

The Fractured Time

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To Hieronimus Bosch's conjuror...

"A n'entr'ouvrir comme un blasphème
Qu'absence éternelle de lit"

Stéphane Mallarmé

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"Can we successfully separate Sunday from a sextuple number of working days ? Can we afford two ways of life, one devoted to beauty, to ideals, to the good, the true but shut away within the narrow limits of the Sabbath and the other one, of a huge scope, determined by the utilitarian and filled with ugliness and sordidness ?"

Richard Neutra - Architect

The Fracturing

In its genesis, religion is instituted by means of this fracturing of time that is widely opening on loss. The imaginary institution of an under life

Religion consists in this amazing maneuver, where the vanishing trick and the breaking in, are indissolubly mixing, a decomposition of the World into pieces out of which the three elements of the Holy Trinity instantly pop up, armed to the teeth :

- *The Profane*, in other terms what infinitely and indefinitely pays and carries the cans, a matter made of a lack so deep that all riches pour out of it, in a word, *Debt*.
- *The Divine*, in other terms, the death of unity, hence indissolubly its ghost, a being infinite and indefinite such as only what is dead can be, the object and objective of any sale, in a word, *Merchandise*
- *The Religious*, finally, the link (lat. "religare"), in other terms, this glue that indefinitely feeds on pasting the pieces of the world together again, the toll of Totality, in a word, *Money*

Religion is really this fracturing in acts. It is such, a separation at any moment, and it has to be so, because it is essentially *that*. Now what ? Nothing else after all than this quite ordinary insinuation that sows discord to sell conciliation. A contemptuous discourse, a gossip, that only draws its strength from the size of what it defames.

The Visible

On the right side, it looks like a theatrical gesture aiming at the reconstitution of unity, but which, by a kind of systematic disaster, would never really succeed. Or better, that would never succeed but for one moment, the instant of the *sacrifice*, the infinite and indefinite and precise instant of the rite, that breaks the unity again in a movement that shows and hides it at the same time.

No malice, no modesty, no mystery, no harshness of the Real in such a systematic failure. The Real in the worst case does not care the slightest and most of the time would rather tend to offer itself. No, there is nothing else in this repeated disaster, than a bare shopkeeper necessity : if the trick really worked then unity would not be for sale next time.

Spectacular gesture, and hence built of concealment since concealment is at the core of any staging (what would staging consist of, else?). A gesture of which, just as well, the entire show is made, as - try it - without concealment there is no show left. A show always consists in putting on the stage what is meant to be seen and removing all the rest of the scope of people's vision.

Rite ! Fascination, obsession, and further, hypnosis of the shadow of number, where all power has its roots. Since to rule is always to rely on repetition, since to obey is always to repeat. A beauty of logic, that this repetition, out of which the show draws its efficiency, is already there, as a signature on the birth certificate of *things*. And hence so is it, that, from the very beginning, one may see the fairy of disenchantment at work, weaving its veil : this particular sort of truth the strength of which only resides into being repeated frequently enough.

The Invisible

On the wrong side, it is plainly the fracturing at work. In other terms, the heart of religion itself, a beating heart that religion pulls out of the chest of instant, and the shadow of which is then shown to the crowd as being something totally external to religion, "Evil", "Enemy" and "Devil", but exclusion and rejection anyway, and for good the Prince of this World per construction, to the exact extent to which religion rules the world.

So that, you may indifferently say, depending on whether you take things by the ass hole or by the vanishing trick, that Evil is the excremental side of the Religious or that the Religious is the excremental side of Evil. One being included within the other and vice versa. And crap is hence not just this symbol of money that Sigmund Freud rightly identified, but rather money itself, that is, this imaginary movement by which the fracturing of Time is in the same moment both stated and denied.

The institution of God has no other source, means, nor aim than the profanation of the world, that is to say, the transformation of the world into a trick, into work , into a *thing*, that is to say, in a word, into rubbish. There has never been any other sacrilege than this initial one by which the Sacred was instituted. Any further sacrilege is a repetition of it, hence in the best case, a *caricature*.

It is rather forgetful not to remember that both meanings of the word "consume" came to sound so close due to this habit that they long had, to attend the same Church, of which both of them finally went out, as the same hard cash.

The altar is the ancestor of the stall. The latter is nothing else than an evolutionary improvement of the former.

The Spirit of Gift

But Time flies, carrying Life in its embrace. Nothing either of time or life may be grasped or touched except through poetry or mystique¹, in other terms, immediately – without any respect to whatever sort of intermediary or delay – and in encounters that are rich and deep beyond all possible hopes – or either not at all.

Similarly, art, in the depths of its well of marvels, does not know and does not want to know of either Sundays or working days. Art is made of this entangling of patience and passion, from the rage and

1 In other terms, the kind of atheist radicalism that leads to the *oceanic feeling* where everything dissolves – and the ego just as well.

stubbornness of the alchemist at his furnace, without past nor wait, without any respect or pity for its own ashes, without any other project than the close-by gold of its own awareness at hand, that grows and blooms, oblivious of any idleness.

All that – poetry, art and mystique – participates far too much of the *present* for not knowing itself as *gift*.

The Repeating Failure...

It is all different as regards *sacrifice* – or rather, to name things properly, *murder* – this remarkable proof of life by *reducio ad absurdum*, this indefinitely missed act, out of which the essential each time escapes. Initial and fundamental failure, and certainty too for sure, but only the certainty to have missed and wasted everything. The sadness of a vanished life opening on the desert of past, without present, without presence, and leaving on the empty shore one life only. One life left alone, one life left deprived – as private property is always deprived. Deprived of what was sacrificed.

And the experiment additionally has this ideal and nicely pedagogic feature, to be repeatable at will. Science almost. Assurance, certainty, did I say, as they grow out from the power of number. Industry, almost, already too.

But then the shadow of what must absolutely be kept secret, slowly pours out of this failure, the shame, that must be decorated and covered by all possible means, screens, smokes, perfumes and veils, so that the pitiful failure on which all this heavy pomp is based is kept hidden from knowledge. Shame, yes, always and opportunely escorted by the engaging cortege of the occult, modesty, concealment and mystery.

It is all different as regards murder, by which the present suddenly forks, into a “before” and an “after”, and where the gift is lost. Murder out of which emerge all the imaginations of the body, of the corpse, the manipulable evidence of the *thing*. Matter, in a word, which has never been anything else than *that*.

Murder is free of charge. The instant of the murder, when the Real is finally caught in one's hand. And public murder is the sun of shared certainty. And here comes Sunday, the end of hesitations, the end of risk, of danger, of incertitude. Peace!

Safer and more reliable than a corpse, you won't ever find...

Murder, yes, from which any assurance comes, although not the kind of assurance granted by a loving community – as community is silently ruined by the awful thrill of a horrible suspicion, passing through the audience in the very the instant when the sacrifice takes place, that this, could have been me – but the assurance of the sharing...

Whoever it may be, whatever finally happens to what falls, is slaughtered and dismembered, each one of the survivors will be allowed to bring a little piece of it back home, as a memory, as a souvenir. Like a baton that passes from hand to hand with this yellow and falsely smiling complicity of the ones who remain, knowing only too well that they had quite a narrow escape. Yes, credit already, in its most exact and efficient appearance : the creditors dismembering the bankrupt in the hope to get some of their lost money back! The kind of agreements on top of which contracts are signed.

O Debt

One may certainly say that poets, mystics or artists do pay the price for their passions. But this is quite literally because they threw away all sort of masks and let grow inside themselves the desire to live this essential and chemical nudity, by which the skin – may it be a stained glass work of either flesh or soul – becomes a membrane, through which the lights, fluids and flows of the Real, are filtering...

None of such things are beating in the heart of the sacrifice. Quite on the opposite, the essential part of the art in sacrifice is "to report yourself sick".

It is a usually underestimated fact that there is no greater fear for men than the fear they have of their minds. That is to say, of the images that their minds unceasingly create - What else ? Stones do not fear anything ; they don't create images. Even death is lighter than this dread caused by our moving minds. Or more precisely, the fear of death is nothing else than this : the dread of a moving mind in which the bottomless horror of images would endlessly unleash its uncontrolled powers. Because it is not the dread of the end that torments us but the fear of an endless dread. "Rather face the dread of the end than an endless dread" as Marx said .

An evidence that nothing is known to men to be as fearful than the power of their own mind.

Hence the idea to let another one face it. If your own mind has turned into a hell, then call a Priest ! The priest will send your mental hell to the infinite. And his is why the divine was understood as a spirit from the very start. The divine is the power of ours minds expelled.

Now please note that the priest is taking risks for the other in this operation, but that he does not stand for the other. The priest is just a mediator, an intermediary, in other terms a being of abstract nature, an information carrier, who is only supposed to appropriately address a request to the spirit expected to be in charge of handling it.

In other terms a priest hands over the hot potatoe from the helpless men to the gods or spirits. Not more. This initial and constitutive defection, is repeated through innumerable sacrifices, where, all well considered, the action in the core of the theater actually only deals, with nothing else, than the mysterious glory of paying one's debts.

So, as greenish as the banknote may be, it does not hide it's origins : in God we trust. And whatever may be told about it, between the believer and his god, the question most often has to do with a bargaining for that kind of deal.

Eye for eye, tooth for tooth... One can sense this iron law in the core of trade. Yet such a law would make trade of a very little interest, if it was, fortunately enough, quite possible to cheat with the divine a bit, by handing the hot potatoe again to a third party : the victim. Who is usually not the slightest involved with the initial request, neither with the priest nor the invoked spirits. The victim is only a sign, a pure sign, absolutely empty of any sort of meaning and hence quite proper to carry away any sort meaning and all possible meanings. This absence of involvement in what is at stake is the reason why the process used for selecting the victim is so often arbitrary.

Let's summarize... Your mind is haunted by a merry-go-round of good images (desire) or of bad images (dread) or even a mixture of both. The priest (carefully !) take that from your mind and drops it on the victim. The victim hence acts as a kind of general purpose mental mirror - and sink.

The victim is now vividly haunted with a merry-go-round of images too -- not necessarily good images though.

The priest kills the victim. The hellish merry-go-round then leaves this earth with the victim's soul (that is, with the victim's last breath) and goes straight to Heaven, where God is collecting all the merry-go-round of images in the infinite (this is why God dwells in the infinite, he needs a lot of room to store all these hellish mental images).

This is the way exchange appears, the quiproquo in which the requirement for equivalence is transmuted into the monetary abstraction that stabs through the victim with the sacrificer's blade. Abstraction, yes, because the victim after all is thereby summed up to this : standing for... anything and standing for all. Being worth for, being a value. To the point that even today, when a dear one dies by accident, we would feel somewhat better if we could think that he or she died for something. As if it was not more human, free and proud to simply die for nothing.

And hence, do not be surprised if money is cold. It only takes its function and efficiency from the final deadly cold.

Ultimately

One must admit that the logical ultimate achievement of the Religious – that is, of the indefinite iteration of the fracturing of Time that constitutes it, as well as of the indefinite iteration of the dismembering meant to ritually distribute its profane and concrete image – could not reasonably expected to be very different than the kind of decomposition w we have the questionable privilege to live.

It is not just the sign or the symptom of barbarity, but this very fracture of the unity of time which is the barbarity of abstraction itself, under whatever "materialism" it may hide. It is – quite precisely – this intellectual drop of blood that all the water of the sea shall never suffice to wash.

And yet, however monstrous may be the ravages and history of this barbarity, there has never been anything else there but images. Which proves enough this truth that all Powers deny, while using it, that is, that images belong to this world and that their power in it is immense. A power where – in such a comical way from now on – the bourgeois realism hallucinates itself as well as it hallucinates us, into heights of blindness and addiction, that overwhelm by far the shy tops of the World Trade Center.

Screens, smokes, perfumes and veils ! Wheezy and dusty pouncing patterns of this fracture of Time through which all strength and beauty vanish. We, who are from the core of image, know much better than these repetitions. Lovers of the seamless time do not live on prerequisites. In each corner of the sinister theater, let us get our marvels grow.