, has some followers who are superstitious, as well as some who are bigots, fanatics, Gnostics, and agnostics. The mysteries of art always pass through the *instruments* of this art—in the same way that there are instruments of a *cult*. And a specific problem of modern art and contemporary art is the ever-increasing obsolescence of these instruments—I am thinking here not only of techniques, and in particular the techniques practiced by artists, but also of organizations (insofar as they are part of what I call a general organology), that is to say, of institutions.

A work only works to the extent that one believes in it. More precisely, a work only works to the extent that it affects us, in the sense that, suddenly, it jumps out at us (*elle fait saillance*). Such a jumping out only affects us, and gets us hooked, to the extent that it directs us toward a mystery: it reveals next to existence—next to *its own* existence first and foremost, but also next to that of its author and of its spectator—*something other* than the plane of existence—if one believes in it. The experience of art is the experience of a work that opens up onto such a plane, and that appears in this way to reveal this other plane. Every work of art has the structure of a revelation.

Any sensible subject that is gifted with a *suprasensible* faculty can have this irreducible and exclusively subjective experience. Kant argues it to be *analogous* to the moral law in terms of the encounter with the sensible (*aesthesis*); he calls it an aesthetic judgment. It makes appear *in the most ordinary way in the world* the *extra-ordinary next to* this ordinary—and as coming out of this ordinary, but also, and at the same time, as *something that can never be proven (prouvé)*: instead, *it can only be experienced (éprouvé)*.

Let's say that the mysterious is a name of the extra-ordinary and that there is a *mystagogical performativity* of the work, which only works on this condition. Insofar as the mystery of the ordinary goes, the work initiates one to another plane, and in this way it constitutes an address, that is to say, a destination. This dimension—which is not that of existence, even though it does not come from an elsewhere or from a world beyond existence, either—leaps forth (*se projette*) from immanence and into it. It is this fully immanent projection that forms the basis of the question of reflective judgment, in the sense that such a judgment cannot be reduced or com-

pared to objective determinations, that is to say, to objects of determinate and cognitive judgment.

The cognitive is never mysterious. The reflective, on the other hand, is the mystery of the extra-ordinary itself, but of an extra-ordinary without transcendence. In this sense, it is the *mystery of immanence itself*, the *becoming-profane* of the world. That is to say: its *becoming-ordinary*—whence the fact that a reflective judgment is only *universal by de-fault* (*par défaut*). Its universality—the fact that I posit that *everyone* should find beautiful, and not merely agreeable, what *I* find beautiful; that everyone should find extra-ordinary what is *also* ordinary—is its very mystery, precisely because of the fact that it only imposes itself by de-faulting itself: one will never be able to prove this universality. It will forever remain *fundamentally doubtful*.

The being-by-de-fault of that which is called beautiful, and more generally the content of every aesthetic judgment, thus joins up with the intrinsically *idiomatic* character of language: there is no universal language, and every idiom comes about through a de-fault of language (through a fault that is de-faulted, un-worked). In the eyes of those who do not speak the language, for example, idioms come about through a fault of pronunciation. That is *also* why a work of art is always idiomatic. Born from the fault and de-fault of language *in general*, of *the* language, a language only speaks *as de-fault*, by *making* faults and de-faults: a language (as opposed to language *in general*, to *the* language) is that which gives speech to a *shibboleth* (which is a fault of pronunciation). It's the mysteries of language and the precarious capacity of poetry that turn such a de-fault into *the very thing that's needed* (*justement ce qu'il faut*)—into a de-fault that is necessary.

This *necessary accident* reveals itself in each work of art, as the jumping out of a singularity that is literally *improbable*, *unprovable*, and that goes much further than a *simple, provable universality*—provable as apodictic universality, which can in this respect be subsumed under the concept of a determinate judgment. That such a *singularity* opens up another dimension, another plane, means that this dimension, this plane, is that which spontaneously leaps forth from any desire—to the extent that desire *renders* its objects *infinite* as the objects of a singularity.

The plane of consistency to which the mystagogy of art refers is a layer that exists among other planes of consistency, and without which *no object of any type of work*—whether it be the work of science, philosophy, literature, law, politics, or knowledge in general—could consist. That is to

say: could impose itself to existence as that which, even though it cannot be the object of a calculation, is *that without which existence would undo itself (se défait)*. Without it, those who still attempt to exist would be brought down to the level of subsistences—that is to say, of the drives.

The reflective judgment by which Kant characterizes aesthetic judgment is thus nothing but a reflective modality of the relation to this other plane that subtends the *entire* activity of the spirit and that can't be reduced to any kind of knowledge, not even apodictic, cognitive, and determinate knowledge. Apodictic thinkers, or “dialecticians,” as Plato and Aristotle call them, are interested in working on the conditions in which one can *put at a distance* and *contemplate deixis*—and thus pass from *monstration* to *de-monstration*, from *showing* to *de-monstrating*. However, these conditions are themselves *monstrative*—they are themselves of the order of *showing*; they cannot be demonstrated or proven. They are what one calls axioms. They are the object of so-called esoteric philosophical teachings that are more like “initiations” than like “education” properly speaking—education is “exoteric” by nature.

If the axiomatic is that which cannot be demonstrated or proven, while at the same time being the condition of all demonstration, the axiom is that which is *likely* but can never be posited as *true*. Does this mean that it is an object of belief? To say so would be a mistake. Because this “belief” only presents itself as axiom on the basis of a kind of *evidence*. This means, however, that it is *also* the object of a *judgment by de-fault*.

And it is this kind of evidence by de-fault that founds the reflexivity of aesthetic judgment. Isn't it *evidence* itself, then, that constitutes a kind of *mystery*? How to separate the necessary mystagogy that would underlie and support the life of the spirit in all its aspects—as the shadow of the light that this life brings—from the workings of all kinds of mystification and obscurantism, which are the price one has to pay for mystagogy but which are similar to the fox in the henhouse?

This intrinsic ambiguity of the life of the spirit requires a critique: a critique of all mystagogies, not in order to denounce them but to discern within them that which is *always* at risk of developing into mystification—and which makes possible the *cultural philistinism* that Arendt analyzes through the figure of the “cultivated philistine.” Plato never goes there—even though he invests the authority of Socrates in the mysterious Diotima, Plato thinks he is free from mystification because he denounces the mysteries of art, music, and poetry. It is also this *tendency toward mystification*, and the mystification that *all* mystagogy carries within it (all philosophy,

all art, all religion), that produces priests who suddenly no longer believe, while they continue to do their job.

Plato's *essence*, Kant's *transcendental*, the object of Freud's *desire*: all these come from such a mystery. All these are the extra-ordinary that a narrow-minded rationalism thinks it can and must eliminate. The excuse being that the extra-ordinary is indeed always *also (but not only)* the reign of simulators.

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I am speaking here of belief insofar as belief refers to an object that is not on the plane of existence—because one can also believe that behind this door, there is a corridor; but that is an entirely different kind of belief. The belief I have in mind is therefore not a *belief of existence*; instead, it irreducibly consists of putting an object on another plane and of believing in this other plane through this very act. It's the most banal structure there is: its logic is that of desire giving itself an object and elevating it to the status of being the object of this desire, an object that can only be desired to the extent that it is not calculable, and therefore incomparable, unprovable. Seen from this angle, it is not an object that exists—if it is true that only that which is provable and calculable exists.

It's exactly the same when, if I judge something to be beautiful, I include in my judgment that everyone ought to find it beautiful. When I love a being and I desire it, I include in my judgment the presumption that the entire world ought to love and desire this being, even though I know very well that this is not the case. Desire, in this case, is not of the order of the drive. Desire universalizes its objects; the drive, on the other hand, tends toward the consumption of an object. The latter does not include autouniversalization: desire is to the drive what the beautiful is to that which is merely agreeable.

We are living in a *time of lovelessness (désamour)*: the time of a libidinal economy that is constituted in such a way that, with capitalism having put desire at the center of its energy, this economy has led to the ruin of desire, to the unchaining of its drives, and to the liquidation of *philia* and more generally of this love that the noetic souls have for each other and for the objects of their world. When they are religious, these souls consider such objects to be the expression of God's infinite goodness. They are the indicators of this goodness as a sublime source of all love. God thus constitutes the object of all desires.

Love—or, to use a less specifically Western and Christian term,

desire—constitutes *philia*. This is also how love constitutes *individuation*: it only follows its course on the *psychic* plane to the extent that it *also* inscribes itself on the *collective* plane. It's through love that the *and* of *psychic and collective* individuation is formed. As the first and preliminary condition of this individuation, *love is that which needs to be maintained through care*, through those practices of care that make possible the access to consistencies that exist on the plane of the extra-ordinary—and that, because they do not exist, are intrinsically doubtful and improbable, unprovable.

Works—for example, artworks—are such practices of care. But they *themselves* need to be taken care of: one must be *initiated* into these objects that are themselves initiatory. This is how the *magnetic* chain and field that Socrates talks about in Plato's *Ion* are formed.

The question of *access to the works* is what one has called in the era of the culture industries, and in the “cultural democracies,” cultural mediation—a highly institutionalized way of referring to the *question of address* (which I raised earlier on). The question of access, however, is a question of *mystagogy*: it is the question of the initiation into a mystery that the artwork intrinsically is, insofar as it projects those that it affects into another plane, a plane that is itself improbable and intrinsically mysterious—at least in view of the planes of ordinary existence and, even more so, of subsistence. The question of this access is raised in each society, whether it is embodied by the shaman, the warrior (who enters into the plane of consistency that is his or her liberty), the official, the master, the artist, or the institution. However, in modern art this question comes to count in a new way (*se pose selon une nouvelle facture*)—and following something like a fault line (*dans une fracture*).

This is the price one must pay—and it's a high price—for the death of God. It's the prize one gets through the death of God, as the trophy for this *chasing out of the sacred* (that is to say, of the extra-ordinary insofar as it is *separate*). Such a chasing out amounts to a state of disenchantment, in which modern art constitutes itself as the *mystery of the profane*, and no longer as the sacred—as the affirmation, within this immanence that the disenchanted world has become, of a consistency next to existence, as something from where a new plane is set free. That's what Charles Baudelaire says, and he is thinking of Constantin Guys and Manet. It's the plane of consistency that Gilles Deleuze talks about as belief in the world. It's a *mystagogy of immanence*.

To “believe in this world,” one needs a plane of consistency: existence will never suffer because of belief. This belief-in-consistency (which

is not simply the belief-in-existence that makes me believe that there is something behind every door) is indissociable from reason understood as motive: in French, the word for *reason*—*raison*—also refers to the “motivation” that produces “movement.” Belief *looks for* the motive, which is in turn constituted by belief (this mystagogy is a transductive relation). I can only desire that in which I believe: the object of my *desire* becomes immediately (to the extent that I desire it) the object of my *belief* (in its infinity). And this goes both ways: I can only *believe* in what I *desire* (infinitely).

Aristotle calls this desire *theos*. *Theos* is the impassive and inaccessible object of all desires. In this respect, it is non-existent. Everything that exists is passive, that is to say, corruptible, or “sublunary,” as Aristotle says. *Theos* is the object of the *contemplation* (*theorein*) of the noetic souls insofar as they desire, the contemplation through which they pass on to—and elevate themselves toward—the plane of the extra-ordinary.

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Today, in a time of lovelessness, it often becomes more and more difficult to say that one *loves* a work: one finds this or that “interesting.” “It’s interesting”: this is the type of “postmodern” judgment—neither negative nor positive—that appears to be typical of the cultivated philistine and that one hears more and more. A mediocre judgment—*mediocris* in the narrow sense of the word: as referring to the average judgment of the average person, subjected to the averages of modern mass society.

A work only works on the condition that the curiosity, the interest it sparks *in the first instance trans-forms itself* into mystery, and *lifts itself* onto a higher plane: “As the Goncourt brothers said about a work by Chardin: at a certain moment, ‘the painting is elevated’” (Arasse 2006: 18). The work only works on the condition that simple interest gives way—and possibly immediately afterward—to *sur-prise*, to *being taken by surprise*. It is in surprise and through surprise that a passion of the work happens (*advient*), so that the work produces a sort of levitation, that is to say, the sort of miracle by which all true admiration is triggered.

There is a *unity of the history of artistic mystagogy*. It manifests itself when I—experiencing one of these mysteries that one calls works, or even a series of such *mysteries* as they are presented in museums, expositions, or galleries—suddenly find myself in a state of levitation—and in a way that is *unexpected* and that I *cannot take in* (*in-compréhensible*): I am *passing on to the other plane*—a plane where an *over-taking* (*sur-préhension*), a being *over-taken*, overcomes or surpasses all *com-prehension* (*com-préhension*).

This can happen through the Black Bull in the caves of Lascaux, or through Greek marble, a portrait of Rembrandt, and the initiatory path that is formed and that I traverse discovering the monogrammatic monography of a contemporary artist, an artist of my time—who *transindividuates the time in which he or she is working*. This is a suspension, an *epokhè*—because it is epoch-making: it becomes one of my epochs, I am *trans-formed* by such a surprise, such an over-taking, and what follows from it is what Gilbert Simondon calls a *quantum leap* in individuation. It can also constitute an epoch in art history, or in the history of an artist: in what one calls *his or her work*.

The scandal is itself a sort of *social levitation*, preceded by a fall—hence the initial meaning of the Greek word *skhandalon*: trap. At first, and *insofar as it involves a process*, the scandal is not psychically and individually experienced as a levitation. On the contrary, it *consists* first of all, and in a way *negatively*, in a *collapse*: it is a kind of being over-taken, a kind of surprise or over-prehension, but this is presented rather as the *incapacity of taking something in* than as that *by which one is taken over*—and as that which goes against all interest as well as all access to the suprasensible—as that which is shocking and “slaps” public opinion “in the face” by going against its interests: as that which is *not at all interesting, unworthy* of interest, and, in this respect, *demoralizing*.

It is only in the aftermath of a scandal, and through a work (*travail*) of collective individuation (that is to say, of transindividuation) that a surprise, an over-taking—which is an epoch, that is to say, a suspension, and an interruption, which lifts us up—is produced. This aftermath of the scandal is, in this case as well, a sort of *collective levitation, but it only comes about through something like a work of mourning*.

This is why one can never say that the mystagogy that is at work during the opening of an art show is merely a mystification: contemporary art—which proceeds from the scandal through which modern art comes about and thus reaches its completion through a sort of trap—requires an aftermath to which its scandalous origin gives it a right, an aftermath that is in a way a priori. This aftermath is that of the transformation of psychic and collective individuation, through which the *scandalous mystagogue*—the one who brings to light the mystagogical character of art *as such*—sculpts the social.

All the same, the question is raised of knowing to what extent a contemporary mystagogy is still possible—if it is true that today the adjective *contemporary* means “without scandal.” There used to be a time of

the scandal: a time when transgression *produced* a scandal. But this is no longer the case—it's as if there no longer were any possibilities for transgression, as if one could no longer expect anything from transgression. Or from a mystery. As if there no longer were a mystery. Our time is a time in which the mafia and the oligarchies remorselessly chase out the bourgeoisie—a bourgeoisie that, although it is philistine, is still too cultivated in their eyes.

Levitation, through which a work appears to me as *work*, and “lifts itself,” can only come about as belief. This belief is *a desire where a judgment is formed*. To judge a work is to *love* or *not to love* it. And this is why *such a judgment is made by an amateur*: amateurs have made art history, and in the most diverse ways.

Now, there are many instances in which one can absolutely no longer say with respect to contemporary artworks *whether one loves them, or whether one doesn't*: in these cases, *loving no longer has any meaning*. In this case, one is tempted to give the assessment that I called mediocre: “it's interesting” or “it's not interesting.” This is a mediocrity for which, as philistine as it may be, one should not have any contempt (for who can, today, completely escape the destiny of the cultivated philistine?): it develops in time, and as the very suffering that Axel Honneth calls *Missachtung* (which is translated in French by the word *mépris*, “contempt”).

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When art becomes transgression—in other words, in the first stage of a larger *becoming-attitude*—that with which art works (*travaille*) is no longer matter: it is individuation. This requires one to think a hypermatter rather than something “immaterial,” and I will need to come back to this. Art takes advantage in every possible way of the fact that in individuation—which is a current, a flux, a process—forms lose and change form and are flowing along, and that these forms are always already materials—pigments, marble, bronze, photographs, canvas for a painting, paper for a newspaper, industrial materials, glass, “entirely finished” objects, rails, apparatuses, *dispositifs*: all sorts of instances that can become *the object of individuation*, that is to say, of *that which can spatialize time*. Such is the role of what I call tertiary retentions: they specify, like traces, the texture of the *and* of psychic and collective individuation, which is woven by the retentional devices, apparatuses, and institutions.

Having become trans-gression and then attitude as psychosocial individuation (which is made up of attitude and is in this sense the hyper-

matter par excellence), art is a modality of transformation, which is what individuation is by general principle—but it has become so according to conditions that change with time: the *materials* of transgression are all the more transgressive when, in industrial and then hyperindustrial activity, they *are no longer simply materials* with which one can produce forms.

Individuation comes about as a function of dynamic constraints that are induced by a general organology that results in a genealogy of the sensible. At a time when a scandal turns out to be a technique of social sculpting (that is to say, a new process of individuation), and after language has already been turned into letters and become printed, reproducibility—*which substitutes the matrix and the apparatus of captivation for the form*—affects not only the audiovisual works of art, such as photography and cinema, but also, and first and foremost, all our everyday objects, coming from serialized productions. It marks a change in the general regime of reproduction that constitutes a *new (industrial) totality of tertiary retentions*, one that begins with the grammatization of the gestures of the workers (*travailleurs*) themselves.

The conditions of individuation are organological: they pass through the organs of perception, but they endlessly recombine the assemblages (*agencements*) of these organs through technical mediations. This can happen, for example, by (artificially) bringing together the ear and the hand through the musical instrument (by an organon that is an artifact), or by bringing together, before art history in the narrow sense of the word, the eye, the mouth, and the hand of the artist who uses a straw to blow pigments on the wall inside the caves of Lascaux.

Art history is also the history of these assemblages, in the sense that painters see with their hands, and musicians, after the appearance in the nineteenth century of the diastematic notation of pitches and rhythms, hear with their eyes. These assemblages pass through organic defunctionalizations and refunctionalizations of both the sense organs and the artificial organs and organizations. And all this constitutes itself parallel to that by which the process of grammatization, through which the continuous flow is separated, begins, the continuous flow of speech, of gesture, of the perceived visible and audible, separated into recombinable elements that can be put together in different ways. In this aspect, the continuous is workable; it is a work of art through this very dimension.

The defunctionalizations and refunctionalizations that determine the rhythm of the organological genealogy of the sensible and of what lies coiled up there—the intellect and the unity of its reasons, its motivations—

have specific folds that create ruptures that are called epochs and that accentuate more and more vividly as time moves on the fault lines, the disadjustments, the incomprehensions, the crises, and critiques. During the more than thirty thousand years that separate us from the Chauvet cave (the first musical instruments are said to date from this age as well), this genealogy (which begins from the start of humanization [*hominisation*], more than two million years earlier) amounts through grammatization to an industrial group of apparatuses of which the machinic turn as well as a turn of the sensibility of the spirit in its totality are born—with all their dimensions having become objects of calculability, that is to say, of determination: of what Kant calls the *determinate judgment*.

It is only within such a turn that an event as extra-ordinary as *Fountain* can come about—between 1917 and 1963, the year when the circuit of its transindividuation entered it into art history, and as the origin of what one would call, today, contemporary art. At this stage of its genealogy—which is also the stage of captivation and of the systematic detour of libidinal energy through the audiovisual powers that are organized in the culture industry as the flow of temporal objects obsessed with attention in the service of a nascent consumerist economy—the *organs of perception* end up becoming *elements of organological sets that are industrially reconfigured* and in which the apparatuses come first—as apparatuses of perception of psychic apparatuses, and as technical apparatuses and social apparatuses as well. And it's in this new setup that transindividuation is at work—when it works.

Artists work (*travaillent*) with all these apparatuses, with this material producing all sorts of retentional materials: surrealism works (*travaille*) with the psychic apparatus which has an unconscious; expressionism with the mnemonic apparatus where phenomena are transformed—the phenomenological apparatus that Klee describes at the beginning of his *On Modern Art* and that continues in Beuys's work; pop art works with the apparatus of the mass media, et cetera. All this brings us back to the question of a general organology, in which the apparatuses of perception are reexamined, explored, reallocated, and possibly also closed down in a context of experiences that have profoundly changed these apparatuses' organological activity as well as their organological status.

Reference

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