

# English Texts

## FOREWORD

On 26 January 2006 Fundació Antoni Tàpies presented the exhibition *F.X. Archive: The Empty City. Community*, a project by Pedro G. Romero. It was a key work for our institution, because it continues the reflections we began some years ago and marks a step forward for our future project.

Six years earlier, on 21 January 2000, Fundació Antoni Tàpies presented the work of Renée Green, an author who adopts a critical approach to historiographical practices: she looks for new directions for representing the past in the present, poses questions about power, context, reception and meaning, reveals hidden meanings, reorganises or recontextualises artefacts. Her installations, normally related to the places where she works, question dominant modes of construction of the past and definition of the present, while trying to retrieve submerged histories or meanings.

Working in and with the different places where art happens – the social and political contexts where the works are generated, as well as the space where they are presented – is a constant practice in the work of Pedro G. Romero. In this approach by *F.X. Archive* to the present time, *The Empty City* project, the object-subject of study is a town near Barcelona, Badia del Vallès.

For the Fundació Antoni Tàpies project, working with contexts has also been fundamental; such is the case of *Contemporary Arab Representations* directed by Catherine David, *Urban Imaginaries in Latin America* with Armando Silva, or Barcelona in the exhibition *Tourisms: The Defeat of Dissent*, and in the project *Urban Majorities 1900-2025*, directed by Joan Roca i Albert. Places and times where we are still working, trying, like Pedro G. Romero in Badia del Vallès, to open up the political space where it has been closed down and to develop new tools for telling stories which provide new ways of seeing.

In November 2001 we opened the exhibition of the work of Hans-Peter Feldmann, an artist who is interested in popular culture and the popularisation of culture, family archives, the construction of the past in the present, and a critical attitude to the consumer society and authorship in the world of art. An author for whom irony, distance and humour, but also the relationship between life and death, are the vectors which generate personal narratives, where different times are conjugated.

Pedro G. Romero's work is masterly in the incorporation of the popular, which he places at the centre of philosophical, artistic or political disquisitions and debates. There are magnificent examples in the work on Badia del Vallès, related not only to flamenco, but also to festivals, rites and their images, everyday human relations or communal city life.

Attention to popular culture is and has been one of the constants of the Foundation through projects such as *Fernando Bryce or Sutures and Fragments. Territories and Bodies in Science Fiction*, devoted to science fiction films and literature, and possibly as a transfer of the artistic practice of Antoni Tàpies himself, always concerned with the contraries and contradictions between high and low culture.

To review essential and/or marginal projects in the construction of aesthetic modernity is a tendency that has been a feature of Pedro G. Romero's work and has also been one of our goals, with the presentation of authors like Lygia Clark, Mangelos, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina or Asger Jorn. All of them are agitators in different disciplines and parts of the world, aware of the relation every human being establishes with his origins, of the fact that a culture depends mainly on what it can give, and most of all that we must truly know the reality of the images of the past both to defend ourselves against the stereotyped view of history and to understand the present.

Of ends and origins, of vernacular cultures and popular history, Pedro G. Romero also knows a great deal since, as he says, in his work he 'sets the archive dancing', does an exercise of recovery of memory, animating a series of images through gestures, breaking

the archive to try to include what is missing, the *vestige*, according to Giorgio Agamben, the *trace*, according to Michael Foucault.

Alongside those authors the references for this *F.X. Archive* project include, among many others, Aby Warburg, Walter Benjamin and Georges Bataille, authors who also worked on historical time through signs, quotes, juxtapositions of images to reinterpret events, to uncover what remains between the images, in short, to write new narrations.

From *Chris Marker* to *Enthusiasm*, not forgetting the *Archive Cultures* project, the practices of the use of the archive, its potential as a generator of new fictions and stories, its infinite possibilities of returning and forgetting, have been a feature of our programme.

Lastly, I would like to mention the co-operative side of Pedro G. Romero's work, which in this project can be appreciated both in the prolonged intellectual associations with authors like Enrique Vila-Matas, Juan José Lahuerta, Manuel Delgado or Valentín Roma – the person who took us and helped us understand life on the estates better – and his work uncovering the social fabrics of the communities where he works, in this case Badia del Vallès. For the Foundation this task is also one of its lines of force: to look for parallel voices which punctuate and accompany our work and to develop links with other institutions that generate contemporary culture, such as Constant, Kunstwerke, Arteleku, BNV and UNIA arteypensamiento.

### *F.X. Archive: The Empty City. Politics*

The book to which this is the introduction is the sediment of a long process of research and, like the exhibition it accompanied, involves one more materialisation of *F.X. Archive*.

In the exhibition space, the scaffolding structure extended that metaphor of the archive staged and in motion, since one could literally go *in* and *out*, *up* and *down* through the different *files*, which made up a *data base*: seven entries in *F.X. Archive* understood as key words – FEKS, Wandlung, Premature Architectures, Pasolini, Ute Meta Bauer, Descoberta da linha orgânica, Capital – gave way to a series of images, texts, pastimes, actions, noises, games, groupings, etc., which allowed each visitor to create his own particular *text*, interacting and composing his own *performance*, as Pedro G. Romero reminded us in the leaflet: 'In a *mise-en-scène* that is drama and gesture at the same time, visual constructions of all kinds are brought into play and administer a different way of uttering discourse in which the gestural values of the theatre subtract exhibition value from the works... In that sense, the theatre is a tool with which to present the works as a "place composition", acting as the choreography of a mental theatre... Although the space is constructed with the materials on show, they do not point to the finished work, their purpose is not that moment; rather it is to sketch intermediation operations, they rather make each thing a medium...'

The book in turn compiles all the materials and takes up the idea of subtracting exhibition value from the things, while reaffirming the textual meaning of the whole project and the non-semiotic elements that overflow from it. The page, edited and laid out, replaces the architecture of scaffolding and allows another sequence, another arrangement, another stage and other itineraries.

Nuria Enguita Mayo

We have included in the publication a conversation with the artist, which brings together many of the ideas and thoughts that have given body to *F.X. Archive*. As in any collective project, for the preparation of this conversation we have used many sources and some earlier interviews, and in particular the one by Pilar Parcerisas published in *Papers d'Art*, on the occasion of the project *F.X. Archive. The Tragic Week*, shown at the Centre d'Art Santa Mònica in 2002; the one by David González Romero in no. 2 of *Parabólica* magazine in 2004, and the transcriptions of the public sessions of *Laboratorio T.V.* and *Laboratorio Sevilla* which *F.X. Archive* made in 2004 with UNIA arteypensamiento.

## CONVERSATION in APRIL and MAY about F.X. ARCHIVE, approaches with PEDRO G. ROMERO

Nuria Enguita Mayo

### A little history

*'Chronologies apart, Pedro G. Romero has been concerned with issues related to time (historical, biological, psychological, verbal...) for as long as he can remember. However, these works are notable for the total absence of the author. One might say that in these images and writings, signs that are not human appear, although it is true that the mechanisms that shape them have been set in motion by the person who appears as the author. Time (the arts, science, religion, history, biography...) is therefore not only the subject of these figures and texts, but also to some extent their author. Such an extraordinary pretension is, in turn, pure vanity, since time is the author of all works. The mechanisms may respond to an attempt to acknowledge time (its identity, its appearance, its measure...) and then to take a stance against it. The image and its impossibility, that is the main battle against time, and it is broken down into gestures, dances, spasms, violent actions, but also emblems, icons, pictures, technical allegories. An attempt to explain the consequences of a gesture through information of all kinds. A task somewhere between documentation and dance.'*

NEM: Whether for the first time or not I don't know, but those lines from your curriculum appear in the prologue to the book *El tiempo en Sevilla*, a compendium of writings published in 1996 in Seville. For me, the text which gives its name to the book is one of the forerunners of *F.X. Archive*, in turn related to projects like *El tiempo de la bomba*, Fallas 41001-46003 or *Sevilla BSO*. Another fundamental precedent for me is *F.E. El fantasma y el esqueleto. Un viaje, de Fuenteheridos a Hondarribia, por las figuras de la identidad*. From the reflections on the aura in the work of art (*La Sección Áurea*, circa 1990) to the beginnings of *F.X. Archive* (circa 2000), there is a red line that is gradually defined in your work, an attempt to review the world, especially constructing new connections; gutting history, tearing the texts apart, forcing the images, recovering popular fictions and relating them to high culture. But let's go little by little and return to the text; let's go back to that sort of diary, as you put it, which is *El tiempo en Sevilla*.

**PGR: The piece of writing that gives the book its title, *El Tiempo en Sevilla*, is like a diary. Indeed, the epigraphs are headed by the time of day and its corresponding activity. From there, the everyday event is related to another of greater scope, what today we would call globalisation, and always related to the repertoire of a large dictionary of the atomic bomb and its consequences, an encyclopaedia of the world to come. The idea is based on an attempt to superimpose any day in Seville with what Hiroshima must have been like on 6 August 1945. The image presented in the *Sevilla BSO* project describes a variant: 'Sevilla BSO is a reconstruction of the soundtrack of a day in the city of Seville (24 hours in real time), from ambient recordings of different times and moments in the life cycle of the city, recomposed into a fresh soundtrack full of sounds and interference, the sum total of a full year's events in the city, the dating of signs around places and ideas (Puerta Osario, Puerta de la Carne, Feria de Sevilla, Monte de Piedad, Gran Poder and Calle del Infierno), and the twinning of that soundtrack with what it might have been like in Hiroshima on the eve of 6 August 1945.'**

It is evident that Hiroshima appears as the place of History, like that, with a capital H, and the city of Seville is the world where I live; it could have been any other city, but my everyday time is in Seville. Reini Nagakawa, a survivor of Hiroshima, the Japanese translator of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad*, a lover of flamenco, lived in

Seville, in the poor quarter of Triana. It was he who told me that in the Japanese imagination Hiroshima was also like Seville, a city divided in two by a river, which left a strong mark on popular music, on humour, with a religious fervour close to paganism. I suppose that was important as well, the link, the possibility of translating between two situations.

At this point we have to ask a first question, to make a first approach. Before and after the images, the historical event takes place, filed in the different carcasses of time. In your work you record the salvaging of those events, or those images, through the juxtaposition of other events and other images, almost always distant in time and space. As you yourself say, often the everyday is related to the far-off and extraordinary. Your work does not follow an evolutive scientific logic, but rather a random one, mutant (mutation of time, of language, etc.), based on more or less whimsical analogies.

How do you construct work that is both ironic and chilling, where everyday activity and thinking about art is interpenetrated by a host of horrors, which in the end remind us of the omnipotence of (capitalist) power over our lives, over life in all its complexity? And if art for you is a special use of language that links reality with its ideological reflection, what does noise mean, the noise of the bomb, for example, which is the noise of death? How does it relate to silence, to the later silences?

**I think a reading of a text by Ernst Jünger at that time was important. He presented the Hiroshima bomb almost as a return of God to Earth. After the different deaths of God, since Nietzsche, after that short space of time when the world had lived without God, he came back with a show of force. Workers, Jünger said, will be able to rebel, to take the means of production, re-found the state, but something will eventually put a stop to their aspirations, something higher which politics persists in calling the nuclear deterrent. It was important for me to understand that position, to understand the limit that had been re-established in the world through the use of nuclear power and so how to understand a world with God, a theological world. Some of the most important things that operated in my work had appeared in that world without God – libertarian communism, the art avant-gardes, even flamenco music owes something to that world without God – and of course I wanted to or had to understand how language was starting to operate again under the cloak of God, under that perfect language he represents, as Benjamin puts it. After 1945 the importance of a thinker like Benjamin lies precisely in his theological dimension. And it is true that silence was an option, like noise: they are obvious responses, from Cage to Merzbau's Japanese Merzbow. However, in the end it was in humour that I found the greatest resistances of language. That in 1947, in the Cádiz carnivals, Cañamaque, a popular author, should write such comical lyrics about the consequences of the Hiroshima bomb, comparing the skin burnt by radiation with a bowl of pork scratchings, or that line about 'if the bomb falls on a bunion, where you once had one toe now you've got seven', was, of course, like Dada against the First World War, but it also reached another dimension. For my work it was an important tool.**

Time, noise, language, reflection and death (phantasms and skeletons) define the traces of an art practice, that of Pedro G. Romero, which occurs as a direct relation with the images themselves. 'And it is not because the image provides us with the spark – as Walter Benjamin said – and not the substance, which is why we have to exclude it from our humble means of approaching the terrible history we are talking about.' (Georges Didi-Huberman, in the book *Images malgré tout*, a defence of the use of images to reveal the history of the Nazi camps in contradistinction to the tendency that claims it is impossible to express such horror in images.) Allow me another quotation from Didi-Huberman (quoting Lacan) before I give you a turn: 'There, then, where "all words stop and all

categories fail" – where theses, refutable or otherwise, are literally dismantled – there an image may appear. Not the *veil-image* of the fetish, but the *rip-image*, which allows reality to burst out.'

What role do you give the image in the construction of your discourse?

In the mid-nineties I took part in a seminar given by Giorgio Agamben in Seville. It was all by chance: the Italian philosopher was in the city for bullfights, recalling his old friendship with Bergamín, etc. It was very interesting, of course, and to certain vanities of thought, fundamental realisations were added. One of them was a challenging of the conception of the image, of the figure, of the symbolism forged by artistic science since Warburg. Agamben's discourse was this: 'Aby Warburg begins his investigations – which the psychologising shortsightedness of a certain art history has defined as the science of the image, iconology, when in fact they are focused on the gestures regarded as the glass of historical memory, and the controversy that shapes a destiny and the attempts made by artists and philosophers, which for Warburg are verging on madness, to free them from that destiny – to free the gestures from the sphere of the images. Since these investigations were carried out in the field of images, it had been thought that the images were also the object; but in fact Warburg transformed the image, which even for Jung is the supreme motionless sphere of archetypes, into something dynamic and historical; that was his great discovery. At the end of the century, Warburg was working on an enormous atlas he called *Mnemosyne*, and which would have consisted of a series of photographs of phenomena of all kinds – paintings, sculptures both ancient and modern, topical subjects, etc. – which has always been considered a kind of repertoire of images of the West.' Well, in this sifting of things by the gesture, the syllables are the images, as in a film, even the pixel or mathematical and numerical expression has the value of the image. Basically, when I refer to my work in terms of a plastic artist, someone who works in the environment of visual constructions – even when what you see may seem to be simply writing – I understand that there is an appeal to images.

'...In a way it aims to establish a discourse about limits, in both their representation and what they represent. So the idea is to give pride of place to the images, understanding the practice of the arts as a direct relation with the images themselves. Indeed, the images will mark the narrative value both in themselves and through the value and the hierarchy of where they have been chosen. The images seem to be a kind of junction where all the opposing terms that construct the paradox are present at the same time...'

These words come from the prologue to the publication *F.E. El fantasma y el esqueleto. Un viaje, de Fuenteheridos a Hondarribia, por las figuras de la identidad*. Before branching off onto other paths, let's talk about how you came to *F.X. Archive* – an archive about iconoclasm and the end of art – especially from earlier work, thinking about the phantasm and the skeleton, a reflection that outlines your interest in the concept of the sacred – its appearances and especially its disappearances – in the forms of organisation of contemporary societies. Might your interest in iconoclasm have something to do with the defining attempt of your work to reveal the folds of history that lead to modernity, folds interpenetrated by the expressions of popular culture, in this case in its religious aspect and its political power?

The will came first from a personal situation, something that has to do with my artistic and practical training. I consider that the circumstances of this country brought about a kind of inflation on the art scene, which I won't analyse now, but which led me to a mechanistic, tactical if you like, exercise of the work, giving immediate responses to situations in the art market or art policy that arose, assaulting me in the day to day. The artwork itself

radicalised the language until I felt the need to say, enough! And it was then that the archive emerged; it was there. It was not so much a conscious decision, I was recapitulating things and the archive was there, waiting for me. For a long time I collected those images of iconoclasm, those images which, on the other hand, assaulted me in my life, in my city, in Seville. That it was an insane interest, with a deep pathological meaning, I have no doubt. The fact is that I was there and I spent an increasing amount of time on it, on locating the images, reading about them, asking, investigating. A certain collector's fetishism led me to invest a good deal of my time and space, long journeys to horrible places, to spaces filled with superstition where I could take a photo of an ugly virgin whose eye had been knocked out or a crucified Christ that had been left with one arm. Each of those journeys, each of those investigations, made me travel through what had been my interests, my leitmotiv in the work of art. The Baroque, political violence or popular carnivalesque humour played their game over and over again. The operations of language, with its quite different games, which in some way were undoing the little consistency there was in what might be called the work of an artist called Pedro G. Romero, were also there. My work was subject to a variety of games that were undermining it, from popular tradition to Raymond Roussel, from the carnival to Silverio Lanza. I once read that when Michel Leiris travelled to Africa – a journey from which his famous *L'Afrique fantôme* would emerge – the only guidebook he carried was *Impressions d'Afrique* by Raymond Roussel. That was certainly an exaggeration, but that is the work I was setting out to do. To construct a machine that would function as an investigation into the violent relations between language and reality. That was how *F.X. Archive* appeared. So what I consider the main political potential of my work also emerged clearly and – to paraphrase Agamben – really, politics is only the action that cuts the link between violence and language in its management of the real world.

### **F.X. Archive**

Tell us how your archive is constituted, how it's organised, the elements of which it is made and the relations that are established between them.

*F.X. Archive* is a documentary collection 'under construction', that aims to lay the bases with which, to paraphrase Habermas, we can urbanise the province of nihilism. On the one hand it has become an archive of the images of political iconoclasm in Spain. On the other, and in that light, it is a reflector of the radical projects of the modern avant-garde from Malevich to Rothko, from Dada to the Situationists. At a time like today when there is a review of the clichés of twentieth-century art history, the parallels between political radicalisation and aesthetic radicalisation are often emphasised: an enlightened revolution that produces monsters. In that sense, the criticisms made by Jean Clair or Eric Hobsbawm, but also Hans Magnus Enzensberger or Christian Ferrer, come together in revealing a community of interests between the radical political projects of fascism, communism or capitalism and the aesthetic excesses of the art avant-gardes: aculturation, alienation, dehumanisation, devertebration, hyperaesthesia of the senses, elimination of the human figure, deposition, loss of memory, etc. In short, it is a description of a landscape: nihilism.

Confronting this landscape by trying to measure its topography, the composition of its soil, the height of its ruins, is in a way the purpose of this project. The instrument used is the constitution of an archive of over one thousand images and files produced by anticlerical political iconoclasm in Spain: decapitated statues, stained pictures, demolished buildings, expropriated sacred space, the reuse of religious buildings, the melting down of objects of worship for civil industry, etc. An archive whose thesaurus is made up of names of styles, artists, movements, titles of magazines,

artists and works around what has been called the modern avant-garde: Expressionism, Abstraction, Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko, Arnold Newman, Black on Grey, Vir Heroicus Sublimis, Black Painting, La Boîte-en-Valise, Locus Solus, Antropocultura, Yves Klein, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina, Antoni Muntadas, Chris Burden, Basilio Martín Patino, Société Anonyme, Merzbau, Marcel Duchamp, etc. The other documents consist of texts and images that help both to date the historical event in itself, the iconoclastic action, and to emphasise the link between the documentary image and the term which names it in this archive. Therefore documentary clarifications of the action follow one another, the image or film and the photograph or camero-graph that captured it; the political and propagandistic details of those images are narrated; there is a compilation of literatures, pamphlets, fantasies and mythologies which these documents have generated; philosophical, aesthetic or scientific thoughts are provided and have served to justify these actions and to question them, and more general reflections which often share a genealogy with the terms designated by the archive; texts of the movements, magazines or artists that make up the index of the archive are added, especially the ones that are effectively related to the image named.

Knowing your passion for random logics, *more or less* whimsical analogies, *non-senses* and language games, and despite your reluctance to give explanations, tell us something about the name *F.X.* for an archive of iconoclasm and modern project.

As far as the name is concerned, I can tell you that I am already giving you explanations. First, following the definition of *F.X. Archive* as 'X File', the archive of the unclassifiable, of the unknown, of the hidden, the contents of the archive itself are presented, the set of classified images and their taxonomies, both as a duly computerised digital device – they can be consulted on [www.fxysudoble.org](http://www.fxysudoble.org) – and as graphic reproductions and pages for free circulation in different formats. Second, and following the definition of *F.X. Archive* as 'f.x.', or special effects, works, texts and discourse that have been generated over these years in the different laboratories created under the aegis of the archive are associated. There are also links with the *Archivo Televisión* video programme that analysed the set of images of iconoclasm in the Canal Sur Televisión archives since its foundation in 1989, the year of the fall of the Berlin wall. Last, and following the definition of *F.X. Archive* as  $f(x)$ , function of  $x$ , in the sense that mathematical science gives the term – and which Jacques Lacan so rightly abuses – concerning the relation between two magnitudes, such that for every value of one term there exists a corresponding value of the other, but also of 'function' in the sense emphasised by the Russian theorist Victor Slovsky, i.e. it does not matter so much what things are but how they function. It may be this more complex definition that explains the series of works I am engaged on now, which maintains a thin but very strong, invisible at times, though clearly unavoidable, line of union with the archive. You were talking earlier about the folds of history, and that is something the work of the archive allows me to do. The link between the piece *Premature Architectures*, balloons which are inflated, and the images of the vanity of the world expressed in the soap bubbles blown by a child, as represented in the seventeenth century: *F.X. Archive* allows me that secret link.

You were talking earlier about raising the ruins, studying the composition of the soil. Does art, like the practice of anticlerical iconoclasm, have a topographical logic, as Manuel Delgado suggests in his book *Luces iconoclastas*, marked by the appearance of the mass as a political subject of modernity and his strategy of redefinition (de-sacralisation and de-ritualisation) of the public space? How do you relate the destruction of sacred forms inhabiting reality and the modern avant-garde?

According to Manuel Delgado's studies, we could say that by overcoming their irrational aspects what is proposed here is an explanation of those phenomena as part of the process of modernisation, which makes them a machinery designed to deactivate the old power of the social ritual of the arts once and for all, challenging the symbolic efficacy of traditional images and placing them at the core of the struggle for the political control of space. All of that by inserting the phenomena we are discussing into the very system of representation that was being attacked so violently.

There is an obvious relation, which we need not explain, by which iconoclasm is one of the motors of modern and contemporary artistic creation. It is nothing new; with Kantian idealism its opposite was born; Rosenkranz's theory of the ugly. In theory, for *F.X. Archive* this works like an epenthesis, a refrain that can be sung, a mnemotechnical trick... with its undoubted educational advantages. This link between modern art and iconoclasm naturally helps the chains of signifiers in *F.X. Archive*.

*F.X. Archive* partakes of the Constructivist oxymoron: the way to destroy is to construct... Basically what I am interested in is creating a base of signs for interpreting events, scrutinising them, changing their perspective, revealing their contradictions, altering their representation, etc. In that sense the point is to manufacture tools. Shaping new tools is the first task of *F.X. Archive*. At first glance it might seem that the scope of *F.X. Archive* lies in drawing this map of relations between iconoclasm and modern art, but let us say that here we are only talking – singing, according to Julio Jara – about the toolbox.

The aim of these works has to do with folding one phenomenon over another so that they illuminate one another. It is not exactly a matter of reading the radical processes of the avant-garde as a kind of iconoclasm, or of finding aesthetic motivations in the anticlerical phenomenon, although it is clear that certain common links help to build the bridges and the necessary structure for the critical and poetic efficacy of the archive.

For example, finding the way to read about how some local guys were accused of attacking the patron saint of the Seville town hall. These were men who had been expelled from the very brotherhood charged with honouring the saint for being homosexual, the very social 'brand' that has done most in support of the vows, the ornate and the popularity of that same saint; that same brotherhood. When I come to recounting those events, I could deal with their common object, with the readings that Georges Bataille or Michel Leiris make of Sade, the construction of anomaly and the leper, as Antonin Artaud or Hugo Ball do. Indeed, these signs shed light on the case with which we are dealing. But when I talk about 'folding' I am talking about doubling, placing alongside, comparing, and that happens because of putting into play this case, this story with the persecution of Mapplethorpe, because of his photograph of Jesse McBride and his persecution by Senator Jesse Helms. This is a rather more explicit fold than the one theorised by Deleuze. Both stories function through homophony, they sound alike, they can be read together, as in a play on words.

For me it is important to pay attention to the joke, the gag, the random, accidental, whimsical if you will, play of language. Part of the work of *F.X. Archive* and its institutionalisation sprang from a mistake, a misunderstanding when I heard 'Perec' when I was being told 'Péref'. All that led to a mad work, which some people would call useless, but it is on that shifting ground that the work of *F.X. Archive* is based.

To place scattered and diverse events alongside one another leads to strange consequences and provides a reality which is often unimaginable. In your archive, the images of art and those of religious destruction side by side describe a historical portrait which permeates the everyday and through which the political can be traced.

At some point he told it like this:

In 1977, Georges Perec wondered if the destruction and burning of churches carried out by the Spanish anarchists between 1900 and 1939 might not be the most important work of art of the century. The question was naturally provocative, so much so that it seems like a double of that photo of 'Benjamin Péret insulting a priest'. So much so that it seems like a play on words, an echo of the same statement, some years earlier, by Benjamin Péret: 'There is no greater work of art in the twentieth century than the destruction in Spain of saints and churches.' Plays on words, provocations, but not devoid of interest. In a way they put their fingers on the revolutionary sore that had made the whole twentieth century bleed, from politics and from art. Robert Hughes, a visitor to Barcelona since the sixties, writing precisely about the events known as the *Tragic Week*, answered, without disdaining the aesthetic character of the question: 'In reality, and as far as the history of art is concerned, these are only special effects.'

Not that I intend to answer Perec's question, but of course I do intend to rephrase it. As David Freedberg has suggested, idolatry and iconoclasm are two extreme aspects of the same phenomenon, the one that invests the representation of images with the certainty of reality. That appears on both psychological and sociological levels, in a host of aspects that range from patriotic symbologies to fetishism, from the candles of the votaries to the 'burning' of the figures, from miracle cures to the anthropometry of design. Both are based on the radical separation of images, which we understand as art, from reality. That separation, which has its origins in platonic idealism, is the essence of the Western way of understanding the work of art, whether as a representation of nature or some higher truth. Only by understanding that separation – and the ones that follow it: between artist and spectator, between art and life, between terror and rhetoric, etc. – as the foundation of Western art in our times can we understand the work of *F.X. Archive*, inevitably confronting historicist procedures.

**Can we take it that when someone is looking at the image of the Almighty – a face that owes as much to the carver's skill as to the smoke from the candles over three centuries – they are looking at a work of art and not the face of God on Earth?**

At the outset the project was associated with the idea of the 'end of art', indeed it was presented that way, *F.X. Archive on the End of Art*. At some time you even quoted Agamben: 'According to the principle that states that only in a burning house is it possible to see the fundamental architectural problem for the first time, so art, once it has reached the end of its journey, allows its original project to be seen.' In what sense do you use the term 'end'? Does it have anything to do with the impossibility of representation after Auschwitz and/or Hiroshima? How is the time frame established, how is it bounded?

'End' appears in the twofold meaning of finish and also of purpose. The 'end of art' as one more sub-genre of art. A genre that is related to the others in the same way that the *vanitas* painting was related to the painting of still lifes. For many years I was preparing a project which reviewed all the movements of meaning, which ranged from the cornucopia to the *vanitas*, a project that never saw the light of day, unless its expression is this *F.X. Archive*. In the relation with those materials, I discovered an obscure, forgotten character who fascinated me. Giovanni Morelli developed a method of observation of the world, which I recognised, like no other until then, as close to my work, to what I was trying to make. His systems of signs, which at first were nothing more than an auxiliary tool in the system of attributions of works of art, has become a main tool for art history (especially in the wake of Aby Warburg), anthropology, semiotics, psychoanalysis: they even enabled the development of the political sciences, which have led to the current system of domain in the form of the panoptic. This method, which I discovered

in Ginzburg's books and which came to be called micro-history, was present in the two projects – both unfinished, Utopian to a certain extent – which I have found most interesting: Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project* and Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne*. Both required their authors to work for so long on marking out their spheres that when their artificers died they remained unfinished. The tension confronted by historical time in both of them, while the idea was to explode it, I found absolutely fascinating. Both projects emerged, in a way, as a response to the totalitarian visual models of fascism and capitalism, which was why they needed a mechanism that included both finite historical frameworks and the way of dismantling them. In that sense, if in their 'finish' they assume the time of history, in their 'purpose' they are political projects.

For those of us who assume 'the end of the arts' as almost one more genre, like 'history painting' or 'still lifes of vanities', the burning of churches can be set in a special modality within that same genre, striving too hard for effect for some, but definitely effective. In *The Master and Margarita*, Bulgakov seems to be speaking ironically when he makes the devil say: 'The dark paintings that adorn this room are full of figures and stories, they are black from the soot of the fire from which they were rescued, they are black because the whole world is compressed in them, in such a small space.' A culture dominated on the one hand by the popular idolatry of mass spectacles, the universal exhibitions, television or the internet, and on the other by the cultured iconoclasm of the *connaisseurs*, the *genius loci*, conceptualism or cyberspace, will have to stop and look at what happens when those parallel spheres, apparently with the same goals although on different scales, come into conflict.

The truth is that from all that Hegelian verbiage about the end of history I am most interested in the stories it produces. In that sense, my work on *F.X. Archive* may perhaps be understood as one more story, another tale, just as the word 'tale' says.

To continue with Walter Benjamin: talking about the 'citation', the philosopher remarks: 'The past can only be seized in the image that appears complete at the instant of its estrangement, like a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger.' Talk to me about that moment of danger.

**From Hölderlin to a Cuban country song in which they sing: 'Where danger grows, where danger grows, there too grows salvation.' A journey around the fertile ground of images, at the very point where they end up vanishing, is certainly the high point of their appearance too.**

In the absolute kingdom of the image, understood as a structure or a flow that sums up the general concept of culture from Aby Warburg and Ernst Gombrich to Walter Benjamin or Guy Debord, we should pause a moment at that complex nihilist phenomenon that was the burning of churches and other religious places by the Spanish anarchist and socialist workers, with its historical, anthropological or artistic, political, religious or heritage implications.

A newspaper report describes Seville on 18 July 1936 in these words: 'All night the city was lit up by the bonfires of the eight churches that were burning in the Macarena district. Day had not yet broken, since the sky was black and lowering, it seemed as if it was about to collapse at any moment on top of us had it not been held up by the columns of smoke that still rose from the burning churches.'

The chronicle provides us with a significant image to try to understand the current state of the arts, an image we can try to read as if it were an emblem: the different fires would correspond to the attempts of the different avant-gardes to put an end to traditional art, to wit, the legends of Dadaism, Futurism or Russian Constructivism. The smoke of those fires would correspond to most of the art movements that appeared after 1945, which sprang from those fires. The black, lowering sky would describe the current art scene, always about to collapse on top of us. For those of us

who work in the wake of those columns of smoke the paradox is clear. In almost all the iconoclastic revolutions that have occurred in Western culture, the savage attack on images and symbols had no aim other than to restore a true, abstract idea of God, to reaffirm his intangible existence and presence like nothing, his assumption by faith. Thus in the iconoclastic wars of Byzantium or the Calvinist events in the Netherlands in 1566. It is a constant, on a less violent level, in the Christian theological debate. In another sphere, in the destruction of the churches in the French Revolution, too, a new, abstract god – reason – was installed, with images of classical Greek statuary; the same statuary that in the name of unreason were later adored by Nazism and Fascism. So we have the restoration of the true non-image of God on the one hand and the return of Fascist classicism on the other. A third one is still missing of which little trace remains, the German Illuminati close to Luther in the sixteenth century or the Paris communes in 1871, who engaged with ridicule and mockery in caricaturing and laughing at the images and emblems they were destroying. It is in the wake of that that the Spanish anarchist model would come in, an anticlericalism that destroys to roars of laughter and with a joy worthy of being included by Bakhtin among his models of popular culture. An example: the burning of the parish church of San Roque was watched and applauded by a crowd and enlivened by *pasodobles* played by the Los Badías trio from a nearby rooftop. One of the special characteristics of the genre, and I am referring to the burning of churches and convents, consists of joining the death of art and the death of God in a single gesture.

The principle of the construction of your archive is montage, as is the case in the projects by Benjamin and Warburg that we have already mentioned. As Susan Buck-Morss has pointed out in her book *The Dialectics of Seeing. Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, for Benjamin the technique of montage has 'special, even total rights', as a progressive form because it 'interrupts the context in which it is inserted' and in that way 'acts against illusion'. In the formation of the archive we also find what Bataille considers incomplete, unfinished. What is the method that leads you to choose a text, a quotation, or to write a new text in relation to an image?

Basically the files of the archive are configured by means of a simple process. It is just a matter of establishing a kinship of readings between the documentary sources of the image – of the iconoclastic event – and the thesaurus that names it – the art index. They are all quotations. Sometimes with serious mutilations that disfigure the original meaning of the text, but help to create the new one. If you ask me about the first moment, when term and image are joined, it is quite diverse. Sometimes it is not my own contribution; it was brought by some other contributor to *F.X. Archive*. The truth is that it is not at all complicated to find relationship keys, since the iconoclastic drive is present in all avant-garde modern art, and however large the world might seem symbolically it is fairly closed off... so we can understand the success of 'communication', that superstition that makes art advertising. It is often a formal similarity, a kinship of ideas, a discourse community, etc. Many artists found in the iconoclastic actions a quite literal correlation with their own work, while others have used the same images of iconoclasm in their works. Sometimes it is a kind of *déjà vu*. For others the association is immediate, but does not have a clear reason and it is in the concentrated work that we find that chain of signifiers that the archive produces. As a result of that last procedure, complete semantic fields appear and give meaning to large zones of the thesaurus.

And on the other hand it is a necessary condition when beginning to sketch what *F.X. Archive* would later become – to consider what Bataille calls the incomplete, the imperfect, the unfinished. The incomplete as sole possibility of reaching fulfilment. From his reflections on the formless, Bataille realises that the failure of any system is in its aspiration to grasp the totality of things in

the world in perfect coincidence. As in Borges' story, a map of the world that aspires to coincide point for point with the places it represents is doomed to failure, they are scraps of parchment lost in the desert. The incomplete, however, cannot be presented as an alibi for shunning rigour, research, the system. It is exciting to read Bataille's letters to his editor, exhorting him to make changes, modifications and precisions when preparing *The Tears of Eros*. The incomplete starts from the recognition of certain limitations of the capacity of human knowledge, from assuming that apparent flaw as a method, a system. Hence too the place of art as a form of knowledge, a springboard, a pole for leaping – making dangerous pirouettes – over that void left by the incomplete.

Let us return for a moment to the relations with the past involved in the undertaking of your archive. Tradition, according to Chantal Mouffe, allows us to think about our place in historicity, about the fact of being constructed as subjects through a series of existing discourses, and that through that very tradition which constitutes us we are given the world and all political action is possible. Tradition is also one of the main subjects of the hermeneutic philosophy of Gadamer, who affirms the existence of a fundamental unity between thought, language and the world. The horizon of our present is constructed through language; that language bears the mark of the past; it is the life of the past in the present and thus is the movement of tradition. For Gadamer, 'tradition is constantly an element of freedom and of history. Not even the most authentic and soundest tradition persists solely through inertia. It needs to be affirmed, embraced, cultivated. In essence it is preservation, as this is active in all historical fields... Even when life changes violently, as in times of revolution, far more than anyone suspects it is preserved in the supposed transformations of everything and combined with the new to create a new value.' How are *F.X. Archive* and your own work related with tradition?

Sometimes I talk about that as if ashamed, as if it were an insane activity. I have said that before. The fact is that I had always been interested in those images and collected them; perhaps the explanation for *F.X. Archive* is as simple as that. I have always been interested in the stories of the burning of churches and destruction of saints, perhaps simply with the obvious fact that they represented the other side of one of the dominant visual imaginaries in my community. I don't think it is possible to ignore that reality and I am surprised that artists – now I remember Rogelio López Cuenca and his works on Easter Week as an exception – who work with images in my own community hardly refer to those dominant, almost contaminating signs. My relation with them, with tradition in general, is not traumatic though. More than that, in a certain sense some of the traditional Andalusian clichés – Easter Week, flamenco, bulls, etc. – represent our modernity. In 2002, the director of the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo (CAAC) stated that in Seville there was no tradition of modern art, although some time before the CAAC had organised as the big exhibition of the season a show of the Seville fashion designers José Víctor and José Luis, known as Victorio & Lucchino. Well, the institution may not have known it but it was putting on the same programme that Walter Benjamin denounced by stressing the relationship between fashion and lack of memory and critical disarmament, i.e. with Fascism. The two things coincide. First you empty history of content and then you fill it with two fashion designers, who only emphasise the modern character of the tradition of the city, only in the form of tourism and merchandise. But who is interested in rereading tradition today? Nobody wants to stir up calm, calming and most of all politically anaesthetising waters. The translation of tradition as treason, that was my first working hypothesis, as you can see in my first exhibition in Barcelona, at Sala Montcada. There, for example, ideas were shown that linked conceptism – a poetic framework that thinks it is Sevillian – with the conceptual in contemporary art. But for me tradition is no more than the cultural substrate of the community

where I live and my link to it is voluntary: it has nothing to do with spiritual legacies, *genius loci*, and other variants of cultural falangism. If there is something I can't stand, however paradoxical it may seem for a lover of flamenco, it is to be one just because your father was too.

For me tradition does not conceal a flow of submissions, rather a fountain of resistances. Many of those iconoclastic images that I hang on the walls of a gallery or a museum, in Seville are to be found in the bars. If Bataille had dropped by Casa Ovidio, he would have confirmed his thesis on the obscenity of Catholicism. But it is not just in this paradoxical sense attained by the images of iconoclasm in Seville, where their sponsors venerate them as relics. Three recent examples: in Seville the judges and the police were mobilised when the hardcore group Narco gave away, in the promotion of their latest record, the videogame *Matanza cofrade*, a variant on the thousands of games in which Chinese or Arabs are killed, but with penitents and saints. A few days later they went into a kid's house and carted him off to jail for having illustrated an erotic story with a photograph of the Esperanza de Triana, a Virgin that a few years ago was given a full facelift by her Brotherhood; something Orlan would have loved. A few days later the Brotherhood of La Macarena pressured a club in Barcelona not to use the image of the Virgin in its advertising. The legal excuse, in all these cases, is that the images of the brotherhoods are copyrighted; and from the people at VEGAP not a word...

We have already mentioned your interest in plays on words, or rather *language games* (for Wittgenstein, an indissoluble union between linguistic rules, objective situations and ways of life), and as you have written somewhere, you are also interested in Roussel's working method. Both of them offer great compositive and imaginative freedom. What value do you place on fiction in your work?

**What interests me about Raymond Roussel is his scientific approach and his seriousness. Roussel's guide was the work of Jules Verne. His project was rational and constructive, and, for all Foucault might say, it was theoretically lacking in any subversive element. As we his readers are no longer innocent, the invocation of his method always seems perverse to us. He is also deeply materialistic. It seems impossible to sustain a world just through the phonetic similarity of signifiers, there is no way they could obtain meanings in that onomatopoeic delirium. It is the culmination of a whole chain of rhetorical figures in poetry, conceptist games, almost a caricature of Wittgenstein's language games. The dictum that 'reality functions like fiction' finds a terrifying verification in Roussel. Treating words as sounds, as things, in the end as images, so that they can really function. That way of confronting language is not new of course; we can find extreme examples in the Baroque tradition of the *ut pictura poesis* or the popular carnivals. Hence my interest in a writer like Silverio Lanza, or Georges Perec or Marcel Broodthaers. The undermining to which any core of meaning of language is submitted goes with an attempt to order the resulting nonsense. Crazy taxonomies which try to keep a world without meaning on its feet. To go on with Roussel and his model of 'machine' for my 'machine', then as well as the suggestive tools used by Duchamp or Foucault, I feel closer to the way in which some writers like Enrique Vila-Matas, César Aira or Roberto Bolaño use them. And of course the vision that is as secular as it is fascinating given by Leonardo Sciascia in *Atti relativi alla morte di Raymond Roussel*.**

In the archives, what carries more weight, the memory of art or its denial? How are the archives, the museum and the collection related in the light of iconoclasm?

I think iconoclasm, rather than denying art, certifies its symbolic function. It is clear that nothing could be farther from the

iconoclastic gesture than the principle of the institution of an archive. However, they are dogged by a community relation. The overlap between the iconoclastic gesture and the definition of painting in the form of a picture has been closely studied by Stoichita. The great European collections came into being as a consequence of the Protestant iconoclastic fury. The Musée du Louvre and modern iconoclasm are defined around the French Revolution. The birth of Tate Modern itself as the cathedral of modern art coincided with, or more precisely followed, a group of iconoclastic and 'sensationalist' English artists. The reactionary, well-read Spanish right itself, of the José Manuel de Prada kind, that regards the museums of modern art as warehouses of iconoclastic junk and naturally call on people to mock them with iconoclastic gestures...

The fact is that in the arts, the iconoclastic gesture has moved on from attacking the museum, the archive, to needing it as the only possibility of existing, of being legitimate. In that sense, the iconoclastic gestures collected in the archive, the ones which from 1845 to 1946 theoretically have a political and anticlerical origin in Spain from militant anarchism, republicanism and communism, attain a certain legitimacy by relating themselves with the gestures of modern art itself, also sharing uncertainties with it. Of course, the archive would not have begun to gestate without that principle of contradiction. Its paradoxical operation is the main guarantee of movement, and that seems to me fundamental, since, as you know, I understand the archive as a machine. In that same chain of reasoning, I have to acknowledge other paradoxical elements, I say fundamental for that aspiration to *perpetuum mobile*: the 'mal d'archive' as understood by Jacques Derrida, as the secret link of the archive with its destruction or the impossibility of veracity between the testimony and its archive, as described by Agamben.

An archive of disasters composed of quotations and images, which in turn work as quotations: flash-image, rip-image or lacuna-image, image, in short, as something historical and dynamic. Didi-Huberman goes on: 'In a world prolific in lacunae, singular images which, mounted on one another, will arouse a *readability*, an effect of knowledge, of the kind Warburg called *Mnemosyne*, Benjamin *Arcades*, Bataille *Documents*, and which Godard today calls *Histoire(s)*'. What readability does *F.X. Archive* aim at? What remains in the 'archive' of salvaged images that can be read *between* the images?

That the terms 'archive' and 'anarchy' share the Greek etymological root *arkhé* – which means 'mandate' and thus 'archive', with mandate, and 'anarchy', without mandate – is still an incipient contradiction. When one thinks of creating an 'archive of anarchism', one is instigating a poetic rather than a scientific institution. Moreover, anarchism, like the Utopia it is, shares the characteristic spotted by Perec: 'All Utopias are depressing because they leave no room for chance, difference, diversity. Everything is ordered and order reigns. Behind every Utopia there is always a great taxonomic design: a place for everything and everything in its place'. That anarchism set out to be a Utopia where disorder could take place has often been put forward as a reason for its creationist 'tabula rasa' strategy. Oddly enough the arguments that have most censured the iconoclastic behaviour of the anarchists spring from inside: as early as 1936, there were pamphlets in Valencia signed by the CNT-FAI, urging the protection of the material and artistic heritage of the church as something that could be expropriated by the people. But that exhortation was immediately classified as 'bourgeois' and in many cases the religious object found in archives and museums was attacked.

In turn, *F.X. Archive* is an archive about disasters, which, as Michel Foucault suggests, must also include the disaster of the archive. And that is the main function of this 'machine' to break the archive, to try to include what it was always lacking. A 'trace', Michel Foucault calls it, a 'vestige' according to Giorgio Agamben. For Jacques Derrida, that 'mal d'archive' which is expressed in the desire to grasp everything, 'losing no trace, leaving no vestige',

and which will end up destroying the very gnoseological possibilities of the archive, for all technology comes to its aid, on the basis of trying to grasp everything, that 'mal d'archive' is particularly crystallised in the archives of disasters, wars, violence. Opening the archive like that, exposing it, making it circulate is a way of looking for those traces, of including those vestiges – of *introducing what cannot be spoken of* – yet keeping the archive 'free of all evil'. The 'machine' proposed, the cinematic gesture thus works as a gag, according to the brilliant attribution proposed in this long quotation from Agamben: 'By having the gesture and not the image as its centre, the cinema belongs essentially to the order of ethics and politics (and not simply aesthetics). In that sense the gesture is the communication of a communicability. It has really nothing to say, because what it shows is the being-in-language of man as pure mediality. But since being-in-language is not something that can be uttered in propositions, the gesture is always, in essence, the gesture of not managing to find language, it is always a gag, in the true meaning of the term, which most of all indicates something put in the mouth to prevent the person from speaking, and then the actor's improvisation to fill a blank in the memory or an inability to speak. Hence not only the proximity between gesture and philosophy, but also between philosophy and film. The essential 'mutism' of film (which has nothing to do with the presence or absence of a soundtrack) is, like the mutism of philosophy, an exhibition of the being-in-language of man, pure gesture. Wittgenstein's definition of the mystical as the showing of what cannot be said is literally a gag definition. And any great philosophical text is the gag exhibited by language itself, being-in-language itself as a gigantic gap in the memory, an incurable defect of the word.' That transcendence of the gag – a kind of metaphysics of the joke – triggers the classification system of *F.X.* We understand techniques of the gag to be the whole modern repertoire of art forms, from homophony to chance, from the readymade to the construction of situations.

That is where Marcel Broodthaers managed to understand the archive, the museum, the catalogue like nobody else, not only making a criticism of the straight discourse that always sustains it, not only questioning the closed order of the world which any archive represents, not only torpedoing the water line of the knowledge project of the Enlightenment which any archive represents, but in the end what Marcel Broodthaers has expounded is the only way the archive, as a model of everything that has been indicated, as an example of the modern project of knowledge of the world, can survive. And he did so through the gag, through the transformation of the archive into staging, choreography, dramaturgy, cinematography. Through the theatricalisation of the archive, he managed to uproot it from the modern project, without it losing its critical effectiveness.

Indeed, Marcel Broodthaers may be the artist who, with his fictitious museum, has best demonstrated the impossibility of classification, and the violence against reality it supposes. And it is precisely through fiction that he in turn has managed to unmask the conditions of production of meaning and representation, establishing the archive and the collection as the place for structuring discourse, regardless of its real existence.

How more precisely does that symbolic machine, generator of fictions, which is *F.X. Archive* work? And, most of all, what does it aim to achieve?

Here I am going to reproduce Machado's well-known definition of Jorge Meneses' 'ballad machine', an artefact capable of composing the songs of a human group, of a people, of the crowds. I take the book and read: 'In the prologue to his *Coplas mecánicas* Mairena praises Meneses' artifice. According to Mairena, the poetic hurdy-gurdy is a means, among others, of rationalising the lyric, without lapsing into the conceptual Baroque. The maxim, reflection or aphorism contained in his *coplas* are inevitably attached to

a human emotion. The poet, inventor and manipulator of the mechanical artifice is an investigator and collector of elemental feelings; a 'folklorist', in his way, and an impassive creator of popular songs, without ever lapsing into a 'pastiche' of the popular. It dispenses with his own meaning, but notes that of its neighbour and recognises it in itself as a human feeling (when he notices it objectified in his apparatus). His apparatus does not use padding or pedantry, and can still be a fertile source of surprises, recording strange emotive phenomena. Naturally, its value, like that of other mechanical inventions, is more didactic and educational than aesthetic. The ballad machine, in short, can entertain the masses and initiate them into the expression of their own feeling whilst the new poets, the singers of a new sentimentality, arrive. That last fragment is where Machado's position is shown most clearly – the new sentimentality – which I think is different from Mairena's and that of the young Meneses. We may suppose that for the 'inventor' of the machine, the 'conceptual Baroque', the risks of padding and pedantry, pedagogy and didacticism, the entertainment of the masses and their initiation into a feeling of their own are not handicaps, but a lucid diagnosis of our time. I hope that its operation, at least its ideal operation, will be what Zizek describes for the *acoustomatic* voice, in a personal reading of Lacan. Zizek gives as examples the eponymous title music from two films: *Brazil*, as used by Terry Gilliam in his film, and *Lili Marlene*, the theme song of the film by Rainer Weiner Fassbinder. In both films the song invades reality in a crushing, totalitarian manner and becomes the only element that makes that reality bearable. It is the same observation made by Gilles Deleuze about the capacity for fascination and the Fascism implicit in the music of Richard Wagner and the way it is overcome in the films of Luis Buñuel. Or Guy Debord when he goes beyond nostalgia by reclaiming the 'red' anthems of the Spanish Civil War, since what were anthems are now joyful songs of defeat.

In short, these are mechanisms that overcome the dogmatic, acritical, spectacular and totalitarian ideas implicit in a world dominated by aesthetics and the fascination of art, their main soundtrack.

## Exteriority of the Archive

From its creation in the late nineties, *F.X. Archive* has been shown in many ways. It has been presented at exhibitions, in publications, lectures, pages for free circulation, films and participation in public or historiographic debates. There had even been some attempts to turn it into a monument, which I suppose the logic of the archive itself has deposed. How have the contents of *F.X. Archive* circulated in academic or artistic circles? And how is it shown?

The idea is that *F.X. Archive* should work like a public institution, with one unusual feature. The centre of its works often runs into the surpluses of the sacred, with 'effects' that go beyond semiotics, with everything Agamben locates in his *Homo Sacer* cycle 'on the outskirts of the city'. As I have said before, a few years ago I went to a seminar with Agamben, and it would be unfair not to acknowledge my debt to those days, which were fundamental for orienting the activities of *F.X. Archive*. Indeed, once the base of the archive has been consolidated, the idea is to apply the mechanics of it more dynamically in spheres closer to the present, immediate applications of these archaeologies. Which does not mean that it abandons the documentary dimension, though there is something of everything.

Naturally, in many cases those applications respond to demands that have arisen from effects parallel to the project. For example, taking part in debates, spoken and written, around that aberrant idea of the 'historical memory', an oxymoron which has half of Spain raising corpses from the war that followed the coup d'état in 1936. *F.X. Archive*, as an impugnation of history, requires approaches of other kinds in which the melancholy salvaging of

what has been lost does not blind us when it comes to understanding political violence, the failure of the Utopias or the overwhelming reality of any authoritarian power.

The works in *F.X. Archive* have also overlapped with the popularisation of this modality of documentary as an artistic practice. So from the outset I saw myself headed for this collation of the archive 'as one of the fine arts'. From the beginning my intention was to create an 'anarchive', a non-archive, a barred archive. Derrida has taught us the importance of these presentations, which, by denying, explicitly assume what they deny.

Books are important too, publications with quite different effects on the idea of book itself. At the Centre d'Art Santa Mònica I directed that publication that went with the collection of one hundred postcards on the *Tragic Week* in Barcelona, a facsimile edition which in my opinion was a good demonstration of that closed-open idea of the work of *F.X. Archive*; on the one hand, documentary treasure, on the other, a service device for the citizens, whom it invited to circulate those recondite images free of charge. With the Colegio Mayor Rector Peset at the University of Valencia, we made a bibliographic wonder, and I am not exaggerating. It was entitled *En el ojo de la batalla*, and the explicit tribute to Bataille in the title concealed a selection of entries from *F.X. Archive* linked with his work, with his discourse. It was a book that recovered a certain materiality, in the design, in the care taken with the edition, aiming at a tactile similarity to the memorial books that go with the original materials with which *F.X. Archive* works. Then there is *Sacer, fugas sobre la vanguardia y lo sagrado en Sevilla*, a small anthology which I published as part of a UNIA arteypensamiento laboratory, on that analysis, which, at the height of the crisis of the radical avant-gardes, had been made of the sacred and which had taken the city of Seville as the landscape. From Picabia to Bataille, I also collected numerous examples of Spanish avant-garde artists. In another way, and to configure what, as I believe, will be a more stable way of presenting the works of *F.X. Archive*, in Olot I published *Lo nuevo y lo viejo, ¿qué hay de nuevo, viejo?*, which presented a repertoire of heteroclitic forms and materials and which, as I say, points to the definition of how the final goal of the works of *F.X. Archive* may be in that idea of book.

Then there are some visual presentations. *Tabula rasa*, a set of works presented in *Antagonisms, Case Studies*, done by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in 2001, and perhaps still more interesting, the form acquired by many of the free circulation materials of *F.X. Archive* when they were taken into the museum collection. The presentation of original materials – photographs, books, magazines and films – of *F.X. Archive* at the Centro Cultural Conde Duque, in Madrid, was also special, an attempt to show that tactile, dusty side of archive work, but it was boycotted by the organisers, the agents of La Fábrica, and I do not remember it with any pleasure. Then came unexpected interventions, like the soundtrack for the *Universo Gaudí* exhibition, curated by Juan José Lahuerta, which was done from sound materials of *F.X. Archive* itself. Along the same lines, I also remember the works around the *Tesouro: Cheka. Reproducción de la Cheka Psicotécnica de la iglesia de Vallmajor* in Barcelona in 1937, in which we made a real reconstruction of the punishment cells in that church, something like Kandinsky's *Point and Line to Plane* turned into a nightmare. A project that is still awaiting the publication of the corresponding book promised by the Museo Extremeño de Arte Contemporáneo (MEIAC) in Badajoz. And those of the *Tesouro: Rappel à l'ordre*, accompanied by the attempts to present the enigmatic carving hidden by the Bishopric of Huelva, which shows a Russian soldier in the winter uniform of the 1914-18 War, carved in Baroque style, to replace the 'Moor' who is usually found at the feet of the warrior apostle St James. A vile representation of the 'red', with his incendiary torch and his blasphemous cry, a few minutes before the patron saint of Spain chops off his head.

Other particularly interesting contributions for the operation of *F.X. Archive* and its transformation into a tool, a tool of knowledge, are the ones that dissertate about different key artists or works in the history of art and which have their, let us say irrational, base in the different entries of *F.X. Archive*. I am referring to texts like the ones about Asger Jorn, which were published in the Fundació Antoni Tàpies catalogue, or other, later ones, in a more gradual process, about Salvador Dalí or Antoni Tàpies himself.

Together with the publications and the exhibitions, you propose other forms of distribution and opening of the archive, which have to do with different forms of propaganda and free distribution, which can incorporate other avenues of circulation for the archive.

I am particularly interested in mentioning the Free Circulation Pages, of which 27 different models have already been published. This is a procedure that I had been using in earlier works and which is perfectly adapted to what I would understand as ideal artistic merchandise. It is usually a sheet of paper on which different language games, images and texts are printed, which the visitor can take away free. Those scraps of paper should contain everything I ask of the work of art. Those flyers of different appearances and sizes also found a kind of literal justification in many of the documents housed in the archive, from the *Tragic Week* postcards, which I mentioned earlier, to other forms of propaganda – posters, leaflets, notebooks, other postcards, etc. – which did not exclude a certain, let's say artistic, preciousness in the way they were put into operation. In particular, there would be all the campaigns which the Republican government and the odd trade union, like CNT, launched to stop the iconoclastic excesses, the attacks on religious images and works of art and sumptuary looting. There are different kinds and uses, from posters painted by hand by the students of the FUE (Federation of University Students) to leaflets like the one that says: 'Your revolutionary ideas, did they lead you to destroy buildings or burn wooden saints? Take care! Don't be innocent, comrade. Oppose that road...'

The years of constitution of *F.X. Archive* coincided with a reading of Mary Douglas and her works on the institution of society. The idea that in the social body its is the institutions that relate, which for the relation between individual and society leaves a series of tensions which are always housed inside those institutions, from the family to the university, from the gang to the army or the football club, that institutional idea was the one that triggered the different attempts to define the framework of *F.X. Archive* as exactly that, as an institution that relates to other social institutions on equal terms, whether that be social movements or the art institution, whether MACBA or Espai en blanc, whether the Civil Government or the Càritas Diocesana charity.

Of course, the tendency in the work has gone beyond that institutional structure and travelled zones and interstices, no-man's lands, works in the dead zone... but I find it more difficult to talk about that, to name them is to enclose them to some extent inside that institutional relation.

And more specifically, as a field of work, as a tool of knowledge, how has *F.X. Archive* related to reality so far?

As I have said, the idea is for the archive to function as a public institution, linked to the problems of its fellow citizens, involving itself to a great extent – the extent of the institution itself – with them, while marking a clear distance from the great Art Institution. For that distancing to be effective, it inevitably needs an involvement, an imbrication with the community. In that sense it is a public service which begins to function without knowing its users. Indeed, the growth movements of the machine that is *F.X. Archive* have always depended on the demands of its users, with more or less good fortune. And so it may appear working on university training or research projects, co-operating on documents with historians,

being shown at art exhibitions, providing materials for local research workers, doing jobs for the community from public institutions to social groups, 'manufacturing' objects, etc., etc. Perhaps the black and red laboratories that were developed under the aegis of the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía (UNIA arteypensamiento) in Seville and Granada may have been the greatest effort to extend the archive, and the balance sheet was very positive. For *F.X. Archive*, of course. The archive is a place where discourses of all kinds intersect, and there is room for an iconoclastic analysis of the strategies of the anti-globalisation movement like the one proposed by the people from La Fiambrera de Sevilla, and a rereading of Christianity – one of the joys *F.X. Archive* has given me is the recovery of certain narratives of Christian art, in the style of Žižek and his reading of the Pauline Agape or Toni Negri and his valuation of the Franciscan crowds – like the ones done, each in his own way, by Julio Jara, Miguel Benlloch or Alberto Baraya.

So the intention of *F.X. Archive* would be to propose new forms of participation, to broaden its field of work, to increase its spheres of presence, to practise an active criticism towards its forms and its modes, etc.

Earlier I listed those different meanings the *F.X.* of the *Archive* may have. Perhaps I can put some examples in that casuistry. As 'X Files' or archive of the unknown, of the occult, of the lost, the archive digs up documents, data or images that can be used; are being used in many of the works that challenge the revisionism to which, for example, the history of the Republic, the Revolution and the bloody coup d'état, with their corresponding three-year war, are being subjected. I am referring to challenges to the texts of César Vidal or Pio Moa, the identification of their sources in Fascist propaganda, a denunciation of their falsifications or monuments to stupidity. Vidal's text concerning the *Chekas de Madrid* was a piece of nonsense illustrated with images of the Barcelona *chekas*, which did not do his crony any favours, as he in turn had no choice but to cut down on the illustrations when it came to his book on the Barcelona *chekas*.

There is that definition as 'special effects', the *F.X.* that refers to pyrotechnic, sound or visual effects in films or on television, also in the theatre and even at political demonstrations. I think that the different seminars, in particular Laboratorio TV, shed a good deal of light on those matters, especially when analysing certain ways of showing low intensity street vandalism or the relations with the religious images that occur in Seville and which, as I said earlier, have been judicialised. *F.X. Archive* has managed to collaborate on some of those dossiers, providing historical data in the defence of those cases, helping to construct a framework of knowledge of those issues, which would remove the idea of hounding the victims as scapegoats. Even in zones of more distant meaning, the debate on copyright, the communal, the hassles with SGAE or VEGAP and the adoption of copyleft licences or creative commons, even in those areas there have been certain modest contributions from the handling of materials and tools of the *F.X. Archive*.

For the third of the definitions, the function of  $x$ ,  $f(x)$ , I have fewer words. I could not really say how the works operate on reality, although their political goal is none other than that operation. The point is to return certain practices, certain kinds of knowledge with which *F.X. Archive* operates, to the communal domain, not forgetting that the ground where those speculations move is in continuous transformation, moving towards the undiscovered, the uncertain, the indeterminate. But I wonder to what extent a series of images, pastimes, organisations, actions, participations, games, languages, associations, noises, etc. can amount to a meaningful political action, for all we talk about the unknown, the anonymous, the nameless, that which does not allow itself to be read.

Working from the public spaces, but perhaps a public less atomised than the present one, where the public space / private space separation has led to a loss of social cohesion. Would the point be to recover truly communal spaces, capable of carrying on a genuine civic (ethical and political) activity, while recovering less rigid forms of association, more flexible in their composition, more involved in the public flow, like the spaces for celebrations, recreational gatherings, festivals?

There is a concept of civil society strongly marked by that French Jacobin idea that needs to be qualified. For example, I work in Seville, where civil society has a major presence through organisms that are debatable, many basically reactionary, but which had and still have a great lobbying capacity. There are a series of mysteriously organised channels, so that you see the movements of the politicians, of the people who soon come to work in power, in art circles, and how they have to begin to infiltrate those spaces of representation, which are not political spaces, but the celebrations of some brotherhood or other, the stalls at the fair. I am very interested in the model during the Republic, the avant-garde artists worked inside, the rite in itself was not regarded as perverse, people thought it could be given the contents the communicants wanted. For example, many people wonder why Seville appears in the Dada manifestos. I have been able to check that the Dadaist groups operated almost like an Easter Week Brotherhood. José Miguel Sánchez, the last modern artist who officially did the great emblems of the city for the Republic and illustrated avant-garde magazines, worked with the Hermandad de los Negritos.

Along the same lines, I am interested in the realisation also studied by Manuel Delgado in his book *Carrer, festa i revolta*, which also appears as one of the mechanisms for creating meaning in *F.X. Archive*, and which is the overlap between the strategies for occupation of the city in celebrations and uprisings.

Iconoclasm is produced by the triumph of the phantasm, it is a moment of transfer between reality and terror, between the space of rhetoric and the space of reality. The iconoclast himself undertakes one of the most religious acts in existence. Remember the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas. The first great burning in Barcelona began after an afternoon of bullfighting following an argument about a bad fight. Or the fact that in Spain more people die from celebrations than from terrorism. The political demonstration systems repeat the festive strategies. When one makes an archaeology of the violence in the workers' movement, the systems of aggression and confrontation with the police have to do with strategies learned from celebrations. Giorgio Agamben says that the political state of emergency is the same as the carnival, operates the same way as when the time of Lent is suspended: structural violence works the same in the festive cycle as in the repressive cycle.

And an inevitable question; in the light of the global events that are defining the twenty-first century: iconoclasm, a form of resistance or the road to a 'new world order'?

The New York business happened while I was collecting documents for *F.X. Archive*... That day I was in a tavern with friends, we were waiting for El Gitano de Oro – a poetry reciter who used to accompany Pepe Marchena at times – and they pointed to the television. The images were tremendous, we were all stupefied staring at the screen, but what surprised me was the speed with which everyone in the bar started making jokes about what they were seeing. Then I spent the afternoon in the Canal Sur recording studios, mixing a soundtrack, *H*, on the subject of the atom bomb in the Cádiz carnival. One of the pieces, an extract from Pericón de Cádiz's story about the explosion in the Cádiz naval arsenal in 1947 contained different images: heaps of twisted iron, bodies flying... Everyone had us confused with

the news broadcasts. One of the lyrics of that musical, I think from 1968, announced it like this: 'What would they say if Heaven ordered the bombs they drop to come back and ruthlessly wipe out their skyscrapers.'

What I'm getting at, the event was within the bounds of possibility, it had been imagined, even wished for by many. By the Americans themselves, who heralded the catastrophe in numerous films: *Armageddon*, *Godzilla*, etc.

That reality works in the same way as fiction is an assertion confirmed by the event. For it to be read as an iconoclastic event, it must be the destruction of a signal, a sign, a symbol, and of course, it had been foreshadowed and as such it is recognised. Not only for its almost symmetrical relation with the destruction of the twin Buddhas of Bamiyan, but for evident, almost obvious reasons, as in that cartoon by El Roto that showed the Twin Towers like the double bar on the dollar sign. Not many people know that the dollar sign comes from the Spanish legend on Caroline dollar coins, the famous Pillars of Hercules – the bars – joined by a strip – the S – with the legend *Non Plus Ultra*. In El Roto's cartoon, the S is the trajectory followed by the two planes before crashing into them. Well yes, plus ultra, beyond...

Who can deny a symbolic value to the event unless it is precisely to endorse that symbol even more? The magazine *Transversal* asked me for a contribution on the subject and I sent a series of propaganda images in which the pro-Franco media presented the destruction of Guernica as the work of communist dynamiters, Asturian miners and other godless men who wanted to raze a sacred plot of land. Afterwards everyone saw what all that propaganda came to: in the end, it was that will for propaganda that led Picasso – and Bergamín and Max Aub, the people who really encouraged him – to transform the sketches for a bullfighting tragedy into a symbolic picture, for political denunciation. What Jean Clair has defined as a hysterical Nativity scene, with its virgin and child, the ass and the ox, the star of the East, the shepherds, the doorway, etc. The aesthetic work – Stockhausen, an eminently religious composer, was dazzled, petrified in front of the television when he declared it the greatest work of art of humanity – can only point to the sense in which we have to read this symbol. Sign of what? I find the controversy between the Lacanians about the symbolic character we should assign to this event interesting: epiphany or apocalypse? Nobody can rationalise the event, interpret it simply as an accident, a disaster, a reckoning, one more act of war. From all points of view, to get over it, to handle the symbolism of the disaster, people have turned to the religious affect, and to the effect. And not only through the caricature of *God Save America* and the wave of American religious patriotism. The most immediate appeal is to what is human in us, to humanism. Is 'man coming back?' The very conversion of the disaster into a symbol is a religious affect. We cannot forget Muslim fundamentalism and its violent ban on images – in this case, the towers are on the edge of what is allowed in their own tradition, the towers were not anthropomorphic, or were they? – but the religious effect goes beyond that. Joan Maragall celebrated the events of the *Tragic Week*: in seven days two hundred years of backwardness in relation to the Protestant reform had been settled and a society was preparing with a new spirituality for capitalism. A Ferrer y Guardia apologist recalled the assassination of Caesar: the aim was to restore the Republic and the Empire that made the consul Augustus a god was founded. So, well, we'll see...

### ***F.X. Archive: The Empty City***

The project to which this conversation acts as prologue, *F.X. Archive: The Empty City*, marks one more stage in the evolution of the dynamics of operation and circulation of *F.X. Archive*. It would be a propositional stage, we might say, in which the entries and images of the archive are the researcher's tools, the political tools and the

context of thought with which to scrutinise a patch of reality, a precise time and space, Badia del Vallès, a town on the outskirts of Barcelona. The city as the supreme setting of the political conflict of modern times has been another of the recurring themes in your work, the modern city as a consequence of the desacralisation of the ancient city.

I know you don't like to talk too much about on-going projects. You will tell me that what you have to say is here and there in memorial texts, leaflets and various devices...

Your interest in working on *The Empty City* predates the 'discovery' of Badia del Vallès, and for that reason I would like to know what led you to think about the void in the modern city (after works that reflect on the sacred in 'full' cities like Seville or Barcelona). Let us recapitulate...

The works in *F.X. Archive* on the modern city have been presented in the shadow of *The Empty City* project. The city was shown as a result of iconoclastic action and in that way it was configured in the Utopian constructions of the modern project: an empty city, whether due to the desolation of fire or the cleansing of progress.

Yes, it's not a bad idea to recapitulate a little.

*F.X. Archive* operates like a great language machine around the relations between language and reality, but it also produces reality. It aspires to it from the moment it activates, through seminars and publications, a reflection on the subject of modern violence, or by arousing from artistic practices, including their social and political dimensions, the importance of iconoclasm as a constitutive element, both structural and phantasmatic, of the behaviours and forms of our Community. It is a task that has been going on at least since the late nineties.

In all this time there has been hard archaeological work and numerous experiments on the different operations carried out by iconoclasm to legitimise in some way a large part of our perception of reality. Those tools are a theoretical and practical flow of approaches to the world that *F.X. Archive* now wants to apply to our more immediate environment.

*F.X. Archive: The Empty City* is now presenting an approach to the political construction of the modern city, just as *F.X. Archive: A Pure Violence* is being prepared, about the social management of fear, or *F.X. Archive: The Zero Economy*, about the cultural meaning of expenditure.

After two years' work on visual constructions and iconoclasm, sacred spaces and their profanation, *F.X. Archive: The Empty City* has developed a specific series of tools which it proposes to apply to the present, a kind of set of instruments with which to begin to urbanise the province of nihilism. Works of representation in the visual arts have often been politically linked to the city limits, the conceptual shores where the most overt political conflicts occur – pockets of marginality, new citizens, renewal of the forms of work, new urban developments, etc. – generally causing redundancies and cacophonies, if not excesses of rhetoric and tautological reiterations in the wake of that effort of the imaginary. The fact is that the very violence of any political conflict and its modern techniques of emergence and communication are already represented sufficiently and independently, with no need for any intermediation.

If we agree with Giorgio Agamben that politics, real politics, is only the action that cuts the link between violence and law; if we agree with Georges Bataille that social action is the kind that tends to suspend the set of rules that subject life; if we agree with Marcel Duchamp that artistic practice is the action that links some particular form of that ordered whole that is the world. If we agree on all that, we can clearly see that the iconoclastic gesture is located exactly at that junction between violence and law, between social rule and bare life, between form and world.

So the idea would be to apply to the reality of Badia del Vallès, by different methods and following quite different patterns

of action, some of the theoretical and practical considerations and conclusions of *F.X. Archive*, to find out to what extent its architecture and town planning, its economy and its political forms, its celebrations and social customs, its legal and life conditions, in short, the set of rules of its 'game of life' would be founded on some of the consequences, formulations and ways of the iconoclastic gesture. The point would be to develop a working methodology – endless medium – designed to broadly show the relation that exists between the present and the set of anomies developed by the iconoclastic gesture.

Indeed, Badia del Vallès refers most of all to an important moment in the debates, in both human geography and in town planning, which brought together the teachings of the modern movement to create specific organisations known as residential estates or dormitory towns, which drew and still define the suburban landscape of the big cities, a social democrat inspired town planning which has been used by dictatorial regimes, but also parliamentary ones, in cities such as Sarajevo, Barcelona and Paris. The seminar *Surroundings*, co-ordinated by Juan José Lahuerta, which has been part of this project, dealt with the subject of the suburb and gave rise to a fascinating debate about the residential estate as a place of conflict (and therefore as a possible place for political action), a place of opportunity, or a place of exclusion.

**Our experiment takes place in the centre of the city – understood as the community, the niche in the world where we happen to live – that empty city that has been deprived of its main political wisdom, taken as an example of a city where 'nothing happens' or, to put it another way, a 'depoliticised' city, i.e. where the 'polis' has ceased to exist. Where we can see that empty city most clearly is in the outskirts, which is why we have chosen Badia del Vallès, the newest city in Spain, as our subject-object of knowledge. We thank Badia del Vallès for its transparency, but let us not deceive ourselves; the void we are talking about occurs in the very heart of the modern capitalist city.**

Ciudad Badia or Badia del Vallès is a new city, a housing estate on the outskirts of Barcelona which is a significant indication of the problems of the modern city arising from the conversion of old quarters into theme parks and the postmodern scattering of the new residential areas, which speak of a different kind of town. The choice of Badia del Vallès as a site, as a field of operations, was due to a series of conditions – the heterogeneous origin of its inhabitants, a recent history, topographical closure, continuous rearrangement of its building, predominance of subsidised housing, festive/seasonal construction, progress in residents' associations, housing stage, self-management of independence, etc., among which the main one was expressed by the total absence of the marks – emigration, precariousness, speculation, etc. – which have been abused by contemporary aesthetic violence. As an indispensable guide on our incursions into Badia del Vallès we have used the work of Valentín Roma.

The paradox that arises when we observe the political power beating in the heart of *The Empty City* – with no 'polis', with no politics – was the first indicator that assured us that Badia del Vallès would be our workplace.

The fact that the perimeter of the housing estate sketched by Badia del Vallès should represent the shape of the Iberian Peninsula and the layout and names of the streets – such as Algarve, Bética, Mediterránea, Menorca, etc. – should be perfectly suitable for this cartography was our second indicator and provided us with the metonymy to make Badia del Vallès the supreme city.

The third emerged from a conversation at the headquarters of the Badia residents' association, which also acts as the municipal funeral parlour, with the chairman Andrés Llantadas and his secretary, who minutes earlier had offered to sell us some lottery tickets. The conversation revolved around the problems of

habitability of the city, of how the conversion of a housing estate given over to vertical shanty towns had constituted a residents' Community and how that Community had been constructed from the different local struggles to open up accesses, improve staircases, lay floors, demand lifts, raise the standard of living. For those singular residents Badia came to life again every time its inhabitants went out on the street to demand something, making politics and making a city, and that was what, contradictorily, the municipal and general policies wanted to suppress, emptying the lives of their people of political content. And so our third indicator was activated, with special attention to the ways in which people, despite the nature of power to make our cities its Capital, had managed to make their own Community.

As well as the collaboration with Juan José Lahuerta, the project has had the assistance of Enrique Vila-Matas and Manuel Delgado, who were invited to work in parallel to *F.X. Archive*, moving around the common spaces but also wandering off along different roads and alleys. *Subterraneans* – Manuel Delgado with the participation of Gerard Horta, Deborah Fernández, Andrea Avaria, Marc Dalmau, Santiago Subirats, Teresa Tapada and Lucrezia Miranda – takes different approaches to Badia del Vallès, from what the collective order conceals, what never ceases to circulate under the ground and emanates to the surface in different forms.

*F.X. Archive* as a documentary collection, a framework for theoretical reflection and now as a political tool. In this case a tool for the complex negotiation of the common space by its direct players and protagonists.

If *F.X. Archive* in one of its first institutional texts, back in 1997, took the phrase which the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas dedicated to his fellow-countryman George Gadamer 'urbanise the province of nihilism' as caption and leitmotiv to set out to compile images of the iconoclastic terror and read them in the light of the most radical visual constructions of the modern project with the intention, in Manuel Delgado's words, to detect the tectonic, subterranean violence where there seems to be nothing, where nothing ever happens, in the Community; if for all those past years *F.X. Archive* applied itself to trying out modes of political construction – laboratories, interventions, seminars, participations, workshops, organisations, etc. – in which it discovered how making community forms is the destruction of the forms that construct and reconstruct that very Community. Understanding that our work of knowledge of iconoclasm and the modern project, in that urbanising sense of what is destroyed, moved in a very close semantic chain – immunity, immigration, remuneration, mutual, municipal, move, permute, etc. – in the field of tensions that stretches between Communication and Communion, Community and Communism; in short, the work of *F.X. Archive* is conceived as a political tool which works that vast field of nihilism with a definite will to urbanise it. And so *The Empty City* project aims to activate the full power of that first metaphor. An effective application of profanation, giving the word back its original meaning, that action that returned things to their common use.

The result of this work is the presentation of *F.X. Archive: The Empty City. Community* and the book/archive *F.X. Archive: The Empty City. Politics*, which the reader is now holding. As opposed to the sphere of the plastic or visual arts, the framework for the artistic practices of many of your colleagues or contemporaries, the references of your work have always been the theatre, music, literature or the dance, and among those disciplines, you have used some of their most popular expressions to define frameworks in which high culture is diluted in popular culture or vice versa. The theatrical concept of 'staging' is fundamental to understanding the presentation of this project at Fundació Antoni Tàpies. A task, as we said at the beginning, between documentation and dance.

Community is the name under which the group of works done by *F.X. Archive for The Empty City* are presented. In a staging, which is drama and gesture at the same time, visual constructions of all kinds – images, pastimes, organisations, actions, participations, noises, language – are brought into play and administer a different way of uttering discourse in which the gestural values of the theatre subtract exhibition value from the works.

In that sense, the theatre is a tool with which to present the works as a 'place composition', acting as the choreography of a mental theatre. The point was to stage an archive and its functions with regard to the construction of the city. A commonplace imaginary refers us to those stage settings, from the emblematic old lady to the closing scene of Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*, for example, the archive 'becomes' a city. A theatre and its double, giving the conjunction 'and' the same values of demolition, of gutting, consigned to it by Antonin Artaud: '...an instrument that does not separate but obliges the theatre to double reality.' For *F.X. Archive* that presentation space of the works seems like the place of places in that same way as doubling reality, but also of bowing to it, since giving each piece the value of a tool is also the outcome of that attempt to subtract exhibition value from each of the works.

And so, the statement 'this is not an exhibition' may be inscribed as a frontispiece at the entrance to the room; not that it is a laboratory, nor a work in progress, nor a work in construction; it is the very nature of this work that makes it necessary to put the traditional exhibition space it uses in inverted commas. Although the space is constructed with the materials on show, they do not point to the finished work, their purpose is not that monument; rather it is to sketch intermediation operations, making each thing a medium. The theatrical resource thus works as a containing wall, preventing the colonisation of spaces of reality which aesthetic violence ends up turning into capital.

Etymologically, of course, the spectators of this exhibition make a Community in the sense that they receive the same communication. Stressing its polyphonic character in the montage is also part of the work of *F.X. Archive*. The visitors as inhabitants of the community are for a moment more actors than spectators. Although the public exhibition of all these works only intends to invite the visitors, the spectators, those actors to add their expectations, their attitudes, their gestures to the great work machine of *F.X. Archive*. Like real helpers, the visitors, actors and spectators of the exhibition have to find their 'MacGuffin' with which to travel, leave traces, draw the floor and the air of the installation.

The whole exhibition is portable, it can fit into a book, and that arrangement also works towards subtracting exhibition value from the things. The construction, the scaffolding of the whole city, works in the opposite way to a theatre of memory, and so what it puts into play is rather an 'art of forgetting' in the face of a totalising *ars mnemonica*, with the same critical sense Michel Foucault wanted to give the technology of the archive.

## Close

In his book *Politics of Aesthetics*, published by Continuum in 2004, Jacques Rancière says that the space of art must be the space of diversity: diversity of competence and function that erases the boundaries and mixes the forms of experience and expression. That the space of art must define a politics of the anonymous in a twofold sense: to avoid as far as possible the separation between activities (contemplation, circulation of information and debate), so that everyone can be integrated, while surprising the visitors' expectations, maintaining the expressive potential of each of those activities, which invite a global reconfiguration of the experience.

To end this conversation, although I could also have brought it up at the beginning, I would like you to tell me about how your

work, all your work, creates spaces of resistance, opens up the political space, where it has been emptied, and tries to show it in all its complexity, resisting banalisation and spectacularisation, which inevitably distances you from many of the landscapes currently defined by the art institution.

In fact, that taking a stance in the political debate, that intervening in the business of community life, that linking oneself with the decisions of organisation of the city should not be based on a more or less social awareness of the artist, nor on the experiences of marginalisation or repression he may have suffered, nor on his concern for hunger in the world; on none of that, except the knowledge that the language of art, in a deep, structural sense has an eminently political, social and communitarian character.

Enrique Vila-Matas, who was also invited to this and other projects, tells me the following: 'Talking about Canetti, I remember a text of his, *The Writer's Profession*, in which he recounts his stupor on reading a note by an anonymous writer. The note was dated 23 August 1939, i.e. a week before the outbreak of the Second World War, and the text said: "There is nothing to be done. But if I really were a writer, I should be able to prevent the war." How absurd, Canetti said to himself when he read it. What pretensions! What could a single individual prevent? And why particularly a writer? Could there possibly be a claim further removed from reality? Canetti said all that to himself, but for days he could not stop thinking about that note by the anonymous writer. Until suddenly he realised that the author of that loose note had a deep awareness of his words, and then Canetti went from indignation to admiration. He realised that while there are people who take on board that responsibility for words and feel it most intensely when recognising a total failure, we shall have the right to conserve a word – the word writer – which has always designated the authors of the essential works of humanity, those works without which we would have no awareness of what really makes that humanity.'

Only someone who recognises the end can recognise what the ends still are. Only someone who knows the different finishes of art will recognise the many purposes it is taking right now. Only by knowing the end of the protagonism of man as the main agent in the world will he now recognise his many tasks.

Let us think now that this machinery that works under the epigraph of *F.X. Archive* – a name that sounds abstract, formal – is an autonomous machine for which we are simply writing an instruction manual. That where Vila-Matas writes 'word', we put our 'images'. Let us think, alas!, that the note of the anonymous writer Canetti found has a distant kinship with the different mechanisms the machine will put into circulation. In short, the work of *F.X. Archive* tries to deploy a meaning machine with which to review the world through its most radical aesthetic gestures. The archive as work of art, understanding that device as a moment in space-time to which people turn their gaze, their understanding, their intellect, their love, their knowledge. The work of art as the minimum object of relation people need to understand the world. As Nietzsche wanted: 'The work of art, where it appears without an artist, for example as a body, as a machine, as an organism. To remove the artists insofar as he, the artist, is no more than a great preliminary. The world as a work of art that engenders itself.' Or as they say in these *soleares*:

'I thought loving well  
was child's play,  
and now I see one suffers  
the torments of hell.

I'd believe in loving well  
if it were child's play,  
now I see it passes,  
like a machine over death.'

# Wandlung

When the ground had been cleared, the surroundings of Can Gorgs looked peaceful. From the gate to the estate you could survey the whole zone, see who was coming and going, you know, the sentry's jobs. In front of the house, the horizon; behind, we were protected by a pinewood, one of the few that had not been burned during that war. It all looked so far from the world. Sheltering from the sun, he had drawn sentry duty by the door of the house, protected by its long shadow. He had been left there by his mates who were travelling the area commandeering bell towers or tearing the bells down from the chapels of abandoned country houses and estates; they had been used to call the faithful to private prayers or announce the different moments of the daily work. They were people from Sabadell and Terrassa, cities they had already stripped of bells and almost of churches, doing the jobs the union had charged them with, looking for the metal needed to strengthen the war industry. Basically their work consisted of transforming the use the old order had allocated to bronze, iron and other metals. There was no money and so their game needed no exchange. They collected bells, candelabras, goblets, crucifixes, walking sticks and rods for different ornaments, always metal. Bells had become the material most in demand, for that symbolic saying people recited in times of peace: to melt down cannons to make bells. Now we were turning it around. Those were other times, times of revolution, but as far as we know, rather than cannons it was lorries that emerged from the smelting of that holy metal. Our committee acted throughout the Vallés area. We had been in Viladecaballs, and in Matadepera, Ullastrell and Castellbisbal, and now we were combing the surroundings of Sabadell. All we did was to load it all onto lorries that took it to a foundry in Vic.

Our friend, of whose name no record has remained, was amusing himself by throwing dice against the wall. The monotony of the scene was heightened by the summer heat. Every time the dice rolled out of the shady zone by the gateway they shone and, from far off, they looked like signs that someone was betting there. They were silver dice, he had torn them off a crucifix abandoned in the Becket chapel in the group of churches of Sant Pere in Terrassa, from where we also dragged out a few bells. It was the day of the visit by the French journalist Tristan Tzara when they ordered us to leave the bell of Santa María, which was left there to announce the opening and closing hours of what the town had now turned into a museum. He was holding the three dice now, playing at wasting time. He had joined the militia recently – he was the one who had found the bell on the road to Rellinars – and he was not in the union, nor had he been a member of the anarchist federation, so he found the exhortations against rolling dice, playing cards or other pastimes that provided a break from the daily grind weird, to say the least. They were harangued by Comrade Espartacus Puig. The printed leaflets left no room for doubt about the Side's intentions. The radio announcements were clear enough too. Fortián Matabosch had had the foundry on the Rambla de Egara closed for accepting

booty from orchards and mountain farmhouses. The Terrassa Committee had argued for the abolition of packs of cards and the Sabadell Young Communists smashed any dice they confiscated to smithereens. Even one of his companions, a communist from Barcelona, had rebuked them – after losing all his money, of course – accusing them of being capitalists, he had even called them seditious. The name that has come down to us is Carles Mas, who was leading the squad when they took the set of dice. He was one of Pedro Alcócer's 'Chiquillos' and as he was the best educated he acted as political boss and on various occasions he had harangued them about the precise use to be made of those dice. Union orders, he said. No time wasting. No moments of leisure or winnings stolen from the comrades in working hours. Likewise, when they had to decide if it was this or some other church to be assaulted or if that country house was the one to take the bells down from, then the dice were used. That was the libertarians, the people from the Lino Patrol did the same, and they did not take numbers to the game. Stories were told about how they had decided more than one execution with the dice, but he had never been a witness, could never prove it. Joaquín, who had been with them since July 1936, had told him, 'at least when they were priests the dice were rolled.' The story was frightening to hear, like the origin of the dice themselves: they were on the cross because they were used by the soldiers to throw for the belongings of the gentleman they had executed. You had to be careful with all the stories that were told then; nothing seemed to be free of propaganda. He could not shake off his anxiety and that string of tales and inventions now served to load his luck even more heavily on each roll of the dice. That was why our hero was not only wasting time; he knew what he was risking.

So far we have the reconstruction of the scene according to the accounts of Miquel Mestres and Joaquim Matarrodona, the chronology collected in *Terrassa 1936-1939. Tres anys difícils de guerra civil* by Baltasar Ragon, and the chronicles in the newspapers *El día* and *Vida Nueva*, and the testimonies of Benjamín Peret and Mary Low. There is also a series of films produced by the anarchist trade union CNT between 1936 and 1939, especially *Barcelona trabaja para el frente* by Mateo Santos and fragments of what could be *El acero libertario* by Ramón de Baños, which have helped to put this story together. The beginning of this investigation was finding in the International Social History Institute in Amsterdam the sequence of photographs nos. 279 to 296 – currently stored in the Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo in Madrid – perfectly ordered in a logical sequence although of different provenance, from the collecting of the bells to the emergence of the new object from the factory. I was not able to verify what it was for, if it was used in some propaganda publication or exhibition. Having just finished writing these lines, I was reminded of the book *Sobre el juego* by Javier Echeverría, a pretext for which this story could be merely an illustration. Kafka's short story *The Refusal* – a fable about power from a brief description of a trial, always with a negative outcome, which takes place in a remote village – is central when

it comes to understanding the notion of gambling maintained by the author of the book. The conclusions, of which I have copied some fragments, should be kept in mind throughout this argument: 'Everything points to the maintenance of the void, of the personal non-existence of the Lord of the Game, of the atheism of God himself, as the most suitable form for gamblers to continue believing wholeheartedly in the interest of the games that engender the largest capital... The Lord of the Game refers us to a far-off beyond whose slightest sound or message, in itself, will automatically be received as Good Tidings, however vacuous its content may be if compared, for example, with a story told by any local in a pub. In the end, the Lord of the Game is determined by the totality, by the people who vote him or boot him out. Whatever image and personal power there may be will always be by delegation, or perhaps alternating periods of dictatorship and democracy, to diversify the strategy and keep everyone happy. It is not for nothing that ordinary people still favour Catholicism over Protestantism, do not disdain the statues in the churches - parliaments - or the mysterious ritual - consensus, negotiation - in the incomprehensible language - economic programme - given the lack of images and emptiness of the churches, the ceremonial and the place of power.'

So that extract from Javier Echeverría's text works as well as Kafka's short story for our account, or better still, if we understand the game to be, not the world's possibilities of functioning, but explicitly its more playful, more random side. Because in that 'game' the point is the interference between 'games'. In his book Echeverría has recourse to Marx, more explicitly the fragments of *Capital* on 'How money becomes capital' to confront his gaming theory with the predominant discourse of his time, the eighties, that still used Marx to resist the conservative counterrevolution that was to ravage us all. The 'lord' of Kafka's story is everything and nothing or, in Echeverría's own words, 'being Catholic to the maximum, he is a Protestant'. In our tale we are seeing a game more our own, in the hands of the locals of any pub. That is why, whether we are talking about a game of cards or dice, we are looking at a story that paradoxically occurs at one of those moments of history when history is abolished. Or to follow Javier Echeverría's words, a moment when 'all games have been cancelled'.

We should be sure we understand those words. This idea of situating our story at a moment when history has been suspended should not be understood in apocalyptic terms. This is not the last judgement. It may be a judgement of capital but not the Capital Judgement. I am referring to the importance of the tone, of the voice that knows that there are other voices too. I would reclaim the debate that has recently accompanied the translations of Kafka into Spanish. The point would be to see a 'humorist' above all and not an 'existentialist'. Those of us who do not know German do not need to turn to the new Galaxia Gutenberg editions. We can make do with rereading our old translations with these other eyes: wipe out *Metamorphosis* and replace it with *Transformation* for his famous story? That is one of the options proposed by Jordi Llovet, who defends this lighter but no less

serious position. Borges had already weighed up that possibility because of the classic reminiscence of 'metamorphosis' as opposed to the industrial tone that went with 'transformation'.

Let us remember our story. Let us also remember an action by Joseph Beuys at *Documenta* in Kassel in 1982. The title *Wandlung* could also hover between the two translations, 'transformation' or 'metamorphosis'. Substantially it is like this: a reproduction of the crown of Czar Ivan 'the Terrible' donated for the economic fund for his '7000 oak trees' project is dismantled piece by piece. The gold is melted down into the shape of a hare of the kind used for chocolates, while the stones and pearls were kept in sweet jars of the kind found in any confectioners. Beneath this 'toy' treasure the following legend written by Beuys himself reads: 'Everything depends on the thermal character of thought. Here is the new condition of will.' I have always defended a 'humorous' reading of Beuys, a necessary condition for putting up with his mystical affectations, or better still, the return of that mysticism to its original condition as a gag. As Giorgio Agamben was well aware, 'gag, in the true meaning of the term, which most of all indicates something put in the mouth to prevent the person from speaking, and then the actor's improvisation to fill a blank in the memory or an inability to speak'.

We could look at the exoteric path, an alchemical relation, a transcendent metaphorical operation and end up translating Beuys' action by the word 'metamorphosis', however much the process is inverted and the gold ends up turned into children's chocolate. The appreciations of the thermal condition of thought in Beuys' writing are too vague for some mystifiers, too obvious for the more attentive reader. They almost always respond to the typical contents of a children's Natural Sciences manual: heat transforms. As in the didactic documentaries that sing the epic of industrialisation. As in the films we have mentioned, *Barcelona trabaja para el frente* or *El acero libertario*, or in that other libertarian film, *Madera*, in which we follow the whole process from the cutting down of the tree to the manufacture of the rustic furniture, as if it were a revolutionary process, encouraged by the same vegetable heat of which Beuys spoke so often and which, in this case, the operator José Baviera prefers to relate rather obviously to charcoal.

At the MNACTEC, Museu de la Ciència i de la Tècnica de Catalunya, in Terrassa, these sequences would be part of the didactic section dedicated to *homo faber*. To place the sequence of photographs from Beuys' *Wandlung* there would have a humorous effect, the same we would obtain by putting the CNT sequence of photographs to which these lines have referred. Morphologically it is the same thing. The variations are sufficient for their combination to pose questions that break this natural chain with which the worker *homo faber* is always presented. The extraordinary elements are the 'toys' and the 'bells'. The place on the work chain where they appear too, the chocolate hare and the artist's sweets at the end while the bells, confiscated from the church, appear at the beginning of the libertarian sequence. Ordering the sequence, a friend proposed the following schema: bells-Ivan the Terrible-toys, or agrarian societies, capitalism and show

business. That transformation is too simple, however much we know that Guy Debord's anger in many of his observations in *The Society of the Spectacle* was merrily anticipated by Johan Huizinga in his *Homo Ludens*; and many years earlier.

But the point is not to renew the different games in the way the great History does. The point is more to maintain a question, a disturbance. The same one caused by the dice in our story when they come up against the epic of the libertarian construction of a new society. Dice, a throw of the dice, which was already implicit in the tinkling, playful image of the bells themselves. Could that be the reason why this sequence, undoubtedly designed for propaganda, would never be used? It is not true, there was a change of policy, the Republic could not keep conveying a barbarous, image hostile to the church and culture... all these reasons can be argued against it. If even the Church which Tristan Tzara visited had been transformed into a Museum which safeguarded the treasures of the old culture, constructed by the very same 'people' who now rose up in arms, as the revolutionary propaganda stated. In the valleys of the Pyrenees the old anarchists wanted to replace the bells of distant chapels with the howling of sirens like the ones in the new factories. It is that disturbance, that transfer of meanings that never materialises in any question, it is that incongruence of the question that opens up and closes with an exclamation that interests us. That is the profanation that catches our eye in this group of images and not the fact that they were torn from the chapels of country houses and churches. What disturbs this epic sequence is the presence of the bells at the beginning of the chain, which invalidate it in our eyes as a construction with which to sing any hymn to labour. This 'transformation' in the canonical eyes of Marx in *Capital* is a scandal, the same one Beuys' action caused in the ranks of the radical left: how can you reduce the revolution to a mere toy?

When in the *F.X. Archive* the CNT sequence of photographs is associated with Beuys' *Wandlung* it is not just a matter of putting two stories in parallel, two discourses that could well complement one another. It is rather the opposite, to make two different semantic fields clash however alike they may sound to our ears. That is why when we try to activate this file, to set it in motion so that it will spill its different meanings, we are looking for a tool that can reactivate this linguistic operation. The appearance of the sets of dice in the story of the anarchists in the Vallès district seemed the best of instruments. To what extent that appearance of chance was contained in the sequence of images itself or is the fruit of a paranoid delirium is something we are not going to consider now.

At the time I was making that investigation, I was working with Gonzalo García-Pelayo and his different systems for winning at games of chance and I was also able to have a look at *Art and Utopia. Action Restricted*, the exhibition and thesis by Jean-François Chevrier that placed Mallarmé at the starting point of a particular journey through modern art. We might say that *Un coup de dés* worked in the history of modern art in the same way as the bells in the story of our sequence of photographs.

Often when people read Mallarmé's 'throw of the dice' they place all the emphasis on pointing out the white parts of the page, the blank spaces. They know, as Marcel Broodthaers said, that 'he is unconsciously inventing the modern space.' And exactly what he is inventing is the modern void and not only because of the visual obviousness of constructing a poem by highlighting the blank spaces, the ones where the writing is missing, like silences in a musical score. The obsession with the throw of the dice pursues Mallarmé from far off and is transparent in its *Igitur* - a more fully symbolist experimental drama, more 'metamorphosis' than 'transformation' - where the game takes place amidst graves, clearly conjuring up nothingness. What Mallarmé is inventing, so early on, is the modern void and in it, sole consolation, the possibility of inhabiting it via the hands of chance, the possibility of playing it. The title itself is a play on words - 'a throw of the dice will never, ever, abolish chance' - and the syntagmata placed antagonistically at the beginning and end of the sentence come to the same thing: a warning. The same thing happens in Beuys' *Wandlung* where the surplus value of time has ended up identifying the czar's crown with the toys. Likewise the anarchist photo sequence in which the bells end up identifying themselves with the metal mouth of propaganda. We cannot forget that Mallarmé's poem fails, literally: in telling the story of a shipwreck, an attempted 'transformation' of the substance of the poem, of the idea, ends up smashing against the rocks, dissolved in foam. Duchamp, who followed in its wake, found that out with *Monte Carlo Bond* - 'neither win nor lose, keep afloat in the shipwreck' -, through which he was aiming to play for a while in nothingness than break the bank at Monte Carlo.

On the other hand, in the nineties Gonzalo García-Pelayo - with Juan Luis Moraza, the only Spanish artist to take the matter of games of chance seriously - developed a system with which he broke the banks of casinos all over the world. The method is based on the material certainty that there is no such thing as chance. Since the wheel, the coins or the dice are physically made of wood, metal or ivory, it is materially impossible for them to be perfect and that small flaw which can influence the final result is what you have to locate. The assistance of modern computer technology to speed up the calculations did the rest. Chance does not exist, it is simply a matter of probabilities which technology now more or less enables us to calculate. In his book *La fabulosa historia de los Pelayos* he recounts a method and its application all over the world. No image of modern capitalism seems more exact to me than the one that emerges from a reading of this book: the Pelayo family playing in various casinos in Europe, while in a hotel in Paris Gonzalo, as chief of the clan, receives data by cell phone or internet, carries out calculations of all kinds on the computer, waiting to discover that certain tendency in the random world of money in the casinos of half a continent. And, once the point has been checked, how they are all directed to bet on that precise wheel until they win, even break the bank. There is no greater artist - as Slavoj Žižek says, through 'over identification' - for revealing the rules of transformation and metamorphosis of the monetary

capitals of today, what Marx studied to see how money becomes capital.

It is that materialist, physical condition that most interests me about García-Pelayo's method. 'I can toss that coin,' Gonzalo told me, 'into the air thousands of times, but the heads or tails result will never be random. Before the five hundredth throw I can guess the tendency and thus, in a game of a thousand throws I am in a position to win, knowing which side will appear more often. The fact is that the aluminium it is made of, the distribution of weights according to the relief of the drawing, the pulse of the arm that tosses it, are all factors that can be perfectly and easily determined.' Indeed the discussion has its background in the controversies of modern physics. On a sensationalist level it is Einstein's answer to Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, 'God does not play at dice', and the nazi scientist Neils Bohr's answer to this remark: 'Let God decide what he has to do.' These are pretty well known anecdotes and what interests me again about García-Pelayo's proposal is how he drags the discussions of ideas – and here we return to Mallarmé – to the ground: 'I once believed in the possibility of the perfect die beyond its mathematical expression. I was in Palo Alto and they told me... they even showed me the apparatus for producing it. Later, over lunch, they told me that the problem arose when these dice were thrown. Not being a drinker, I had the idea of comparing it to serving wine and they thought it a good example. It is in the imperfection of the die that all the possibilities of the game occur.'

And so the opening of the modern world discovered by Mallarmé, that the game of chance reveals an empty, godless world, futile and banal, is not the most interesting thing about his tool. The solution he proposes is the game itself, so that, ideally, it will enable us to survive in an empty world; the antagonism between the throw of the dice and chance is where we find the tool. García-Pelayo plays at dice, he does not practise chance, and it is in that operation that the 'transformation' is possible, whether Beuys' *Wandlung* or the anarchist photographic programme.

And the fact is that García-Pelayo is on Baudelaire's road, to place him in some way in relation to Mallarmé. In his essay *Chance in Baudelaire* Walter Benjamin draws us an exact picture of the essence of our story, the modern similarity between work and the game of chance: 'But what it is of course not lacking is the futility of the void, the incapacity to be consummated inherent to the activity of the wage worker in a factory. Even his gestures, caused by the rhythm of automatic work, appear in the game, which is not played without the rapid movement of the hand of the person betting or taking a card. In the game of chance the so-called "coup" is equivalent to the explosion in the movement of the machinery. Each manipulation by the worker of the machine has no connection with the previous one, because it is its strict repetition. Each handling of the machine is as impermeable to the preceding one as the "coup" of a game of chance is to any of the previous ones; that is why the performance of the wage worker coincides in its way with the performance of the gambler. The work of both is equally empty of content.'

The point would be to retain that gesture, to repeat it as a tool. As Benjamin repeats throughout his text, it is the supreme gesture in the modern world, ununsatisfied, uncomfortable, empty gesture. A gesture that repeats itself, writes Benjamin: 'Always starting over, from the beginning, is the ruling idea of gambling (and of waged work).' And so when I began to work with Mario Berenguer on *Solitaire*, a version of the computer game that reproduces the card game, as a first approach to the empty city, its forms, its perimeter, its morphology – I was only applying what I had learned in *Wandlung*, the *F.X. Archive* file that gave rise to the reconstruction of our first story.

The fact that photographs of buildings and architectural elements used in the computer artifice are images of Ciudad Badía is part of this work. When we began this application from *F.X. Archive* we formulated some conditions for the experiment. The empty city on which we would draw our essay could not have a history that coincided archaeologically with the historical period on which the Archive carried out its investigations into iconoclasm. In other words, a new city in the sense that its history had taken place since 1945. The fact that Badia del Vallès, the present name of Ciudad Badía, was first planned in 1964 and the fact that it is the newest independent town in Spain began to move our conditions from the terrain of chance to the discourse of cause. Other characteristics such as its perimetric layout in the shape of the Iberian Peninsula, its streets named after geographical locations on the Peninsula, its original condition as a dormitory town entirely inhabited by emigrants, the communal characteristics of its housing, which was all subsidised, the exacerbated communitarianism of its people that gives it the highest percentage of residents' associations in the country, etc., etc., began to outline Badia as the most suitable place for our test. Everything pointed to the fact that Ciudad Badía could become a huge metaphor for the 'empty city' we wanted to try out. And what was most important, Badia's metonymic capacity was such that we could break out of the straitjacket the metaphor meant for our work. Beyond that, we could slide through a discourse critical of the metaphorical syllogism, the tautology of representations, the alliteration of similes that a city like this could provide us, a discourse that we can only describe as paranoid. People have often related *F.X. Archive* to the paranoid criticism tried by Lacan or Dalí. There is something of that, of course, in terms of trying out a criticism of paranoia, that general condition the visual arts today have reached. But we also have other scenes: when I arrived on the first official visit to Badia, accompanied by Noemí Cohen, we visited the people in charge of the residents' associations. Their headquarters was shared with the municipal funeral parlour, which was engaged in buying plots in the graveyards of neighbouring towns since Badia lacked one of its own. The secretary of the association who received us at the door and doubled as janitor combined those posts with the sale of lottery tickets due to a disability from which he suffered. Of course, before I went in I bought a couple of lottery tickets and the whole conversation that followed about a past of residents' struggles and fair housing claims was overshadowed

by that first image. An image of a present frozen between social work and the lottery.

When we began to locate files in the Archive that would provide us with tools for our new test, we looked in the closest places, narrative supports with which to begin to weave the critical plot that would turn Badia into a source of examples of our demonstrations on the empty city. The Can Gorgs - still standing in Barberà del Vallès - of our story is none other than the main country house of the Sanfeliu family, on whose estate ninety percent of the land of Badia now stands. The surroundings where the story circulates must correspond more or less to the part of the Vallès now occupied by Badia. Our informers who lived in Terrassa or Sabadell, in Barberà or Ripollèt, may be regarded as being linked in some way to Badia. Door number seven of avenida Cantàbrico, which appears in *Solitaire*, is none other than the house where the children of Carles Mas, one of the leading characters in our story, lived. The recordings in the Alhambra or La Isla bars also come from conversations with Joaquim Matarrodona and Miquel Mestres. While we were trying to adapt historical notes to the fleeting recollections of those two men, the loss of hearing typical of age and the background noise created a tempo constantly marked by the clatter of slot machines. They were our clock, which most often meant that they agreed with all our data. I even believe that those machines collaborated on the invention of more than one fact, corroborated more than one story so that it would fit perfectly into the game of our account.

The art historian Àngel González García wrote that the only possibility for an event within modern art was a meeting of friends, if possible in a bar, a lunch, a dinner or simply a drink or two with which to leave a record of some story, affections, community. At a time when the primary possibilities of communication are being colonised by the labour market, commodified, capitalised by something that goes far beyond the 'general intellect' glimpsed by Marx, a colonisation that, of course, has found the way smoothed by that scouting party that are the non-objectual practices of art. The same practices also supply us with the tools to try to resocialise those affective capitals, those links of communication and language that we are now expropriating. At a time when industry is moving out and sets us to work when we are ordering a coffee or while we are looking at a list of snacks in the shade of a bar. At such moments - also the same moments when we made the sound recordings in the bars of Badia - we appreciated as never before the overlap of the call of the pinball machines while our companion was trying to hum *La Santa Espina* or how the high volume of the sports broadcast confused *El himno de Riego* and *María de la O* in our friends' minds. Some of these sequences, now lost for ever, have been added to the tapes as a laboratory collection.

The communities of ancient Greece, the ones that handed down the democratic imaginary to us, were well aware of the rules of chance. Magistrates were chosen by lot, using the bean system. From a collection of white and black beans, according to the bean the person drew out of the bag he was given the post or not. It was a way of eliminating all

influence of the rich and any possible intrigue. With chance eliminated, the images of our democratic society refer us to the two images evoked Javier Echeverría's text mentioned above.

On the one hand, the empty, unrepresentable face of the Lord of the Game, who cannot have a face, a figure or any content due to a terror of the absolute dissolution of his arguments, the disfigurement of the images, the shattering of the Apollonian unities, the experience of chaos as chance, which is everything because it does not envisage the exclusion of any possibility. Hence its representation in the onanistic game of *Solitaire*, the outer image of an impenetrable face.

And on the other hand, the idle chatter of any local in any pub. And so we have the recordings of the bars, an orgiastic transmission of the community in which we live, interiors without representation, without images, all politics.

## FEKS

From the Factory of the Eccentric or Experimental Actor, developed the more prosaic abbreviation of FEKS, by which it is usually known, although the alternative FEX is often used in the Anglo-Saxon world, perhaps for its similarity to the acronym *FX*, now universal when referring to 'special effects', and we cannot forget that these 'tricks' are defended by the FEKS as the supreme tool of their trade. The FEKS was an avant-garde group that appeared in Petrograd in 1921 in the field of the visual and performing arts under the banner of their *Manifesto of Eccentrism* published the following year, in 1922. The declaration was signed by Gregory Mikhailovitch Kozintsev, Georgy Kryzhitskii, Leonid Zakharovich Trauberg and Sergei Khosyvovich Yutkevich, though it is true that initially there were many contributions, from Meyerhold and Eisenstein, but also from critics and authors of the Russian formalist school. But perhaps the development of FEKS is most interesting in the films of Kozintsev and Trauberg, films such as *The Adventures of Oktyabrina*, *The Overcoat* or *The New Babylon*, films that we shall be looking at in some detail. The fact is that the 1922 manifesto - an interesting collage of what the eccentricist city or eccentropolis should be, full of Futurism, biomechanics and cabaret strung together by an excited panegyric of the first American entertainment movies, especially the slapstick comedies with their pratfalls and punches - minimises the range of that cinema and we should perhaps look elsewhere to find its main aesthetic breviary. I am referring to the pages Georges Bataille's surrealists devoted to Eisenstein's films in the fourth number of *Documents*, a collage of images from *The General Line* which defines like nothing else the poetic scope the eye sought of the FEKS. We need only change the documentary images for the actors in costume and the naturalistic images of animals for the well-made papier-mâché of the props manager Yakulov. And it is in the Gogolian grotesque where we can best understand what the practical work of the FEKS achieved within the great experiment of Soviet

revolutionary film. If in *The Adventures of Oktyabrina* – a kind of portrait of the modern city stuffed with Chaplin-style adventures or an “eye with sleepy dust film” as some critic contemptuously labelled it – the Eccentrism manifesto takes on its full body, it is in *The Overcoat*, the adaptation of Gogol by the formalist Tynyanov, where his film conception is at its more original, making the humorous grotesque of the Russian literary tradition represented by Gogol a tool for the popular cinema while not sacrificing any of the avant-garde aspirations of the group. Not only that, the vocabulary they generate for that film becomes their favourite “means of transport” for dealing with any narrative theme. This idea of making a means of transport of any medium, as film was, leads them to construct a complex system of quotations, ‘critical quotations’ they were called at FEKS, with which they construct their films. In some way they were following in the footsteps of Kuleshov – and vice-versa since his film *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* could not be understood without the existence of FEKS – as his famous “effect” put an end to any attempt to establish formal correspondences in the interior of a film without the final decision on the editing being in hands other than those of the audience. When formulating his experiment – in which different montages of the same vacuous expression on the face of an actor with the images of a plate of food, a young woman and a small child produce different narrative lines, when in fact we are looking at the same empty expression – Kuleshov tries to call attention to our need to relate any elements that crop up in reading. We isolate our own signs and read them in an exercise which is as educational as it is paranoid.

The eccentricism of FEKS would tackle that same exercise by adding all kinds of oddities to the relations system but keeping the standard images recognisable. It is a crazy, literally eccentric formula, but undoubtedly a novelty: it was found, of course, in Gogol and in a host of Russian popular expressions, in popular tales, as shown by the works of Propp, another formalist close to the career of FEKS.

When in 1929 they began work on *The New Babylon or Assault on the Heavens*, a free adaptation of *The Civil War in France*, a historical tale by Marx for the days of the Commune, all that aesthetic structure was fully developed. They wanted to make a ‘classical’ film referring not to classicism but to the class struggle, to follow Eisenstein’s misunderstanding. Indeed, how else to dare set up this story based on gags, visual jokes with which to catch the revolutionary epic? We have to bear in mind that the gag for FEKS is a mainly technical instrument which goes beyond its use in comic turns. In the words of Kozintsev, ‘the gag is a lag in thought, a confusion of cause and effect, an object used for opposite ends to the ones it was manufactured for; it is a metaphor made reality and a reality made metaphor, it is the eccentric nightingale that opens the door to a world from which logic is banished... Eccentrism sprang from the exaggeration of contrasts and has its roots sunk deep in satire, boasting is cynical dismantling, caricature the destruction of everything and everyone, from the

“blague” to the gag, satire is emptied of content, since the point is no longer to mock but to go crazy, when the absurd ceases to be a caricaturesque system, becomes an end in itself, Eccentrism is no longer a parody of the aristocratic style, of all that is usual, of the monstrosities established by the social order, but a parody of man.’ So the point of this is to empty a repertoire of humorous tools of content so that they appear to be ‘new’ tools. There has been much argument about FEKS’ intention to look for Gogol’s ‘point of view’ when they were making their film adaptation of *The Overcoat*. They were working at the same time that Eisenstein was looking for Marx’ ‘point of view’ in his adaptation of *Capital*. And so why did FEKS not look for a new ‘point of view’ for *The New Babylon* and continue with what seems still to be the Gogol tool?

When relating FEKS with the critical movement of the Russian formalists their obvious relation with Victor Shklovsky has often been suggested and it is clear that the theory of the gag developed by Kozintsev owes a great deal to the linguistic alienation of the Russian theoretician. However, we propose to go beyond any chronological collaboration and read the ideas of those Soviet film-makers from the perspective of Mikhail Bakhtin, a theoretical route as symmetrical with that of FEKS as it is concurrent. We will reproduce his basic schema, the one the Bakhtin school expresses with the montage of three sequences: the dialogic – Marx and Joyce –, the polyphonic – Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche – and the carnivalesque – Rabelais and Montaigne –. It is clearly a perfect story for understanding the world, and not only that, it is the history of the FEKS but presented in reverse: *Oktyabrina*, *The Overcoat* and *The New Babylon*. That inversion seems important since it transforms Bakhtin’s theoretical project into a political one: ‘The point is to establish a new chronotope for a new man, harmonious, global, with new forms for human relations. The point most of all is to destroy all the usual links and associations between things and ideas and create unforeseen associations, unexpected logical relations’, and FEKS once again. As Javier Huerta Calvo has rightly seen, the main instrument for doing so is found in the grotesque, an aesthetic of ‘grotesque realism’ whose outstanding feature would be degradation, in other words, the transfer to the material and bodily plane of the lofty, the spiritual, the ideal or the abstract. We are talking about “materialism”, almost assuming the misunderstanding mentioned above, as you know, “classic” is not the same as “classes”. The important part of the transit, or transport, of Bakhtin’s theoretical discourse is the relations established between all these ways of understanding the world. His scholastic followers have tried to de-Marxistise Bakhtin – the same thing happens with Walter Benjamin – forgetting the relations systems he drew and halting his knowledge at the ‘subterranean’ in Dostoyevsky or the Mediaeval world. The point is not to make a fetish of his discourse; it does not matter whether it is Marx, more or less. As with FEKS the point is to pay attention to his tools. The least of it is the way Bakhtin might laugh when reading Rabelais; it is more important to understand how he guts him, cooks him, eats him and defecates him.

Bakhtin was aware of that process that inevitably led to establishing the grotesque as a 'static' category that often lapsed into petit bourgeois comedies of manners or cultural stereotypes of assimilation such as Romantic affectation, modern Naturalism or postmodern kitsch. His dynamic image of materialism springs from the grotesque imaginary; it would be a corpse, something static in which thousands of new cells are now beginning to move, new lives starting on the road to putrefaction. Embalmers thus become the main enemies of creation, idealists too: the film zombie is preferable to a dead body that stands up and walks, a monster that totters and stumbles clumsily along.

When we found the photograph that appears in *F.X. Archive* under the FEKS entry at the Tobella Foundation, the description was incorrect. It came from a donation by the family of Josep Armengol Cañameras, though we do not know for sure if he himself photographed the scene. At the door of a church a group of citizens are posing among a group of corpses that have been dug up, exposed mummies. Finding it at Montserrat Abbey was the mistake when it showed an outing from Sabadell or Terrassa to the convent of the Salesians in Barcelona, on which for a few days, from July to August 1936, the exhibition of mummies of the former inhabitants was mounted with great success. Most of them were Salesian nuns, with the excuse that it was an example of the tortuous, obscene life where in the dark Catholic Church moved. From the records of the movements of those populations – the different Committees had to be notified of each outing that involved sums of money larger than five hundred pesetas – we know that one member of the excursion was Sebastià Badia, an anarchist from the Vallès whom we have seen portrayed in similar poses with the peasants of the area during a CNT trade union project to bring country and city work closer. Indeed, we have seen pictures of Badia alone and with the peasants of the Sabadell and Terrassa area and in Barcelona his surname is also related to the owners of estates in this part of the western Vallès. We also know that he had belonged to the Excursionist Centre that took possession of the premises of the Ceda, number 37 Calle Norte, and at the centre there was an Armengol who turned up dead on the outskirts of Terrassa and whose body took some time to identify. We do not know what relation those events might have with the theft of the contents of the safe of the industrialist Marcel Poal, which the union engineers took eight hours to blow up, but the fact is that those names are often associated with those events. Frederica Montseny writes, 'the men and women who engaged in attacking convents burnt everything they found in them, including the money. How I remember that rough proletarian who proudly showed me the edge of a thousand pesetas note, burnt! 'We've set fire to a heap like this,' he told me.' In the convent of the Salesians in Paseo de San Juan, in Barcelona, they nevertheless decided to keep it. It was an idea of commander Pérez Farras before leaving for the front, when he recalled the exhibitions in the Tragic Week of 1909. The thing had its tradition, indeed about forty thousand people filed past the macabre preparation, a spectacle for the people with intentions of turning

the experience into an 'instructive amusement', as Farras himself said. On July 25, *Solidaridad Obrera* published the following: "When it seemed that all that shone was destined to be fuel for the flames, it was discovered that when an altar is burned in the street it is the only time it has shone. Moreover it turned out to be all muck, complete muck. Warehouses of intellectuality. Heaps of rubbish. That and no more is what is burnt. Works of art? First, the works of art were loved by the authoritarian, hierarchical world, not as art but for their quality as gold and silver. Life is worth more than art!' If in 1909 the interest of these exhibitions was to forcefully denounce the dark ignominious world in which the church was living, its nuns and its priests, then now, according to Farras, the issue was art. In the General Suit the fascists brought against these acts when the war ended there was nevertheless an insistence on their theatrical character: 'At the church of El Carmen, in Madrid, parodies of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Funerals were held, mummies were dug up from the religious graveyard in the church as appears in the documentary appendix. Likewise in Barcelona the mummies profaned by the Marxists were exhibited; they dug up the ones in the Convent of the Salesians in Paseo de San Juan. It is worth mentioning the sacrilege carried out in the church of the Dominicans, in Valencia, commandeered by the Popular Front, where performances were put on.' In the documentary appendix those same militias appear, celebrating and laughing among skulls and mummies somewhere in Madrid. But I insist, in Barcelona the exhibition had a more artistic character, although this is denied by the tremendous voiceover in Mateo Santos' documentary, *Jornadas del Movimiento Revolucionario en Barcelona*: 'In this convent of the Salesians mummies of nuns and friars martyred by the religious community itself were found. The sight of those twisted mummies, violated by torture, aroused a clamour of popular indignation. The Catholic Church in this and other events has bared its rotten soul, has undone in a few hours the fabulous lie of twenty centuries. Those petrified corpses in their coffins are the bitterest diatribe ever launched against Catholicism.' Next the soundtrack fills the screen with cheers and hurrahs for the revolution, the republic, anarchy. In the images we can observe a host of people held back by the grilles of the convent that is housing this macabre exhibition, a host shouting and hesitating between glances at the camera and the bloody, comic spectacle before their eyes. To support the new intentions of Commander Farras we have the photographs from the book by Francisco Lacruz, *El alzamiento, la revolución y el terror en Barcelona*. 'One of the mummies dug up by the mob in the convent of the Salesians', whilst we see how this corpse has been adorned with branches, military gear and curtains that give it a certain elegance. 'A macabre exhibition of the mummies dug up put on by the murderous horde in the middle of the street' and the two photographs show the arrangement of the mummies in the exhibition, aligned in a precise route, and the large multitudes visiting them. It should be noted that propaganda often mixed images from the events of the Tragic Week displayed as proof of the horror with these from the visit to the Salesian exhibition, more comical and didactic. "With sick,

nauseating curiosity, the plebs of Barcelona filed through the convent of the Salesians for several days to see the macabre spectacle of the profaned mummies” and, in a double photograph we are shown a couple of experts looking as if they are making precise comments on the different finish of this or that mummy, while in front of some boxes filled with rotten remains a group of spectators are having to hold handkerchiefs to their faces and cover their noses against the fetid stench. And without captions we also have other examples that make an explicit assessment of the works with hands measuring their size, eyes scanning their shine and roughness and gestures of traders who seem to be weighing up how much they would pay for each one. The most complete testimony of this exhibition is provided by the art historian Manuel Sánchez Camargo – his best known monograph deals with the representations of death in Spanish art – in his contribution to volume twenty-one of *Historia de la Cruzada Española*, where he says: ‘Not far from the Sagrada Familia, in Paseo de San Juan, the convent and church of the Salesians were destroyed, one of the most rounded constructions of the architect Martorell and one of the best and most complete works of its kind built in recent years. The building was neo-Gothic style, almost filigree, and the polychrome of the materials used completed and enhanced the splendid exterior ornamentation. The interior, consisting of a single nave, daring and majestic, in the shape of a cross, ended in a large apse, crowned in the centre by a dome. Flamboyant Gothic architectural and decorative elements predominated. Here the profanation of the convent graveyard took on a horrendous character: the mummies of the nuns were taken from the graves and exhibited by the main façade of the church. That macabre exhibition was the spectacle that drew the largest multitudes and caused the greatest merriment during those days when Barcelona was maddened with blood and flames. It was an endless parade of people of the most varied conditions: militiamen, guards, craftsmen, workers, parents with their offspring and women, many women, who flocked to gaze at the mummies and skeletons with the eagerness and curiosity with which people gaze at wild animals in the zoo. And the parade went by amidst appalling jokes, cynical mockery, spicy remarks, and the spectators burst out laughing when some callous swine, refining his perversion, indulged in an obscenity with the mummies or stuck a cigarette between the jaws of a skull. A city policeman kept “order”. On the wall by the door where the curious entered, a slogan was painted in white letters: “To visit the mummies”. And an arrow pointed the way.’

As the quotation from Frederica Montseny shows, we see that many people abroad were surprised by the anarchists’ attitude to money. The sacking and burning of churches often found justification in the honesty and sincerity of gestures by the assailants who did not seize goods, jewels, gold or silver and when they found cash or share bonds they burned them. They were also attacking an institution, the church, which from its own figures of financial losses seemed excessively powerful and wealthy, especially considering that it wanted to present itself as the charitable sister of the

poor. Hence the campaign that denied these libertarian attitudes began abroad, with insinuations that what was claimed as justice against an institution that had oppressed the poor for centuries was robbery and pillage by the militias. The Nazi publication *Das Rotbuch über Spanien* compiled these impressions, and the Salesian exhibition gave them justification for the legend of the confiscated religious treasures. Quoting the *Osservatore Romano*, they echoed items of news – indeed, never repeated by the propaganda the fascists made for internal consumption – that darkened the exhibition like ‘a curtain of smoke that hid the numerous treasures the revolutionary masses were stealing.’ The photographs mixed images of sackings of churches in Toledo and the church of El Carmen in Madrid – which showed mockery with skulls and bejewelled mummies – with the exhibition in Barcelona. The value of the exhibition was not so much in what was shown as in the fabulous wealth that was hidden. The fact that those commentaries were a subject of debate abroad is also shown by the publication in Paris in 1937 of *Los de Barcelona*, a courageous vignette by the German Jew Hans Erich Kaminski on the revolutionary months of July and August 1936 in the city. His late arrival prevented him from seeing certain events at first hand. He had been told about the Salesian exhibition but it is obvious that his approach to the subject is guided by those international controversies about financial pillage and what some libertarian media say about respect for the heritage and the transformation of the goods of the church into works of art. The chapter given over to the Catholic Church abounds in testimonies of this kind: ‘In the Archbishop’s Palace in Madrid 500,000 pounds sterling have been found, in the one in Vic 16 million pesetas. In a convent in Madrid considered especially poor, whose members engage in begging, a search turned up over 100 million pesetas, most of it in shares. In Catalonia alone 30 million pesetas belonging to the church have been confiscated, not counting, of course, its properties.’ That is the general tone of the chapter, a positive debate for the republicans who were conserving the works of art and confiscating the economic excesses of an institution that had enriched itself by force. At some moment he was assailed by doubt and it seems he does not fully understand what he has been told and is not sure that he has all the keys to the problem. Of his visit to Tarragona cathedral – the data here is not very reliable because this church was sacked, most of its chalices stolen and the rest of its ‘metals’ recycled by the National Metallurgy Service – which had been converted into a museum by the local government, guided by a priest who at the time was wearing the blue dungarees of the militias, he says: ‘Everything is intact, the missals closed and in their place, the images of the saints on the altars, in the treasury the gold and silver tabernacles shine, and not one of the precious stones that adorn them is missing. Not even the relics in the urns have been touched. Only the arm of St Tecla, patron saint of the cathedral, has been moved to the city financial administration, I did not quite understand why.’ In the Nazi publication mentioned above it was also hinted that many of the heads of the mummies were preserved in the safes of the main communist and libertarian trade unions.

When we interviewed Josep Ramon in Terrassa, he was ninety-seven years old and had witnessed many of the events recounted. Although he was blind with cataracts he identified many of the people in the photograph and gave us an exact account of what had happened. Everything is improbable and he had used the same data we gave him throughout the conversation. As I say, he was almost blind, but he moved his finger over the photograph and corroborated the facts. He confirmed the presence of Sebastià Badia and identified him as a member of the trade union CNT. According to what he said the excursion was a cover for a journey to Barcelona to take the money confiscated from the industrialist Poal. Before handing it over to the union they had visited the Salesians exhibition. He said how much it had impressed them, the fear but also the laughter it had inspired. The gold teeth of many of the mummies were the most popular subject. Also their comical grimaces and the arranged scene where a trepanned skull was used as a piggy bank into which another one of the mummies seemed to be depositing a coin from its savings. The emotion of the event and the frantic revolutionary enthusiasm constantly displayed by the multitudes of visitors – in Mateo Santos's film there are some good examples – had inspired them to burn everything they were carrying, all the paper money was fuel for the flames and the coins were tossed into the air. Later the blame fell on Armengol and on the journey back, in an argument or some such thing, it seems they had killed him. The whole story is improbable, but we have to give Señor Josep credit for his skill in fitting it all together, for adjusting all the facts to his narrative. There was something in the photograph that led us inevitably to that, but I do not understand how that man, who was blind, was capable of seeing it. But there was something, an anxiety generated by the offhand gazes of the people in it, who could smile amidst such a macabre scene. Like the photographs of tourists eager to visit places where some disaster has taken place, visitors to concentration camps, battlefields, landscapes devastated by the eruption of a volcano or a tornado, there was a glimpse of something grotesque. The justifications of the exhibition of the Salesians in the name of terror, art or capital function to perfection in the FEKS theoretical sequence or Bakhtin's different analyses. The grotesque drags the ideal towards matter, towards money, as all the documents have shown. But how can it be that the empty aftertaste left by a photograph can be material enough to check it?

Well, that void is born from an incongruity. There is something that does not fit when one finds in the same image that group of frank smiles on the faces of the comrades and the dislocated grimaces of the dead women. As Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio said in a memorable article in which he felt rightly distressed at the excitement of a party of tourists gazing in ecstasy at the sublime beauty of a volcano in eruption. The insanity of that image was its truly eccentric incongruity, as was Ferlosio's passion for trying to understand the scene. And that is where we are, where we always are, since those are the forces that converse in that immense polyphony Bakhtin wanted for his carnival time.

In his study *Film and the Anarchist Imagination* Richard Porton reminds us: 'A prototypical sequence of the Soviet avant-garde epic *The New Babylon* (1929) by Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg sums up the antiauthoritarianism of the bases that acted over the 72 days of the Paris Commune in 1871, while anticipating Spanish libertarian communism of the 1930s and the anti-state radicalism that exploded during the events of May 1968 in France. Towards the end of the adaptation of Zola's novel *Au bonheur des dames* by Kozintsev and Trauberg (a film whose delirious montage and anarchic spirit made it one of the most unusual productions ever to come out of the Soviet Union), the young heroine, Louise, expresses her solidarity with the Communards by building an improvised barricade with a piano stolen from the huge store where she was working. Walter Benjamin observed in the unfinished *Das Passagen-Werk*, a huge investigation of the origins of the culture of consumerism, that 'in the soul of the commodity a hellfire rages'. Louise's joyful, improvised gesture transforms the deified soul of a commodity into a tool for social transformation.' Such was Commander Farras' intention when he set his masquerade in motion, that was the ultimate goal of his carnival, the origin of the whole incongruity of the Salesians exhibition.

Porton's error in attributing the plot of the FEKS film *The New Babylon* to Zola's *Au bonheur des dames* is significant. The backdrop to Zola's novel, the most optimistic in his whole cycle on the enthronement of the bourgeoisie as the new economic class that will govern the movement of our worlds, is the emergence of the first big department stores and the structural change that involved for social organisation. Indeed, the novel takes place in a continuous holiday atmosphere, a symmetry extrapolated by the FEKS to later revolutionary events. Zola, however, points to that moment of festive work positively, in the carnival of labour in which the world is topsy-turvy the miracle happens and the big capitalist ends up marrying one of his employees, bypassing the traditional system of domination which enlightens the class struggle. Moreover, for Zola the work of artists – the old shopkeepers call the new bourgeoisie with new ideas for the economy poets – emerges as the new engine of social creativity in substitution of the working strength of the old craftsmen. We make no headway by saying that Zola does not distinguish Paris either as 'hell' on earth or as the promised 'paradise'. The capital of the world is indeed capital.

The utopia represented by the carnival is also noted by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt when in *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* they dedicate their entry to the *Carnival* and refer to it as a political instrument: 'The notion of multitude based on the production of the common is seen by some as a subject of sovereignty, an organised identity similar to the old social bodies of modernity, like the people, the working class, or the nation. For others, however, our notion of a multitude made up of singularities seems like mere anarchy. And indeed as long as we remain trapped in the modern frame of reference defined by that alternative – sovereignty or anarchy – the concept of multitude

will be incomprehensible. We have to break with the old paradigm, free ourselves from it and identify a mode of social organisation which is not sovereign. A literary digression may help us to make that change of paradigm, the review of the concept of carnival developed by Mikhail Bakhtin.<sup>7</sup> Bakhtin, of course, always understood that there was a political relation between popular culture and the mass media it organised, though he warned about the way things could spin out of control when those media grew out of all proportion due to technical progress. Walter Benjamin had also encouraged and warned about that capacity of technology to become a power in itself with sufficient independence to manage a different system of organisation, a new sovereignty over the masses. Marshall McLuhan had also been enthusiastic about those correspondences, all the potential praised by pop culture – the absolute rule of the commodity, for example –, ‘agitpop versus agitprop!’ By emphasising that coincidence between the form of organisation of the multitude and visual constructions, we reach paroxysm as in the brilliant final crescendo of the text by Negri and Hardt: ‘That perspective refers us once again to the concept of multitude and the difficulty of understanding it as a form of political organisation. It is easy to observe the performance and carnival nature of the different protest movements which have emerged around the issues of globalisation. The demonstrations, though fiercely combative, are also very theatrical, with gigantic figures, fancy dress, dances, satirical songs, slogans chanted in a chorus, etc. In other words, those protests are street parties where the demonstrators’ anger coexists with the joy of the carnival. And they are not only carnivalesque in their atmosphere, but also in their organisation. This is where Bakhtin comes in. In political organisation, as in stories, there is a constant dialogue between different singular subjects, a polyphonic composition of the subjects, and a general enrichment of each one through this common constitution. The multitude in movement is a kind of narrative that produces new subjects and new languages. It is true that other political movements, those of the 1960s and 1970s especially, managed to construct this kind of polyphonic narrative, but it often seems that the only thing left of them is the historical monologue constructed by the dominant powers, the police and the judges. The new and powerful movements of today seem to resist all attempts to reduce them to a historical monologue: they cannot not be carnivalesque. That is the logic of the multitude, which Bakhtin has helped us to understand: a theory of organisation based on the freedom of the singularities that converge in the production of the common: Long live the movement! Long live the scene! Long live the common!’

In all these war scenes we find the same strangeness, the same deviation, the void of an incongruity which, nevertheless, is called by some and others to govern us politically. In his film *El encargo del cazador* Joaquim Jordà provides us with many images like ours, groups of hunters resting after the slaughter, posing beside their victims, dead animals. Everything is the result of work, the hunters and their trophies, the revolutionaries and their mummies. There is an evident relation

between the victims and their hunters, in theory there is congruity, a habit that makes the whole scene familiar, everything chimes but for the fact that the film undertakes to empty our gaze, to make the hunters’ practices eccentric. In the very references to the family photo album where the hunting photographs are strange, here we also find our photograph for FEKS, torn out of some other family album.

Another visual relative for our photograph appears in my own family album and needs a more lengthy explanation. In Cádiz, carnival has an extra day of celebration, usually the last Sunday in February and it is known as the day of the ‘fed-up’. The most resistant bands go out that day to make their rounds and when night falls, around the market square it seems they are declaiming their repertory as if it were their last chance. On the stairs of the post office the spectators are usually photographed with the remains of some group, smiling citizens leaning on one another amidst those grotesque masks, while the hoses wash away the remains of rubbish and confetti. These strange photos that abound in family albums escape any classification, they are the ones that, in his study of family images and souvenirs, *Álbum de familia*, Armando Silva would call eccentric, they announce the dissolution of the family unit and its recomposition in the shape of collages via Photoshop, via any modern technology. In these photographs of extraordinary celebrations, carnival or Halloween, a formalist analysis would only find a strong overtone of violence. The end of the party produces the same void that remains after any revolutionary event and which is filled by terror. That horror is what comes back in the carnivalesque as Bakhtin was well aware when he analysed Rabelais’ images of superabundance as if they were landscapes from hell, the same one which according to Benjamin was stored at the bottom of any commodity, the same one which the optimists Negri and Hardt could describe, not in an antiglobalisation demonstration but in a visit by a large family to the supermarket at the busiest time of day. The cornucopia as total image of the carnival observed as if it were a vanitas. The carnival as image of the total, absolute triumph of capitalism, its enthronement, the void as space in the bottle to be filled up. Carnival as political tool? Well, of course, otherwise which world do we think we are living in?

In his *Little Philosophy of the Holiday* Odo Marquard writes a fierce diatribe against the political drift of the world towards a total permanent holiday. He compares and likens what he calls moratoria of the everyday: holidays, war and the total work of art as alternative life. He imagines an infernal world where the three exceptions spread further and further until they give meaning to a permanent global state of emergency. He argues strongly for a return to the episodic character of the holiday to neutralise the necessary expenditure of the total work of art and war. ‘And so,’ he writes, ‘men need holidays because the human person is the eccentric being who cannot go on without the holiday.’ In his diatribe, he fills festive episodes like holiday tourism with praise. ‘Today – as shown, for example, by comparing the number of German soldiers who occupied Yugoslavia before with the number of Germans today who spend their

holidays in the country – this martial form of tourism is no longer needed: all you have to do is buy a ticket in Yugotours.’ What would the innocent Marquard think those Germans tourists are doing in Yugoslavia in view of the historic course taken by the zone since the independence of Croatia?

Giorgio Agamben suggests the opposite in *State of Emergency*. The likeness he establishes between the figure of political law that is the ‘state of emergency’ and the festive practices of the carnival – and of any other festival that allows anarchy – can help us to better understand that political dimension of the carnivalesque chronotope: ‘Anomic festivals dramatise that primary ambiguity of legal systems and show, at the same time, that what is at stake in the dialectic between those two forces is the very relation between the law and life. They celebrate and paradoxically reduce the anomy through which the law is applied to chaos and life only on condition that it itself, in the state of emergency, becomes anomy, life and living chaos. And the moment may have come to try to better understand the constitutive fiction that, by joining law and anomy, also guarantees the relation between law and life.’ It is curious that where the social conflict is taking place between the institutions of power and the antagonistic revolutionary movements, both elements are being combined at once, the application of ‘emergency measures’ by power to repress dissidence and the adoption by the dissidents of ‘carnivalesque’ practices with which to bypass the total control power exercises over the public sphere. Agamben’s political idea – re-reading Walter Benjamin, ‘in fact, politics is only the action that cuts the link between violence and law’ – which identifies the state of emergency – paradoxically in a sphere of political resolution linked to the state in revolution – as the rule that governs the state of affairs of the historical period we happen to live in – from the world wars to the present day police wars of the empire – finds its visual simile in the anomic practices, in the festive cycles of the carnival. And just as Agamben points out that there can be no ‘return’ to the state of law because, as the ‘state of emergency’ is at the very foundation of the state, it has questioned the very concepts of ‘state’ and ‘law’ and that it is by looking deeper into this anomic state of affairs – ‘where danger is, what saves us grows’ to follow Hölderlin – in which we must liberate life, the uses and human practices of life that the powers of law and myth have tried to capture in the state of emergency.

It is strange how for Giorgio Agamben the defence of Walter Benjamin by the English Marxist Terry Eagleton also leads to the carnival and especially to its consideration through Bakhtin’s prism. The transmutation of revolutionary messianism in a time of permanent carnival seems to come from Benjamin via both the ‘mystical’ path and the ‘Marxist’ path. The consideration and study of this anomy as a source of instruments and tools for political action also finds an endorser in Eagleton from a conviction that the political character of all artistic practices may be reached by delving into their language rather than allowing oneself to be swept along by any reason of conscience. The point is to establish a common root between Bakhtin’s carnival

and Benjamin’s Apocalypse. According to Eagleton: ‘Only when body and image have interpenetrated within technology in such a way that all revolutionary tension becomes collective bodily stimulation and all the bodily stimuli of the collective become a revolutionary discharge will it have transcended itself to the point demanded by the *Communist Manifesto*. The imaginary of the carnival through which Bakhtin organises the libido of the collective ‘physis’ promises to materialise for Benjamin in the historical forces of production. Because the body counts itself among those material forces and is also inscribed with images produced on the superstructure level. By using technology to generate new images, experimental art can intervene indirectly at the base, writing the body anew to align it with the new tasks presented by a transformed infrastructure ...’

An empirical confirmation of the similarity between holiday and revolution has been provided for us by Manuel Delgado in *Carrer, festa i revolta*, his study of the symbolic uses of public space in Barcelona between 1951 and 2000. It was a reading of this book that turned the work of *F.X. Archive* in Badia towards its festive cycle, leaving its little record of revolutionary struggles – if we can call them that: demands for independence, residents’ struggles, etc. – for another part of the investigation. Though it was there, in the festivals of the carnival cycle, that we had to concentrate on applying the effects of our FEKS. Of course, for Señor Josep, our blind informer, the crime his story of our photograph ends with took place in land now occupied by Ciudad Badía, but we cannot give too much credit to that datum.

Let us return for a moment to Agamben’s text to understand why we chose the carnival festivals and Easter Week as the object of our work. In his book *State of Emergency* he says: ‘And so the anomic festivals point towards a zone where the maximum subjection of life to law is turned to liberty and licence and the most frenzied anomy shows its parodic connection with the “nomos”: in other words, towards the state of emergency effect as the threshold of indifference between anomy and law. In the showing of the sorrowful character of all festivals and the festive character of all mourning, law and anomy show their distance and, at the same time, their secret solidarity.’ It is true that the fact that a major emigration from the south of Spain has populated Badia since its beginnings has marked the celebration of those festivals and that my reference points, Seville for Easter Week and Cádiz for carnival, condition these works in some way. The inversion of the sorrowful and festive characters was guaranteed simply by the operations these festivals have suffered by being transported to Badia. That eccentricity turns the simple development of the festivals in its streets into a strange agent who, as such, disseminates estrangement.

What we wanted basically was to present the carnival as Easter Week and Easter Week as the carnival. There are historical reasons for that as demonstrated by José Luis Ortiz Nuevo in *¿Iconoqué?*, a text presented at the *F.X. Archive* Television Laboratory. For example, a large part of the figurative substrate of the via crucis of Easter Week is to be found in the

momentary triumph of Don Carnal over Doña Cuaresma in the most revolutionary period of the 19th century. The proletarian parodies of the cigarette girls of the tobacco factories taking out Easter Week floats in disguise seems to prove it. And, for example, it seems clear that the *saeta* is incorporated as a liturgical chant into the streets of Seville from the merry songs of the blind, erotic and comic diatribes on the images that were forbidden for some time, though now they are a usual prayer. What those historical inversions of the sorrowful into festive and viceversa give us is a trick, a gag with which to look at the city from the masks of the photograph of the outing to the Salesian exhibition – the one of the mummy, of course, is the mask of death; the mask of the knight refers directly to the Mexican tradition of depicting the Spanish as one more beast in their collection of animal faces – had no other purpose than setting in motion that look of delirium, of craziness, that eccentric and eccentricist look insofar as it can refer us to that whole chain of reasonings.

An interesting Sevillian film, *Costaleros* (Image Bearers) by Joaquín Arbide, a super-8 from 1980 which was never finished, had a plot about a strike by the port workers who traditionally took out the Easter Week floats in the procession. The actions of the strike follow one another – with the inclusion of many fragments of documentary – and among the demands for workers' autonomy the question about whether or not the strike should affect the procession is raised. In the film an evident metaphor is dropped, 'the float bearers are to the Virgin's float what workers are to capital'. I do not know why, when I watched Badia Easter Week, it reminded me of that story, noticing the whole procession in the workers' labour. In many cities in Andalusia you can watch the rehearsals for the Easter Week processions throughout the winter. Beneath rustic looking handbarrows, structures of bare wood usually loaded with sacks of cement, large stones, blocks of concrete or iron weights, you can see groups of local men walking those artefacts through the city with a seriousness that looks out of place, rocking the strange weights, marking the pace of those sacks of cement, stopping the traffic, often accompanied by a processional soundtrack playing from a portable cassette player or some other apparatus. For anyone who is not familiar with the context, the apparition of one of those processions in the street is somewhat odd, grotesque even, an event with no explanation. Oddly enough it is the same sensation I had when I saw the procession in Badia. What was all that doing there?

I wondered the same thing about the appearance in Cádiz during the carnival in 2005 of the quartet – in Cádiz quartets always have three or five people – Vaya Cruz, a group that put on a parody of the passion of Christ, with the typical jokes of any carnival. A bit like Monty Python in *The Life of Brian* and Pasolini in *La Ricotta* or Rufus Wainwright in *The Crucifixion of the Gay Messiah*, artistic precedents they did not know about and which I personally undertook to praise to them. In the end it turned out that Vaya Cruz was a quartet from Seville and with the load of regional rivalry on their backs and with that repertory of lyrics it was quite an achievement to have reached

the final of the carnival competition at the Teatro Falla. They could not be from anywhere else, of course, the daring of being Sevillian had a twofold merit, although the betrayal of Sevillian traditions won them some respect. When I suggested that they perform in the carnival in Badia, where some years figures imitate those in the Cádiz carnival, they asked me whether their repertory would be understood there. From those conversations came the idea of putting subtitles. It was not that they needed to put credits in Catalan; that did not seem necessary. Subtitling their performance became an important tool in our work. I do not know if you have noticed but there is never any clear correspondence between the dialogue of a film and the subtitles, and not only due to the translation, since dubbing into another language is not the same either and is also different from subtitling for the deaf. Do the test with any film, go and watch a showing of *The Life of Brian* on Digital+ and try all their translation and subtitling tools to test the gibberish. And so we tried to apply many of the techniques of FEKS in our task, or rather we decided that the members of the quartet were FEKS actors and we would take the subtitles to a more dialogic field, though I do not know what Marx would end up doing in all this. One example of their parodies, the three on the cross are talking: (Gestas) 'I'd heard about the priests, and apparently you can't imagine how they hand out alms in the churches. They make a circle and throw the coins, the ones that fall inside are him, and for the church the ones that fall outside. (Jesus says) It doesn't have to be like that, Gestas. In other churches they make a line, the coins that fall on one side for him, and the ones that fall on the other for the church. (Dimas says) I say that it can be done another way too. They throw the coins up in the air: the ones that go up God keeps and the ones that fall back on the ground are for him.' I'm sure that they are not familiar with a Mediaeval story which Bakhtin tells in relation to Rabelais' *Gargantua*. It is a variation on the old idea that gold and money are shat by God – it also exists in native American tradition – and throwing the coins up in the air is a way of giving them back. We return to the grotesque, literally, bringing ideals down from highest to lowest, towards matter, towards money. And of course nobody understood most of their gestures, in the farewell, a direct parody of Easter Week in Seville, when they wriggle around on their crosses while humming the national anthem and in the theatre the lights are lowered and the curtain comes down.

With the masks it seems obvious, how to look at the city through these eyes? Through the empty sockets of a paper mask and with the images represented, their function seems clear. Both with *The Image Bearers* and *The Quartet* the intention was the same, to look for an actor through whom we could look at the city, an actor or a troupe of actors specially trained at FEKS. The whole work is aimed at finding that look of strangeness the photograph of the people on the outing to the Salesians aroused in us. I remember a conversation in Cádiz about the carnivals. I brought up the subject of Bakhtin and they told me it was finished, it was no longer good for anything – not even a lyric – in the carnival, it was obvious that I had not passed the test

for wanting to intellectualise everything. And I was disturbed, I felt shame and a strange emptiness in my stomach. I am sure that the blame for that strange story we are now ending lies with the unresolved conversation of that afternoon. So that is the point now, to see the city from there, from that emptiness in the stomach.

## El Capital

There can be no doubt that the following lines are destined to be added to the list of those accused of 'fetishism'. Since Althusser, or even earlier, anyone who has pointed out the centrality of the chapter *The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof* to a reading of Marx's *Capital* has been accused, to say the least, of living in a world populated by fantasies and phantasms. This is how the text begins:

'A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that those properties are the product of human labour. It is as clear as noon-day, which man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by Nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, as soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than 'table-turning' ever was.'

The references to 'spiritualism' are evident in the final allusion to 'table-turning'. And so we must believe that those who seek to level accusations of fetishism at thinkers who have tried to refer to this text of Marx as fundamental, in fact want to sit Derrida, the Italian operative left, Agamben and Lacanian leftist drifts at the table and make them move the pebble. Not just that, even the post-hypostasis that can designate a large part of the thought which appears after modernity has been called a simple 'fetish' to which a complete associated semantic field must be added: fragmentation, disappearance of the subject, etc. Even when people talk of 'leftwings' the plural 's' is given a fetishist character, a final whistle that naturally has sweeping psychoanalytic resonances. That critical analyses of any careful reading of this piece of writing by Marx pause at those puns is quite consistent. At the end of his chapter Marx makes the commodities themselves speak. Let us have a look:

'But not to anticipate, we will content ourselves with yet another example relating to the commodity form. Could commodities themselves speak, they would say: Our use value may be a thing that interests men. It is no part of us as objects. What, however,

does belong to us as objects, is our value. Our natural intercourse as commodities proves it. In the eyes of each other we are nothing but exchange values. Now listen how those commodities speak through the mouth of the economist. "Value" - (i.e. exchange value) "is a property of things, riches" - (i.e. use value) "of man. Value, in this sense, necessarily implies exchanges, riches do not." "Riches" (use value) "are the attribute of men, value is the attribute of commodities. A man or a community is rich, a pearl or a diamond is valuable..." A pearl or a diamond is valuable as a pearl or a diamond. So far no chemist has ever discovered exchange value either in a pearl or a diamond. The economic discoverers of this chemical element, who by-the-by lay special claim to critical acumen, find however that the use value of objects belongs to them independently of their material properties, while their value, on the other hand, forms a part of them as objects. What confirms them in this view, is the peculiar circumstance that the use value of objects is realised without exchange, by means of a direct relation between the objects and man, while, on the other hand, their value is realised only by exchange, that is, by means of a social process. Who fails here to call to mind our good friend, Dogberry, who informs neighbour Seacoal, that, "To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but reading and writing comes by Nature."

The value of the paradox that Marx slips in at the end, borrowing a dialogue from Shakespeare, must be understood in terms of Marx's own deep conviction that the greatest merit of his economic analyses is to have pointed out the twofold nature of work conditions. For example, in *Capital* he says, 'I was the first to point out and to examine critically this twofold nature of the labour contained in commodities. As this point is the pivot on which a clear comprehension of political economy turns.' Likewise, in a letter to Engels dated 24 August 1867 he confesses, 'The best points in my book are: 1. (this is fundamental to all understanding of the facts) the two-fold character of labour according to whether it is expressed in use-value or exchange-value, which is brought out in the very First Chapter.' In another letter to Engels, dated 8 January 1868, he adds: 'Economists have not noted a simple point: that if the commodity has a two-fold character - use value and exchange value -, then the labour embodied in the commodity also has a two-fold character. That is, in fact, the whole secret of the critical conception.' All these facts, taken from Néstor Kohan's fetishist accusing-finger, may seem evident for anyone who restricts himself to a reading of this chapter of Marx. We are trying here to note the reasons why, going beyond the general character of the ideological sway Marx's work has held in other periods, other artists from different parts of the world - among them the Russian Sergei Eisenstein, the Frenchman Guy Debord or the Argentinian Marcelo Mercado - have attempted film adaptations of *Capital* and, in particular, begun their work with the chapter we have been quoting.

In Spanish 'fetiche' comes from the Portuguese 'feitico', which means 'made by art, made by the hand of man', though the term had previously made an

outing through French, 'fétiche', literally, 'bewitchment'. The etymological evolution of the term seems to confirm the accusations against the French thinkers, and so Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida would all appear to be bewitched. But what interests us about that philological drift is not to emulate the phantasmagoria of *Spectres of Marx or The state of the debt, the work of mourning*, and the *New International* by Jacques Derrida; rather the opposite, the deep materialist subtraction through which Marx dragged those artists in the enterprise of trying to narrate *Capital* in images. It was obvious, and Derrida himself pointed it out, that the fetishist character of the commodity is heightened in the world of art as nowhere else, even the world of religion. It may have been that context which, in the arts, followed the logic of late capitalism, which led to an interest in the 'fetish' as something 'made by the hand of man'. And it was in that logical order, in that materialist design, where those artists wanted to set their readings of *Capital*, since the mystical character of the commodity was already tremendously familiar to them. The excursions which analyses of Marx make around Robinson Crusoe have a curious echo in Coetzee's *Foe*, in the sense of turning all the commodities Robinson needs to survive into language and in the sense in which Susan Barton, the narrator of the shipwreck, makes us see the deep material need language attains in this story. We must remember that the chapter of Marx we are highlighting was not included in *Capital* until the second edition and that it was written as a deep reflection on that nature of twofold relations between labour and commodity. Lastly, the parameter Marx manages to explain to us relates 'commodities made by the hand of man' and the production of language itself: 'The mystical character of commodities does not originate, therefore, in their use value. Just as little does it proceed from the nature of the determining factors of value. For, in the first place, however varied the useful kinds of labour, or productive activities, may be, it is a physiological fact that they are functions of the human organism, and that each such function, whatever may be its nature or form, is essentially the expenditure of human brain, nerves, muscles, etc. Secondly, with regard to that which forms the ground-work for the quantitative determination of value, namely, the duration of that expenditure, or the quantity of labour, it is quite clear that there is a palpable difference between its quantity and quality. In all states of society, the labour time that it costs to produce the means of subsistence, must necessarily be an object of interest to mankind, though not of equal interest in different stages of development. And lastly, from the moment that men in any way work for one another, their labour assumes a social form.' Duration and quantity of labour valued through social exchange, Marx continues on, and it is in those very laws of social exchange - the laws of communication - where the twofold character of the commodity will appear, its use or use value as it is usually called, and its exchange value, or strictly speaking the meaning the value has for itself. And so Robinson saves from the shipwreck 'the watch, book, ink and pen, and, like a good Englishman, begins to keep an account of himself.' In other words, he starts to write, for all the prosaic

Marx rightly situates those activities at the dawn of capitalism. And so there could be no other reason for the fact that today we think that language and communication are the main objects of labour in late capitalism.

Before pursuing this line, a word of warning. Marx functions here, in this story, as one more character in the narrative, just as he appears in *Dr. Pasavento* by Enrique Vila-Matas, the inhabitant of a ranch which conjures up some kind of phantasms, a link between the different modes the story has of producing itself. The point is not to establish any type of communion with Marxism, similar to the kind Marx indicated about Christianity as that form of capitalism where the fetishist character of the commodity is given pride of place. In that sense, the iconoclastic way in which Marxism dismantles the added, religious, mystical, fetishist value of the commodity as typical of a Christian ideology would fully focus the intention, the originality of these lines. The point therefore is to make ourselves understand through Marx - rather through a file from *F.X. Archive* that takes *Capital* as the theme of a series of works of art - and not to try, from these modest pages, to explain any kind of Marxism.

What we are trying to locate are the tools that led those film directors - Eisenstein, Debord, Mercado - to tackle *Capital*. Of the last two we might say that they were familiar with Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* and had studied Eisenstein's attempts to bring *Capital* to the screen, finding in the French artist's film a kind of reconciliation between the documentary attempts of Vertov, Kulechov, the FEKS and Eisenstein himself, so reviled by the situationists themselves. As for Guy Debord, we have already said that, for a change, the public presentation of his project to adapt his work *The Society of the Spectacle* for the screen was done at the cost of Eisenstein's failed attempt: 'We know that Eisenstein wanted to film *Capital*. We may then wonder, given that director's formal conceptions and political submission, if his film would have been faithful to Marx's text. But for our part we have no doubt that we would do it better. For example, as soon as it is feasible, Guy Debord will make a film adaptation of *The Society of the Spectacle*, which will certainly not be inferior to the book.' Before that, René Viénet had marked out the advertising ancestry of the film by establishing its genealogy, from Buñuel's *L'Age d'Or* to American B-movies by way of Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*, in the business of commercial cinema, the advertisers' absolute, and emphasising the Soviet filmmaker's attempt: 'Advertising film, at the service of commerce and spectacle - that is the least that can be said of it - but free from those media has laid the bases of what Eisenstein glimpsed when he was talking about filming *A Critique of Political Economy* or *German Ideology*.' We therefore understand that *The Society of the Spectacle* is Debord's attempt to crown Eisenstein's project by making a reading of *Capital* mixed with Luckács. More than that, we would venture to say that the project to crown Eisenstein's attempt precedes the writing of the book *The Society of the Spectacle*, which would finally emerge as a perfect script for the future film. Moreover, the situationists knew that in 1930 Eisenstein had answered them:

'The "announcement" that I am going to make a film of Marx's *Capital* is not a publicity stunt. I believe that is the direction film will take in the future.'

Things being that way, it is obvious that we must focus on Eisenstein and his approaches to cinematic representation of the theoretical work by Marx. It is traditional to associate the attempts to adapt *Capital* and an interest in filming James Joyce's *Ulysses*. An interest that has its roots in the different proliferation of languages in a single work. The twofold character of language and commodity. Joyce and Marx in a kind of dialectical communion. David Bordwell sums it up like this: 'He began to be enthusiastic about the idea of a cinematic discourse that could show arguments and present complete systems of thought. He intended to use montage to generate not only emotions but also abstract concepts: "from emotion to thesis". He began to think of a film about Marx's *Capital* starting from the "For God and Country" sequence from *October*, which had tried to criticise the idea of God just through a juxtaposition of images. The film would create an "intellectual attraction" which should "teach the workers to think dialectically". At the same time he had started to read Joyce's *Ulysses* and he saw in it a possibility of "de-anecdotalisation", as well as sharp, lively details that brought about general conclusions "physiologically". *Capital* would be about the Second International, "but the formal aspect would be owed to Joyce".' If we detail the evolution of the project, we shall see how the rapid juxtapositions of montage which Eisenstein found in the imaginary of his Soviet propaganda, especially in constructivist collage and posters, the so-called 'intellectual montage', would be followed, under Joyce's influence, by a broader concept of the unities, mixing theatrical games and different levels of language. It is curious that the unbridled invention of visual montages in *October* would, despite its critics who accused it of making no distinction between documentary and fiction, give rise to the bases of representation of a Russian realist cinema, so that its non-verist reconstructions would end up being part of the Soviet propaganda newsreels. Here we might say that the attempts to go beyond a 'cinema without plots' in the general framework of the didactic attractions with which Eisenstein wanted to tackle his version of *Capital* would be used by the director to make his film project compatible with the general framework of socialist realism introduced by Stalin, a Stalin who would call Eisenstein 'mad' for proposing to make the film; Hollywood said the same when the idea was mooted. He thus returns to his theatrical experiences, to the unity of meaning that provides the possibility of a single space and a single time, i.e. the scene and not the image as the general unit of montage. Joyce's influence therefore went beyond the interior monologue itself and explored everything this narrative technique brought out: realistic dialogue, polyphony of impressions, popular scatology, juxtaposition of affections, psychological connotations, alogical humour and 'nonsense'. In the scene from *Bezhin Meadow* where some peasants turn the church into a workers' club, we find the close of the series of cinematic attempts that began with the impressions of montage in the scene 'For God and Country' in *October*. Ten years separated the two scenes

united by a language they have in common, most of all humour as catalyst and mortar of these iconoclastic vignettes. Ten years that provide us with a complete manual of tools with which Eisenstein wanted to tackle Marx's *Capital*.

It is that very same humour that led us in *F.X. Archive* to identify the scene of the little figure in *Nuestro culpable* (Our Guilty Party), an anarchist film directed by Fernando Mignoni in 1937, as a faithful representation of the film project for Marx's *Capital*: to be precise, an illustration of the chapter *The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof*. It is a sincere humour, of wit and irony, without the violence of mockery or sarcasm appearing in such thorny subjects. Eisenstein's attempts and Mignoni's scene have something in common, both films are made after the revolution has taken place and it seems that in the new order it is no longer necessary to lash out at the enemy. They are presented as triumphant revolutions and the films allow themselves to laugh amiably at a defeated past. Of course, the audience shares the joke and can see that it can be directed at their own situation, dwellers as they are in the new revolutionary dream. A humour that refers to irony, the critical machine of modern story-telling.

We must set aside for now this succinct summary of what Marx says in *The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof* to go on to describe the scene in the film. Let us take the summary from Diego Guerrero's popularising work on the internet: 'That Fetish character of the Commodity - phantasmal, enigmatic, phantasmagoric, mysterious, magical, mystical, fantastic, illusory, cloudy... are some of the adjectives applied to it - can be essentially reduced to something which is not difficult to understand: basing themselves on appearance, merchants, practical men, and economists, their theoreticians or sycophants, grant a social character to what is only natural about the commodity (for example, they call what is only a means of production capital); and, the other way round, they take as natural what is no more than its social side (for example, the fact that the commodity has a price they take to be one more natural property of the commodity thing). The famous fetishism therefore comes down to that double *quid pro quo* which emerges, not from the body of the commodity, which is easy to understand, but from its form, its own mercantile form, due to the 'peculiar social nature of the labour of those who produce it', i.e. due to the fact that the private, independent labours that produce it only become social, a part of the whole to which they really belong, through Exchange and the Market. The split of the commodity into thing and value only truly takes place when, already in production, the product of labour becomes commodity, and the private labour doubly social: it has to play its part in the social division of labour as something natural and has to materialise in a commodity that can realise its value. The producers do not know about the second; or, to be more precise, do not know that by comparing their heterogeneous products in the market they are reducing their specific labours to homogeneous human labour, but they do so, and conceive that particular character of being value as something universal. However, a review of the different possible forms of society will convince us of the specificity of

the mercantile form. In a society that is reduced to a single individual – Robinson Crusoe’s economy – there is also a need to distribute social labour among the different needs that society has to meet, but here the relations between Robinson and things are ‘simple and transparent’, and so the total labour will be distributed directly as something social. Likewise, in Mediaeval European society, the peculiarity of the different natural individual labours is compatible with their direct social distribution, so that the relations between people as producers are identified with the personal social relations feudalism consists of. The same thing happens with collective labour in the productive form based on family production: the expenditure of each individual labour is directly socially determined as part of the natural whole of social work of the family unit. And the same thing would happen, fourthly, with the alternative case analysed: in global collective society or association of free men, the planned distribution of social labour will also be the distribution of the qualitatively determined labours of each person. On the other hand, in commodity production of the capitalist kind – since Marx considers that the forms of commodity production before capitalism only played a subordinate role in the context of their corresponding dominant mode of production (ancient, Asian, etc.) – the price of the commodities appears in bourgeois awareness as a natural necessity because ‘the objective appearance of the social characteristics of labour’ is presented to them only as the appearance of a reality but without an understanding of that reality – and indeed their attitude to earlier social forms is the same as that of Religions with regard to other Religions: their own is the true one because it is natural, the others are false because they are artificial – and so it is impossible for them to ask the crucial question correctly: why does production take the commodity or value form in capitalism? Because they do not understand that, economists think that value is an attribute of things, whilst use value seems to them an attribute of man (utility seems to them to be something that involves the individual who uses) which does not depend so much on its properties as things; in other words: exactly the other way round.’

The scene we are describing has the same plot, let us follow it alongside Marx’s narration and his conclusions in a world ‘exactly the other way round’. The scene begins with the ‘merchant’ going round the antique shop of the ‘economist’. On the door a poster reads: ‘El Chepa. I pay more than anyone for all kinds of furniture and antique objects.’ The merchant enters the establishment and walks through the realm of the commodity, he is surrounded by sumptuary and utilitarian objects of all kinds, and art objects. The ‘economist’, engaged in a not quite ‘clean’ manual task, watches him closely. From among all the commodities our buyer has set his eyes on a religious figure, a kind of episcopal reliquary in which the little saint is raised on an enormous column that serves as funerary urn and pedestal. The object has an obviously phallic shape and before our eyes conjures up those adjectives Marx applies to the fetishist character of the commodity: phantasmatic, mystical, magical, etc. The conversation of the two sycophants in front

of the little idol into which the commodity has been transformed goes on for some time. The ‘merchant’ and the ‘economist’ converse and weigh up the value of the product they have before their eyes and at the same time gesticulate about its weight, the origin of the hand carving, the symbolic value given by its former owners, the different offers already made for the fetish, etc., while, I repeat, they weave a conversation typical of a buying and selling transaction, bringing into play a representation of the social character of the market. More than that, the parody of their behaviour emphasises that if this scene at the ‘summit’, in the highest of markets, is possible it is due to the whole social and historical development, hence the setting as an antique shop, because the economic exchange is sustained by hundreds of years of history. It is true that the antiques also allude to the different stages of society which we may regard as precapitalist, with allusions to Asian antiquity, feudal society and even the family societies that subsist in economic systems based on farming and fishing, with those intersections between religious objects and farming tools. Even the controversy Marx takes up on the bases of the theft of the Roman economy are embodied in the presence of various objects – busts of emperors, oil lamps, coins, etc. – but especially in the rarefied, illegal atmosphere that imbues the whole scene and which will later confirm the second setting of the representation, when everything develops inside a gaol. Before that step we must not forget to point out the allusion to Robinson Crusoe who appears represented in a picture just behind the ‘economist’ and which often frames the main reflection of the scene. That fact that, unable to find pictorial representations of Crusoe, the costume designers modified a whole representation of John the Baptist adds a certain irony to the scene. That religious objects or pictures with holy subjects predominate makes sense since it is a Spanish antique shop where religion is the supreme old commodity. Moreover, the allusion to the religious behaviour of the economic laws of capitalism is evident, and so, with the preponderance of religious objects of Christianity the shop has been adorned with the odd African idol and the body of some Eastern goddess. The economic transaction ends up giving pound for pound, note for note, the value of the commodity and our buyer leaves the shop with the fetish at the ready, as if he were carrying a weapon and not a religious figurine. The second part of the scene, with the reincorporation of the commodity into the social life of the market in the arms of the ‘merchant’ takes place in the yard of a gaol which is presented as an example of the ‘world exactly the other way round’. It is a very busy prison where a large number of affects, communications and economic transactions are coming into play. The irony of presenting the gaol as the ‘society of free men’ which Marx talks of refers directly to the critical analysis Marx himself makes of capitalist society. Moreover, this joke is the plot line of the film *Nuestro culpable*, to which the scene belongs. To return to our story, we watch a second sycophants’ dialogue. Now the ‘merchant’ is in litigation with a group of prisoners where we can identify the ‘worker’,

the 'intellectual' and the 'jobless' as three figures from the social base that produces and then consumes commodities, and who are constantly wondering about the condition from the time they leave their hands until, far more expensive, they return to them again. The conversation revolves naturally around the legitimacy of that process. The merchant seems to have convinced them that there must be some concealed secret for the thing to return to their hands with a significant added value, for which they have to pay again. The discussion moves on to the very nature of that value that the 'merchant' situates in the extraordinary character which the producing hands have given to the thing itself, so that with the passage of time, and the social game, it has naturally modified its value and price. It seems that the trio of 'producers', in the face of those reasons and the modest price the 'merchant' proposes (he often puts on an innocent tone, like a social democrat), suppose that they can take some advantage from the rich budget offered them. Everything is translated into a scene in which 'use value' and 'exchange value' appear as misunderstood concepts. In an elaborate exchange of commodities, to which we have to add some added expropriation by the producers, it would seem that the economic scales have levelled. The theft of the merchant's wallet is vital since it powerfully emphasises Marx's discourse. The exchange value is no more than the fruit of a social exchange process and not the natural use value of the object itself, depicted in the scene by the false admiration the 'producers' show for their acquisition. Not only that, the 'producers' return to their lair convinced that if they find the secret of the commodity they have concluded a fabulous business that will enable them to multiply their fortunes. The final stroke refers us directly to that 'making the commodity speak' Marx refers. In the film the fetish is destroyed and inside there is nothing more than a useless blah-blah of newspaper cuttings; and in the wallet, the 'added value' of a Christmas card with the words 'Happy Xmas'. Admittedly, in the original plot of the film the fetish had a fortune of millions of dollars inside. Both the 'merchant-usurer' and the 'producer-thieves' accept the overpayments for the different transactions, which suggest that the commodity contains a secret. That rumour, spread from the prison itself where the perpetrator of a fabulous theft of dollars is incarcerated, is what confers such a valuable character on the saint, who appears as a shining commodity, laden with artistic and religious values when all it conceals is the vulgar rumour of being the perfect hiding place for the booty. The fetish is fetish insofar as it hides its secret. But the commodity, the object as such, is empty, and the product hides nothing more than its value. The scene in which the saint's head is removed brings us face to face with that emptiness; typical of any revolutionary access, there is nothing to base that value on. And so I would say that the conditions in which 'the fetishism of commodities and the secret thereof' are denounced are more radical than the ones expressed by Marx in his text, lukewarm words which, as we said at the beginning, have made that chapter of *Capital* anathema to many of its scholars.

For a broader understanding of the importance of this scene for the work we are now doing in *F.X. Archive* we can leave the film and enter its machinery. In the realities of the production the conditions of the fiction have quite a few features in accordance with the move towards the material that the scene represents. The little figure used by Fernando Mignoni as a 'Mac Guffin' in the film comes from Olot, from a batch reclaimed from the trade union CNT - which had collectivised its famous cardboard saint factories in the town - via Madrid and was taken to the capital by the new production delegate of the National Federation of the Public Entertainment Industry in Spain, Antonio Polo, to be used in the unfinished film *Caín*. That was a strongly anticlerical film for which a few shocking scenes were shot. Oddly enough, many of the materials from that batch and that film were used in the iconoclastic reconstructions made by Saénz de Heredia for *Vía Crucis del Señor por las tierras de España*, a clerical, fascist propaganda film. The batches of figures of saints would not reach Madrid until late in 1937, since the lorries carrying them were commandeered for the transport of works of art for the Church of San Pere in Terrassa, which had been turned into a national museum, and for the return to Olot of some of the Romanesque and Romantic jewels of the Museo de Arte de Cataluña in November 1936. During that time they were stored in a country house near the church, La Románica, now in Barberà del Vallès. Reports from the Diocese of Barcelona note with surprise the veneration given in these parts after the Civil War to Bishop John the Almsgiver, the patriarch of Alexandria - a figure represented in the fetish of the film, with a kind of base which also served as a reliquary - and which is no doubt due to some deviation of the merchandise while it was being stored in that place for over a year. The choice of that imitation of the reliquary of John the Almsgiver by Mignoni reveals his broad culture and his ironic intentions, which take the joke beyond what is shown in the film itself. The miracles of Bishop John of Alexandria, a rich merchant to whom the Lord returned his wealth for all the donations and alms he gave out, are always jokes about this or that load of commodities. The final joke of his burial - when he was to be buried in the tomb of the former patriarchs of Alexandria there was no room and the corpses of the old bishops moved of their own will to make a space for him - left many rumours about the busy trade in his relics: there were seven times the number of thigh bones and over ten index fingers found. That was a frequent situation in the world of relics, but when those of John the Almsgiver were associated with gifts and alms they had - particularly in Italy where Mignoni came from - triggered the analogies between the value of the money and the remains of the saint.

Mignoni's taste for games of this kind, especially for the 'Mac Guffin' (in his next film, *Martingala*, a strange musical with Carmen Amaya, Lola Flores and Pepe Marchena, which he began under the libertarian aegis and released under the Franco regime, the plot revolved round some American millionaires who wanted to adopt a 'little Gypsy boy' and ended up taking a non-Gypsy dyed a darker colour) denotes a knowledge of the commodity form that, as Slavoj

Zizek says, owes as much to the world of the arts as to the world of religion, since among capitalist general merchandise it is the work of art which still keeps 'its' secret. For example, if we start from the definition of 'Mac Guffin' given by Hitchcock - the void of the 'Mac Guffin', the nothingness of the 'Mac Guffin', remember - we see that in its origin it describes the routine procedure of a robbery, the theft of the plans of the enemy fortress, and in the end, to continue with Hitchcock, 'stealing documents... stealing papers... stealing a secret'. The idea Mignoni gives us is not bad, to regard the main subject of Marx's *Capital* as a 'Mac Guffin'.

*Nuestro culpable*, the film by Mignoni to which our scene belongs, is a small masterpiece of Spanish cinema. Produced in 1937 with the support of the CNT, when Madrid was reeling under the bombardment from the fascist aviation, its atmosphere and topics, as we have said, seem suitable for a world at peace where the revolution has triumphed. The difficulties of the shoot - for example, Fernando Díaz de Mendoza, one of the actors, was killed in the 'tunnel of death' while trying to cross into the national zone - made the critics wonder about the timing of a humorous film whilst 'comrades were falling at the front'. Mignoni even clashed with the trade union given the incompetence of the staff they sent to work 'on that film business'. It is odd for this writer that it was the Marxist critics who were the harshest in their assessment of the film. Its plot is that of a screwball musical comedy that is ironic about the relations between justice and bourgeois society, and they found it too light. In the tangle, of course, a story of the underdog versus the powerful is woven, but that is not where the ideological charge of the film lies. 'Apart from the commonplaces,' says José María Caparros, 'a careful viewing of *Nuestro culpable* leads us to a series of connotations where the ideology we are concerned with is evident throughout the story, despite the apparently light tone of the narrative. For example, details as significant, albeit minimal, as a silver-framed photograph of a pig, to the anarchist gesture of the contemptuous, mocking raspberry of the hero in prison or the "Happy Xmas" on the card that comes out of the wallet in the place of banknotes in the scene of the scam. But more important still are the sequences where the three prisoners ask for equality with El Randa, saying "we're the bosses", and the one in the cabaret where praise is offered to the thief.' Those ingenious details have also been attacked in the name of a certain ideological orthodoxy, accusing the film of confusing 'the destruction of order with libertarian order' (sic.) Thus Emeterio Díez: 'However, although the heroes emerge victorious, the message is that the bourgeois order can only be mocked with the picaresque or a stroke of luck, hence the importance given to a horseshoe. With that "magical object" the film defends something as unrevolutionary as the claim that happiness depends on chance and not the action of man. Likewise the fetishism of the dollar and luxury are not very orthodox.' We can end this critical review with the comment written by J.B. Heinink in *Flor en la sombra*: 'from now on, all those who have suffered damage will be forced to

tell lies - I say the opposite so you understand me -, which fosters the development of the film as comedy and allows the introduction of songs with lyrics dotted with sharp irony, where the director gives free rein to his visual experiments on the basis of impressions which, if they are not perfectly carried off in terms of technical resolution, it is because they have no aesthetic pretensions but keep to a preconceived purpose of film syntax.'

The intention of this essay is to offer the story of the work we are going to do. These lines are written while we are working on the idea of the empty city, and we come and go from Badia to confirm who knows what hypothesis, who knows what promises. Some time ago now - it was from a text by Luis Castro Nogueira, *Contra el tiempo, espacio*, published in the magazine *Archipiélago* in 1992 - I worked on the idea described critically by the geographer E.W. Soja, 'to give *Capital* a geographical character'. The project, which sprang from the theoretical ideas of Harvey and Jameson, offered Soja a formidable array of conceptual tools, once a certain Marxist rigorism that seemed paralysing had been overcome, and opened up an equally huge array of linguistic strategies. Now that I have rediscovered this possibility, which has fallen like 'manna' from heaven almost, of returning to this project for criticising capitalist space, a space which subrogates time by acceleration, I took up some ideas from that time again, for example, a simple idea like highlighting the twofold condition of the word 'tiempo' in Spanish - it means both time and weather - and observing its consequences. I remember that Bill Murray, the main character of the film *Groundhog Day* (Spanish title *Atrapado en el tiempo*) directed in 1992 by Harold Ramis, was a meteorologist, a weather man who was trapped in a time sequence of one day, and although the pair 'time-weather' does not coincide with our 'tiempo-tiempo', it is one of the films which has most distressed and amused me. In TIEMPO-TIEMPO those doublings of language - I suppose the great love for one another professed by surrealists and Marxists must come from that same reading - which formulated theoretically seemed too phenomenal, too idealistic to me, have not prevented me now from connecting a camera to the web with the same purpose: to observe the skies of Badia, its atmospheric changes, and compare them with their chronological values. TIEMPO-TIEMPO is a space for thinking, a space which when it comes to installing it is overwhelmed by the phenomenon of Alfred Picó and the thousands of fanatics who look at their computer screen instead of the sky hoping to see if it is raining or the sun is shining. In TIEMPO-TIEMPO I wanted to formulate a hypothesis on the general conditioning factors of our habitat and how they unfailingly mark the Duration of Labour and it turns out that I am joining an alienated internet users club.

Another play on words, the construction UR-VANITAS, a slogan to display on banners and notices on the permanent building site of our cities, heightened in the case of Badia since it is a city with no possibility of expansion, perimetrically closed to land speculation. I should clarify the distinction between the 'Urbanality' of Francesc Muñoz, who was also invited to collaborate on these pages, an accurate definition of the

increasing channelling of all our cities and this UR-VANITAS that refers to many things, but wants to reach the primary UR, that ur we so easily turn into urine, describing it as a VANITAS, an original void on which the cornucopia of the city is later developed. This is also a geographical idea of the city that had been pursuing me since those attempts 'to give *Capital* a geographical character'. Indeed, the transformation of the cornucopia into vanitas is just a matter of time. The coat of arms of Valencia springs to mind, but how many cities are there that do not sell themselves as a tempting cornucopia? Cities are the world where there is everything, the great table of the capitalist lunch. The rotten apple, the UR-VANITAS understood as an irreversible framework that conditions the Quantity of Labour on which the modern city is founded for ever.

Walter Benjamin emphasised like no other Marxist the religious condition of Capitalism, a religion that depoliticises the life of the modern city around its swindles, hides its intention to construct the non-polis, the non-city we live in. Materialism would be no more than a disenchantment, a demonstration of the world in the face of superstition. The function of the quotation in the *Das Passagen-Werk* is none other than the demolition of the great spectacle of the modern capitalist city grain by grain. And so in our Printer for *Capital, The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof*, a way of bringing a theoretical construction, a ghost story to earth. The point is to set up a subtracting machine which paradoxically multiplies its own material by seven. When we take away the sequence of our film shot by shot and drag each image to the weight of paper and ink, gram by gram, taking power from the spectre, dragging it to its condition as matter.

## Pasolini

The comment by the official in the town hall ran as follows: 'A short time ago Adigsa, the body responsible for administering subsidised housing in Badia, had to reclaim an apartment because the owners had rented it illegally to a family of Rumanians. It turns out that since the whole of Badia consists of subsidised housing, the apartments cannot be sold or let except through a transfer of ownership supervised by Adigsa. This means that a town consisting of many diverse groups of immigrants (symbolised by the swallow flying in the city's emblem) is now closed to them, while the occupancy of their houses cannot be transferred.' We then made a study of some statistics from the Badia del Vallès census, in the course of which we went to see an old administrator whose working life had been spent in the old offices of Barcelona provincial council, the town council, and Adigsa. Now it seemed he was in some local government service. It had been he who originally had the idea of baptising Badia's schools and training centres with the names of regional dances: *sardana*, *seguidilla*, *jota*, *muñeira*. We looked into his game, which had something to do with the peninsular names of the topography of Badia, and

we ended up asking him about his origins, for although he spoke Catalan, a certain intonation led us to guess that he came from elsewhere. He told us he was from Teruel, from Aguilar de Alfambra. Basically, I was the only one to get the joke that accompanied his certificate of origin. That was how the *Pasolini* entry came to enlighten our work, even though many claimed that this was obvious and necessary when it came to drawing a profile of any city on the periphery.

In *F.X. Archive* the *Pasolini* entry points to a sequence from the film *El derrumbamiento del Ejército Rojo*, edited in 1938 by Antonio Galvache as propaganda for the nationalist army. The same images can be found in *Noticiero Español*, though the origin of the filming remains unclear. In this sequence we see a group of Moorish soldiers who belonged to the colonial regiments recruited by the fascist army among the people of Morocco. From the door of a chapel another Moor comes out, smiling and bearing the figure of a saint (St Anthony apparently) and shows it to his officer, who orders him to return it. Both the soldier coming out of the chapel and the other officer are trying not to spoil the shot so that it will clearly pick out the figure of the saint. The original film has lost its soundtrack, so we do not know the exact intentions of the sequence. It appears at the end of a series of montages that identify the monuments and landscapes around Teruel with the homelands of the Moroccan troops. And so the iconoclastic, or perhaps iconodulic, scene of the saint seems to interrupt that chain of images. Another problem is the location of the chapel. The *Noticiero Español* contains items from the Sarrión zone, also in the surroundings of Teruel, but the story is in contradiction with the earlier film, although they were both made in 1938. *Teruel*, the alternative title for *El derrumbamiento del Ejército Rojo*, ends precisely with the taking of the city and focuses on the so-called Battle of Alfambra. The monumental chain we were talking about links the common etymology of the word with 'al-hambra', meaning 'red castle' in Arabic. The Alfambra area is marked by a Mudejar architecture with orange tones, which are likened to the castle in Granada. An interview with Antonio Galvache, the director of the film, in *Vértice* magazine and the knowledge gleaned in the course of the conversation with the *paloteado* from Aguilar, lead us to conclude that the action takes place in the chapel of Santo Cristo de Aguilar del Alfambra and that the *paloteado* alluded to is none other than the local dance. The image matches the old one of St Benedict – some people also say St Anthony – whose relics were kept there and the little we see of the door of the chapel in the film vaguely matches forms we can recognise in its present state. The passage of time and most of all the work of the restorers makes it difficult to be more precise. What does interest us is the joke this held for Galvache, since in the context of a propaganda film we cannot speak of any excess of culture.

The dance of Aguilar del Alfambra is an old one, and includes drama and music. Beneath the structure of a dialectical combat between enemies – angels and demons, Moors and Christians, etc. – historical references and contemporary events are put into verse, a kind of counter chronicle, in the style of the carnival

songs that today, sadly, are buried under the weight of the museums that are the guardians of tradition. One more folkloric event in which the 'sayings', which consist of social criticism, weighing up the year and the successes and errors of the politicians of the moment in rhyming phrases, have lost their challenge and political violence, elements which we now have to trawl for in the musical forms, in the *paloteados* and the movement of the dances to properly assess the force those performances once had. In *El dance en Teruel* Ángel Gonzalvo notes, 'a complete dance as known in the eighteenth century would have the following parts (in chronological order of antiquity): dances, dialogues of shepherds and sayings, struggles between the devil and the angel and confrontations between Moors and Christians. Likewise, today the most common order in which the dances take place is the following: preliminaries; the dance; the military, embassy or struggle between Moors and Christians. These ritual acts have their special officiators who are embodied in characters (realistic, symbolic and historical), and each plays a part with its own characteristics. The roles are sometimes hereditary among the performers, which heightens the ritual character. The following are usual characters of the dance: the dancers (always an even number, from eight to twenty; their task is to dance and recite the sayings); the shepherds (divided into leader, shepherd and shepherd boy, as in real life with the flocks); the devil (whose task is to prevent the festival from being held); the angel (he is the defender, not only of the people holding the festival but also of the Catholic faith and morality); and the Moors and Christians.' And so we understand why today the closest thing to the dance of Aguilar de Alfambra in the region is the punk music festival held every year in this small town near Teruel. At the end of the eighteenth century the dance began with this folk song: 'Ah, woe is me! Jesus! What a wretch! It cannot be! All jobs rain down on me! And all misfortunes besiege me on every side! What will my poor children do? What will my poor family do? Of hunger we shall die, finding no human remedy!' All very much in the style of The Clash.

It could also be a speech by any of Pasolini's characters, from *Accattone* to the *Trilogy of Life*. However, the sequence of the Moorish soldier carrying the saint out of the church and putting it back again reminds us of Pasolini for other reasons too. Basically, as far as *F.X. Archive* is concerned, more than anyone else it is Pasolini who questions the status of sovereignty in our consumer societies from a reconsideration of the sacred. 'Where am I the boss?' asks the body of the alienated worker in a festival of consumerism where he or she finds the full pleasure and good fortune of something very close to happiness. In the crisis of this model signified by the sub-proletariats - the unemployed, emigrants, homosexuals, blacks, Arabs, etc. - Pasolini found the power to build his discourse. Beyond the iconoclastic dialectic of modernity represented by Marxism like no other ideology, he found the questions he needed to create the crisis of this form of political redemption, which in its day dominated all the debates of the left to which he also belonged. It is clear that he finally discerned in the forms of the world of the Algerian and Moroccan workers some of the reasons

for questioning the sovereignty that was cornering the place of the sacred in the modern world. That paradox, so easily resolved in the multicultural vaguery of today, is the engine of his anti-modern discourse and for us an obvious explanation of why the Riff soldier takes the holy idol in and out of the church. This is the Pasolini who in order to explain his pro-Israel declaration in 1967 wrote: 'I swear on the Koran that I love the Arabs almost as much as my mother. I am negotiating the purchase of a house in Morocco to go and live there. None of my communist friends would do so, due to an ancient, traditional and unspoken hatred of the sub-proletariat and the poor peoples!' This is the Pasolini who for his Greek tragedies wants 'the sacred landscape the Arab peoples still keep'. This is the Pasolini who locates the final script of his *Porno-Theo-Colossal* in a primal Near East with the city of Ur as the final setting, among Arab shepherd boys and North African juvenile delinquents.

There is nothing strange about Pasolini resolving his ideological paradoxes with the figure of the dance. The dance destabilises thought as it destabilises morality. In *Accattone* or *Mamma Roma* popular dances represent the place where sin bursts out, the places of temptation. In *Comizi d'Amore* it is in the ambiguity of a dance where the question of the 'abnormality' of homosexual practices is raised. When Pasolini thinks of making films he thinks of reinventing the forms, the approaches, the times with which the image will appear on the screen. Beyond any technical manner, what he is looking for is a new political way of being in the world. In 1961, he wrote about the reasons for making his first film: 'I always replied that I made it to change technique, that I needed a new technique to say something new, or rather, on the contrary, that I always said the same thing and that was why I had to change technique: according to the variations on my obsession... How often, furiously and inopportunistly, have I said that I want to renounce my Italian citizenship! Well, by abandoning the Italian language and with it, little by little, literature, I was renouncing my nationality.'

That understanding of Pasolini's films as dance, which the flamenco dancer Israel Galván has managed to explain to me so choreographically, is confirmed by the thousands of annotations that appear in his scripts, and which have been collected by Lino Micciché in *Pasolini nella città del cinema*, which is the exact opposite of 'Cinecittà', the famous Italian film studios, since from *Accattone*'s Rome to the villa of Saló, Pasolini constructed his own cinema cities outside the entertainment ghetto of 'Cinecittà'. In Pasolini's city the protagonists are always dancing. When they walk, swaying like the Neapolitans, as tired as the Romans, as determined as the Milanese... As in the quote from *La Ricotta* when they ask the Orson Welles character, at once a god and a film director, about Fellini: 'He dances..., yes..., he dances.' It is evident that there is a certain sarcasm in pointing to the dance as the space of a playful director like Fellini. But for the tragic Pasolini the dance is also the origin of his paradoxes and divergences. After the comment on Fellini, the director goes on with his dance: 'I am a force from the past. My only love is tradition. I come from the ruins, from the churches, from the stables, from the edges,

from the Apennines where my brothers lived. I race around the Tuscolana like a madman, along the Appian Way like a stray dog, I watch the night fall, the day break over Rome, over La Ciociaria, over the world like an act of post-history, which I attend as recorder of a buried era. Monstrous he who was born from the womb of a dead woman, and I, a wandering adult foetus, searching for my vanished brothers... You understand nothing because you are an average man. Do you know what an average man is? He is a monster, a dangerous criminal, conformist, colonialist, racist, slaver, indifferent!

Another dance. In *Ucellaci e ucellini*, a masterpiece often labelled as a profession of that 'radical chic' iconoclasm so typical of Italian comedy, which as Lino Micciché has so rightly appraised is a kind of *De profundis* of ideological utopianism. Well, after Toto and Ninetto have lunched on the bird, the Marxist crow - who lives in the Land of Ideology, in the City of the Future, in Via Carlos Marx number 70, door 7, a wise bird that replaces Minerva's owl with the raven Edgar Allan Poe created for his *Nevermore* - they digest it in a country stroll that would originally have closed the film with Ninetto's dance-style leaps and Toto's speech. The recital only makes sense if it is given in Italian, in a dance rhythm, this incredible Neapolitan recitatif in Toto's mouth: 'Uno spettro si aggira per l'Europa, è la crisi del marxismo. Eppure bisogna a tutti i costi ritrovare la via della rivoluzione, perché mai come oggi il marxismo si presenta come unica possibile salvezza dell'uomo. Esso salva il passato dell'uomo, senza il quale non c'è avvenire. Il capitalismo dice di voler salvare il passato, in realtà lo distrugge: la sua conservazione è sempre stata una manutenzione da museo, cretina e distruggitrice. Ma oggi la rivoluzione interna del capitalismo rende il capitalismo così forte da fregarsene del passato. Egli può ormai permettersi di non rispettare più i suoi antichi pretesti, Dio, la patria, ecc. La reazione si presenta ormai come partito giovane, dell'avvenire. Prospetta un mondo felice in mano alle macchine e pieno di tempo libero, da dedicare all'oblio del passato. La rivoluzione comunista si pone invece come salvezza del passato, ossia dell'uomo: non può più promettere nulla se non la conservazione dell'uomo. Poeti cechi, polacchi! Poeti ungheresi! Poeti jugoslavi e sovietici! Mettete in ridicolo il governo delle vostre nazioni, martirizzatevi, perché la rivoluzione continui, il potere si decentri, il fine ultimo sia l'anarchia, l'uomo si rinnovi rivoluzionandosi senza fine e senza fine fioriscano i garofani rossi della speranza!' The scene was lost in the final cut of the film, which now ends with the Big Birds, Little Birds song while, after the dance, we see the smoking fire where the crow Toto and Ninetto have devoured was roasted.

I mean that for Pasolini the dance is the shape his political discourse takes. The *Trilogy of Life* - *The Decameron*, *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Thousand and One Nights*, his erotic fresco of a vanished world - is full of those spontaneous popular dances, blurred scenes where the happiness of a lost world breaks the possibility of communicating, of any language functioning. The trilogy has an implicit serious and intellectual language with a socio-religious content, and makes a special effort to create a mass

cinema, according to Gramsci's concept of the 'art product', as Roberto Laurenti pointed out. We need to understand that Pasolini's reading of Gramsci has a mythological value. 'Gramsci talked about "national-popular" works, he said they had to be epic, in other words, religious, or sacred.' Evidently when Pasolini writes this he is referring more to his own reading of national-popular than Gramsci's. Indeed, the conflict with a mass art took him to an extreme when he decided to renege on that orgiastic celebration of life - 'in the end, the representation of the eros, seen in a sphere barely superseded by history, but still physically present in Naples, in the Middle East, was something that fascinated me personally as an author and as a man,' he writes - takes a political decision overwhelmed by the growing banalisation to which his idea is being submitted, vilely commercialised in the porno genre, but also the insensitivity of the modern left, which has been unable to gauge his intentions or appreciate his portrait. 'The young men and boys of the Roman sub-proletariat (the ones I have projected onto the old, resistant Naples and the countries of the third world), if they are now human scum, that means that they also were then, they were imbeciles forced to be adorable, squalid criminals dragged into being likeable scoundrels, vile useless things pushed into being innocent, etc. The revolution of the present also implies the revolution of the past. Life is a heap of insignificances and ironic ruins. My hurt or contemptuous critics, while all that was happening, maintained stupid 'duties' to be imposed: they were duties aimed at the struggle for progress, improvement, liberation through the falsification of their values. And now they are satisfied! They find that Italian society has undoubtedly improved, in other words, it has become more tolerant, more democratic, more modern, etc. They are not aware of the wave of crimes sweeping over Italy; they relegate that phenomenon to the black chronicle and do not bother to renew values. They do not notice that there is no break between those who are truly criminal and those who are not, and that the model of insolence, dehumanisation and impiety is identical for the whole mass of young people. They do not realise that in Italy the night is deserted and sinister as in past centuries; they do no experience it, because they are at home (engaged in gratifying their conscience with modernity with the help of television). They do not realise that television is the worst compulsory school, it has degraded all the young men and the boys, it gives many a complex, filling them with second rate racist bourgeois ideas; but they consider it an unpleasant conjecture that will doubtless be answered by believing that the anthropological change is irreversible. And they do not understand that sexual liberation, instead of bringing lightness and happiness to young people, makes them unhappy, closed off, and therefore stupidly presumptuous and aggressive; but they do not want to do anything about that because the young people do not matter to them. Outside Italy, in the 'developed' countries, especially France, sets are made with a single piece. It is a piece in which the people, anthropologically speaking, no longer exist. For the French bourgeoisie the people consists of Moroccans and Greeks,

Portuguese or Tunisians, who, poor things, can only take on the behaviour of the French bourgeoisie as quickly as possible. And both the intellectuals of the right and the intellectuals of the left think so, identically.' We could go on but the text is sufficiently eloquent to explain who are the protagonists of this dance of sovereignties that Pasolini is travelling: the sub-proletariat, now, are the Moors too.

Let us mention one more dance. In *Saló or the 120 days of Sodom* Pasolini wanted to make the reverse of his *Trilogy of Life*. By taking Sade's novel to the political adventure of the fascist republic of Saló, in the last gasp of the nazi-fascist occupation of Italy, he wanted to reveal the true condition of the orgiastic in the modern world through that founding society where the coexistence of eroticism and violence became unbearable. I have to say that a recent version of the film is on sale on the newsstands in Spain in a collection circulating under the name *Midnight Cinema*. Perhaps banalisation has reached Saló too to cap it all. The fact is that the film opens and closes with a dance. The connection with the tranquillity of the real world is a dance. At the beginning is an elegant ballroom dance, although in the film we can only hear the music since the footage was stolen from the producers' studio when Pasolini was just starting the editing. Again at the end, to the same music, some boys are resting for a moment from their work as torturers and collaborationists. As they dance with each other in couples, a trivial conversation takes place: 'What's your girlfriend's name? Margheritta.' The room, the ballroom from where the Count watches and enjoys the tortures of the prisoners in the courtyard, is decorated with reproductions of modern paintings, especially Futurist ones. But let us not deceive ourselves about the historical references, the film is about our time, a metaphor for the consumer world that has become a concentration camp. The bodies of the past recovered by Pasolini from the Neapolitan sub-proletariat or the North African emigrants are now subjected to tortures in the modern capitalist city: only in crime, in the social outskirts that he still regards as the space of the sacred, can they wonder, where am I the boss?

Let us remember for our story a crucial moment in Pasolini's life. He is finishing the filming of *The Thousand and One Nights* with the great scene of the dance in the Esfahan mosque. The mullahs have put pressure on the Teheran government to throw them out of the mosque since in the scene dozens of naked dancing girls have profaned the sacred precinct of El Muzzein. Pasolini has to stop the shoot and, as was his custom, takes advantage of the break to put the finishing touches to the project for his next film. He is preparing one entitled *Lotta continua* in which he will deal with the alliance between the traditional left and the capitalist forces when political and trade union interests decide to crush any other representation. He decides on a change and sketches what will be *Saló*, a film in which he makes it quite clear that the triumph of the techno-fascists in this society is achieved on the condition of their triumph as anti-fascists in the

realm of the consumer society. The shooting problems are solved and the dance scene is finished.

We see how Pasolini is permanently occupied with that discourse of political legitimacies and sovereignties. His clear anti-fascist position consists of now revealing to us the new faces with which the political monster is appearing. With the left he argues about the construction of the community, on the misunderstanding that it is not a matter of nostalgia but of ensuring other ways of making society after economic mercantilism and legislative banality have finally wiped out all social ties. It is a misunderstanding in which he nevertheless decides to proffer all his memories of his childhood in Frioli and his affirmation of a past world that has now disappeared forever. As Pietro Barcellona has pointed out, his criticism of the 'emptying' of the social ties, which the abstractions of the right and of money have meant in modernity, do not imply any nostalgia for earlier times or mystical natural or primary communities. We know that the idea of community cannot be thought of as an oppressive and authoritarian space, but as a free choice based on the awareness that only in reciprocal relations without the involvement of money can there be a true acknowledgement of difference and peculiarity. The community can be the place where individual peculiarities are defended and valued, where our conversion into 'social illiterates' can be avoided. That determination referred to by Barcellona was also Pasolini's, his whole attention was focused there, all his denunciations were of the creators of that social illiteracy. When he says that 'the most adorable people are the ones who do not know what their rights are' or 'civil rights are, in substance, the rights of others' he is referring to the same thing, the otherness of a sub-proletariat whom we require to shed their community ties, to become social illiterates if they want to join the ranks in our modern cities. His insistence on those people, on constantly pointing out all we can learn from them as repositories of the ties of our community, the community we are shaping, frees him from his own melancholy calls to feel nostalgia for community.

It is quite exemplary that Pasolini should detect the emergence of the new conflicts of modernity among the North African sub-proletariat, that he should point, in the social fringes they inhabit, to the crisis of community values, which only on the basis of a banal, corrupt law and the conversion of any social communication into an exchange of money does consumer capitalism maintain in our cities. An analysis as early as his allows us to remove ourselves from any cultural differentiation since Pasolini himself is culturally identifying a world that comes from Naples, Andalusia or North Africa. It is therefore a structural and economic problem to which the cultural ingredients are added as phantasms, smoke screens with which to evade the centre of the problem, the class struggle, the creation of a new community. As in the example he takes from the Gramsci of *The Mystery of Naples*: 'Goethe was right to demolish the legend of the organic "idleness" of the Neapolitans and to observe that, on the contrary they are most active and industrious. But the issue is to see what the effective results of

that industriousness are: it is not productive, it is not aimed at satisfying the needs and requirements of the productive classes.' It extends to all the inhabitants of the southern spectrum; it is not that they are not productive but that their productivity is not at the service of capital.

These days Manuel Delgado has referred to it with regard to the worker conflicts – now regarded as cultural conflicts with that modern imaginary that describes the Arab or the Muslim – in the suburbs of Paris, also referring to our project on *The Empty City*. The city we are recounting, the city of the great workers' suburbs, is the same one to which Pasolini gives his body. It is in those same places where we see that cheap labour is now Algerian or Moroccan. The workers' estates of *Accattone* or *Mamma Roma* are the same ones Delgado talks about: 'That defence of the apartment blocks did not overlook their numerous defects, as a result of the appalling architectural quality of most of the projects, but highlighted that the construction of the great clusters of apartment buildings implied, at a given moment, a definition of the urban expansions that put the issue of subsidised housing in the foreground, an issue that took on an importance it had never had before and which it was not to recover after it was abandoned as a formula for town-planning action. Moreover, it was also notable how the way of grouping the blocks and the provision of spaces for meeting – derived from the inspiration of this typology in the ideas of the modern movement – promoted expressions of intense collective life, among them mobilisation and struggle, insisting on that praise of the concentration of blocks as a sphere that demonstrates the virtues of conflict as a source of social cohesion. In that way, we ought to consider whether the factors that determined the abandonment of the model of dormitory cities should not include the evidence that this type of human agglomeration ends up as a nucleus of conflict difficult to control politically and complicated to subdue whenever it underwent one of its periodic outbursts of insubordination or insolence. Indeed, the system of blocks offered an alternative to crowding the working classes in particular old quarters or city centres, easy to close off with barricades and from where the most ungovernable sectors of the city could become strong and resist the onslaught of the police or even the army. It is well known that the tendency of the European working classes to shut themselves up in intricate districts and turn them into fortresses of insurrection was what justified to a large extent the great town-planning operations to clean up from the last decades of the nineteenth century, of which Haussmann's in Paris would be the paradigm, but which would find a no less eloquent example in Barcelona. However, the decision to take the working classes to the suburbs and remove them from city centres brought unforeseen results, among them allowing forms of coexistence that were not so different from the traditional neighbourhoods and repeating the capacity of the working class district to become a centre of social antagonism.' When Micciché talked about a Pasolini City, that was what he was referring to, the kind that is being laid waste these days by

the young unemployed, the children of North African immigration, on the periphery of Paris, the city of conflict which Pasolini liked to reduce with that old Italian anarchist text, a product of May '68. As he said, not without irony: 'Let the town halls and the police stations burn, the barracks and the banks, the solicitors' offices and the registry offices, the churches and the hovels, and let the palaces be taken by storm, and all the fat bourgeois and their whores be thrown out of the window. Let the department stores with their food and warm clothing be sacked; the telegraph wires, the railway lines and other means of communication be smashed... barricades, showers of chunks of rock and boiling water, pieces of broken glass thrown, large nails for the cavalry, powder tobacco or dynamite bombs... one must move by one's own initiative, let throats be cut and buildings burned down where there has been cruelty or where past injustice can be breathed; one has to hate to excess if one is to love to excess in the future.' But let us go on with Manuel Delgado's writing about the emergency in Paris: 'But the closest proof we have in these days' events in the "*banlieue*" of Paris and other French cities, outbursts of rage which the media catalogue as "acts of urban violence", performed by this new working class largely fed by the flows of migration, whose young people are the victims of exploitation, precarious jobs, unemployment, racism and a lack of expectations for the future. In short, we are seeing, in the devastation of the unfortunate outskirts of Paris, one of the reasons which probably encouraged the abandonment of the dormitory cities option to meet the demand for housing for the most vulnerable sectors of the population: too much rancour all together. A few weeks ago we discovered the way in which the problem of housing for the new poor neighbours is resolved in Paris. The 24 African immigrants who died in two fires in the rundown buildings where they lived in the city centre show that the issue of subsidised housing is tackled in the same way there as here: forcing the new wretched to live in unhealthy, unsafe, often clandestine, but most of all scattered homes. Like here, the method there is to dissolve them among the interstices and holes of the city, to scatter them, to bury them alive under the carpet of clean, affable cities. Anything rather than letting them group in territories where they can dig in; anything rather than allowing them to realise that there are a lot of them and that any moment may be the right one for revenge.'

If I have insisted on Manuel Delgado's text it is because it implicitly pinpoints the conflicts of sovereignty and violence in the same terms as Pasolini, explicitly confronting those 'culturalist' considerations that point to cultural integration as the problem of a collective – the young unemployed on the outskirts of Paris – that has been stripped of any identity, of any social tie, and, precisely as Pasolini pointed out, by the machine of capitalist consumption. Whilst all the press and official propaganda insist on turning this urban conflict into a cultural one, Delgado excludes any reference to identity to put class conflict in line with the old movements that helped construct the modern city.

It is in that paradoxical sense – for instance, reactionary in the eyes of the left for its decidedly anti-modern diatribe, subversive for the right for its

radical defence of the excluded: another form of dance – that Pasolini interests us. In the same paradoxical sense that Giorgio Agamben, who played the apostle Philip in Pasolini's film *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, reminds us as being constitutive of all sovereignty: 'The sovereign is both outside and inside the juridical order.' That paradox is what Pasolini acts on, vitally as a man of action, although theoretically – and this is the source of so many perplexities of his life – he still maintains an idea of old sovereignty, linked to the sacrificial model of the sacred. Agamben himself has shed light on the business by identifying sovereign body and sacred body, the latter taken from the Roman idea of the 'homo sacer', the man whom anyone could kill but who, located beyond the sovereign power that decides on life and death, cannot be sacrificed. In the same senses that Agamben has likened sovereignty and exclusion in relation to the band, in that same sense Pasolini develops the plot of his whole life which culminates in the event of his violent death. And so his life is often presented as a kind of Easter week, a *via crucis* of politics which is now biopolitics. In that sense, the conflict of modern politics as a machine for subjecting naked life reaches full expression in Pasolini's work as the way in which he describes how the modern city expels and subjects the 'true' forms of understanding the life of the community on its margins. There is no doubt that the power of his work springs from the violent raising of this question that never finds a satisfactory answer, dragging over and over again a problem to which he gives no solution and which maintains antagonistic oppositions with all its might. It is worth saying here in the same words as Pasolini in *Gramsci's Ashes*: 'The scandal of contradicting me, of being / with you and against you; with you in the light / against you in the dark entrails. // To my treacherous and paternal state / - in thought, in a shadow / of action - I have joined myself to the heat // of instincts, of aesthetic passion, / drawn by a proletarian life / before you. For me // its joy, not its ancient struggle, is religion; / its nature, not its conscience...'

That is why, in the film clip chosen for his entry in *F.X. Archive* we can equally elucidate that power. The contradictory gesture of the Moorish soldier taking the sacred image in and out in the face of the naturalness of his act is founded on the war of facts and propaganda of the Spanish Civil War. That same image was commented on in republican publicity as an example of the barbarity and rapine of the Muslim mercenaries who, in the service of the fascist cause, attacked the values of Western civilisation represented by the republic. It is truly paradoxical that racial prejudice should be so repeatedly found in the republican and revolutionary forces of the left. It is true that the coup of 18 July was carried out by an Africanist army, which deployed the tactics of colonial war on the Peninsula, but only the anarchosindicalists were capable of pointing that out and very cautiously. It was the Spanish colonial army that had crushed the north of Morocco in several imperialist wars that started the uprising, in the full sense of the word: as military practice and political ideal. It is known that Moroccan nationalism was largely opposed to the participation

of Riffs in the fascist army of occupation and that the poor harvests and famines of North Africa in those years brought about a demographic pressure Franco's troops were able to exploit for their mercenary army. What interests us most of all is not the historical reasons but the imaginaries the Moorish troops embodied and which set in motion a series of contradictory discourses with which the civil war was also made. In his magnificent work *La guerra que vino de África*, Gustau Nerín analyses the whole rhetoric of that discourse with an unforeseeable idea offered by that same story with a new twist: 'The ideological construction of otherness was a basic tool for increasing the war effectiveness of the rebels. To accuse the republicans of savagery was a means of justifying the need to dominate them (the pretext of civilising savages had been one of the most frequently used arguments to legitimise the conquest of Morocco and the Third World as a whole). In 1934 it was alleged that the Legion and the Regulars in Asturias had undertaken to defend "order and civilisation". At that time Franco said that the operations against the revolutionary miners were a "border war" against "all the forces that attack civilisation to replace it with barbarity". In his orders before the 1936 coup, Mola argued that the uprising was indispensable because the country ran the risk of falling into barbarity.' It is clear that the iconoclastic attacks of the revolutionaries were particularly used by fascist propaganda to construct that image of barbarity. In war crimes and their publicity, exaggerations seem the most normal thing in the world, but attacks on cultural and material entities sparked off heated controversies which came from far off, from the debate between culture and civilisation that confronted Europe in the Franco-Prussian war. When the image of St James the Moor-Slayer was reconstructed in Castaño del Robledo, it was decided to replace the Muslim soldier with a soldier of the red army, literally carved in wood, with the campaign uniform of the 1917 revolution. Earlier on, the Africanist army itself had used that propaganda in the Moroccan war with the Riffs themselves. 'The Spanish press presented it as an intolerable offence that the Riffs should destroy the altarpiece of St James in the church of Nador, without saying that the image represented the saint in the middle of slaughtering Muslims,' as Nerín reminds us. In the publicity of Franco's army it was impossible to suppress a certain ferocity of the Riff mercenaries altogether, amongst other things because sowing fear was an important task of their news bulletins, war communiqués and propaganda pamphlets. That incomprehensible, barbaric violence was real; all European colonial armies had done the same by reinforcing their assault troops with particularly bloodthirsty natives, whom they had dislocated from their old war rituals, breaking any hint of meaning amidst the often symbolic cruelty of their deeds and their putting into practice in territories where their old sacred codes no longer worked. In the 'other' fields where their wars now took place they could deploy all their atavistic cruelty, now mounted on the machine of modern war. In the civil war the widespread 'razzias' or pillage of the conquered populations to pay the regular troops or the legionnaires with a special

supplement continued to be the custom, although sacred places were explicitly excluded in a decree by General Mola. There were exceptions, such as the attempt by the legionnaires to assault the bishop's palace in Badajoz or the gift the Regulars gave General Franco, the uncorrupted arm of St Teresa, a relic from the convent of the Carmelites in Ronda, which was never returned to its true owners. A page from the book *Islam y Guerra Civil Española* by Francisco Sánchez Ruano speaks eloquently of that iconoclastic and iconodulic conundrum of 1936: 'Religion was used by the Falangist newspaper *Arriba*, in photos with Moors and riders with the inscription: "With Sidi Franco to the war against the 'godless'." The Arabist professor Miguel Asín Palacios said, 'The image of the Sacred Heart was on the breast of many of our Regulars,' and on one occasion, when the image of the Virgin was about to be taken down in a hospital, a Moor protested, 'Not take down. Virgin good for all.' And defined: The strange sight of our Moroccan soldiers attacking enemy positions intoning litanies that implored the help of the God of armies. A regular attacks the trench and tells a Marxist to 'surrender'. 'You be not of Mohammed.' For the Moroccans the Marxists were 'dogs with no religion'. A sergeant of the Regulars, on hearing Franco in Burgos, shouted, 'God and Spain we fight.' Franco himself accepted the importance of Catholicism in the warlike nature of his Moors: 'The Moors are delighted with the war. They wear Heart of Jesus "bullet stoppers" which the girls pinned on them in Seville. They say: "It had been a long time since we had been able to kill Hebrews."' The Moorish soldiers were Islamic but they were against the profanation of Christian images by some reds, because they were religious images, hence the girls pinning scapulars on the Moors' uniforms. At the outset, Franco and his men accused the men of the Republic of 'denying God', which made them attractive to the Moorish elites and the people. Then the USSR intervened in the war, and they said to the Moors that the 'new Spain' was in mortal combat with communism, 'the sworn enemy of the Islamic religion'. The rebel military chiefs played all their cards to take the Moors to the slaughter, sowing confusion among them over the atheism of the reds. It is true that the paragraph is carried away by certain mythologies, like that powerful image of Sencourt's in which he tells of a caravan of Franco's army with buses full of Moorish soldiers with their roofs laden with the spoils of war, a jumble of old radiators, sewing machines and religious emblems. What we are trying to understand is the ambiguity of the gesture of the Moorish soldier dragging the sacred image out of the church and hastily taking it back, not quite understanding what was 'bad' about his immediate gesture. And we are trying to understand it with a tool that will also serve in the style of Pasolini's contradictions and paradoxes. Perhaps that is why the republican point of view we mentioned at the beginning may be the best place to get the most substance out of our little dance of images. However much we may turn to the participation of North African soldiers in the International Brigades or the attempts by the CNT to encourage a Riff uprising in Franco's rearguard with a promise of decolonisation, the republicans' ideas about the Moors turned out to

be reactionary and they placed conservative myths at the service of their propaganda with the same brutality as the fascist rebels. Another exemplary book, Eloy Martín Corrales' *La imagen del magrebí en España* provides us with a meaty page: 'That idea made it possible to criticise the contradiction that meant that the Muslims, descendants of the ones expelled from Spain over the eight long centuries of the Reconquest, were now used by the nationalists to fight the Republic; a criticism by no means free from ambiguity. That idea underlies the composition by Alloza in which two Regulars in front of a painting of St James the Moor-Slayer are showing the severed head of an adult and the corpse of a child, and remarking: "You won't deny, Jauniet, that you're being ridiculous!" Nor should we be surprised by the thorough exploitation of the apparent contradiction that the self-proclaimed exclusive defenders of the Catholic faith numbered among their ranks units made up of Muslims, who were automatically turned into defenders of Christian values. The fact that the nationalists themselves called the civil war a "crusade" was ironically exploited by their adversaries. In the republicans' opinion, the fraternisation of the Catholic Church and the Muslims was expressed in a greater ferocity by the Franco side. In view of that, it should come as no surprise that for the republicans the alliance between the reactionary church and the Moroccan fanatics should take the shape, among other abominable actions, of the execution by firing squad of Jesucristo, a craftsman's son, as a Gijón newspaper reported. The republicans also mocked the idea that the Moroccans, like the Germans and the Italians, could help to civilise some nation, all the more since they were regarded as barbarians and savages. The nationals were sarcastically denounced for aiming at the "Hispanicisation" of the country using foreign troops, among them the North Africans. Naturally that subject was exploited to the full in Catalonia, since part of the population and political class were particularly sensitive to such a project. From a perspective not entirely free of racism and conservatism, the "whiteness" of the reds or republicans was contrasted with the blackness of the "whites" or "nationals", especially the Moroccan units. To increase the feeling of savagery, they were often presented with black features. A poem by José Bergamín, focusing on the figure of Mola, includes a play on words in which Franco "announces mulatto troops":'

Let us recall that in November 1975 Pasolini was murdered. A Spanish newspaper remarked on his death with these words: 'Pasolini took care to remember, to repeat that the desolation of his proletarians cannot be relieved with social improvements alone.' In Spain the dictator Francisco Franco went into a coma the same day and his death dragged on for twenty days while his body was kept alive in an obscene spectacle of guts, medical bulletins, oxygen pumps and bags of blood. Foucault used the anecdote to introduce the word biopolitical into his discourse for the first time. Those days were also used by the Moroccan government to stage the famous Green March to demand the decolonisation of Spanish territories in the Sahara. Years before Pasolini had left us his poem *Negotiations with*

*Franco: 'What is in the sun / above the cemetery / in Barcelona? // Nothing, but between the Andalusian, / between the Andalusian and the sun/ there is an old link. // His soul has departed from him / and he has come to live/ beneath the cemetery in Barcelona. // A soul can become Castilian // and a body can remain Andalusian / beneath the same sun! // They say that African souls / have turned white, // and not by the will of the Lord. / (But no Lord of Barcelona/ going to Andalusia / has had a black soul). // Before becoming Castilian / the soul must learn Catalan / in an Andalusian body. // Happy then he who learns Walloon, / because his body is in the sun, / in the great sun of the world. // But here one goes from sun to sun, / and between the Catalan and the Andalusian / there is no more than the eye of the Castilian. // Yes, between the Andalusian and the Frenchman / is the sun of suns, / not the sun of a cemetery. // If he speaks Castilian, / learning Catalan in the meantime, // he gives his soul for a few pesetas. / Not in exchange for reason / like the Arab or the black / in the sun of Lille or Pigalle. // A hut for a soul, / a heap of hovels for a heap of souls, / a little fire lit under the sun. // Sun of Catalonia! / Little fire of Andalusia! / Garrotte of Castile! // Land of Spain, / what do you expect under the sun / which is no more than sun? // A journey of a thousand hours / to find a cemetery / and a heap of huts. // You have to come to Spain / to see the silence / of a man who is only a man.'*

Now back to Ciudad Badía. How can our hands not shake when we handle these tools in Ciudad Badía and do not want to take the name of Pasolini in vain? In 1968 the Italian poet visited the city of Turin. As the embodiment of the true '*Civitas Dei*' of industrial capitalism – 'but nobody has ever been in a "*Civitas Dei*" and we have been in Turin,' Pasolini wrote – the film-maker pondered the work of the artist in the modern city: 'Because there are existential, immediate, specific data of "behaviour in behaviour" of which, it seems, sociology cannot "speak". Is it not then the artist's task to "speak" of these things which sociology excludes from itself, in practical terms, "speak" about survivals? (Survivals of the peasant world, of the provincial bourgeoisie who liked to give a craft flavour to their first industries, of the southern way of life, etc. etc.) If that were the mission of an artist in Turin, that is, to return confusion and uncertainty to the inhabitants of an industrial city whom the sociologists tend to sketch cleanly and safely, then it must be said that a writer's instinctive "realism", with the touch of the non-ideological and existential that implies, is always undoubtedly destined to fight "avant-garde battles". Battles in which, when all is said and done, the true massacres take place. The false artists, the so-called fashionable artists, volunteers in the "avant-garde battles", in fact only fight lounge duels and virtuositities where there is never a single casualty.'

With all due respect, all that remains is for us to be modest so as not to lose our lives. We cannot allow ourselves to be cowed by the power Pier Paolo Pasolini. Modestly, all we can do is to offer a few approaches, perhaps inappropriate to a 'realist writer' but no doubt destined to bring confusion and uncertainty to the inhabitants of *The Empty City*.

A news item from 1936 which appears in *Terrassa 1936-1939. Tres anys difícils de guerra civil* by Baltasar Ragon ('A group of militiamen turn up at the homes of nearly all the photographers in the city and confiscate all the negatives of young men') leads us to publish a set of seven postcards with which to reconstruct a 'racial' map of the citizens. They are all photographs confiscated one way or another in Ciudad Badía. In *The Postcards* we act like a photo booth. But the nub of the question is in the dispatch, in the posting of those postcards. The lines of those mails trace a map, a cartography that comments ironically on the map of races, the books of mixtures, the tables of ethnic groups: Spanish, Poles, non-Gypsies... Pasolini generally liked to use those words.

Around the independentist journey of Badia del Vallès, a second work, *Independence*, is constructed. We can say that from the project in 1964 to achieving independence as a town, the social community of Badia has strengthened its ties through neighbourhood struggle, in the demands for improvements in living conditions, in recognition of their right to live in occupied housing and to refurbish the apartments that had been legally distributed among them, to the struggles for achieving independence as a town. At those moments of struggle the conflict of identities and sovereignties have been made explicit on more than one occasion: the residents' grouping around different regional origins, the occupation of dwellings by a group of citizens mostly of Gypsy origin, the Catalanisation policies implemented after the Catalan government gave the independence of the town its blessing, etc. Some texts by Pasolini have been constructed with an alphabet of images, as he himself wanted, which come from these 'cycles' of struggle.

We should not infer the meaning of these lines too much to understand our proposal for the circulation of images marking the Pasolini entry in *F.X. Archive*. It is evident that the conflict between sovereignty and subject is resolved for Pasolini around the paradoxes of identity. The dance of the Moor who tears down and returns the figure to sacred ground is circulated as the reverse of different laws that aspire to being text – in the sense of the religions of the Book – of different sovereignties. From the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* to the *Founding Deed of Badia*. With some urgency, the Spanish constitution and the version of the statute of Catalonia that is being debated are there too. Also, following Pasolini, we have added a deed of rights that is circulating on the internet and whose beneficiaries, paradoxically, are the illegal immigrants.

## Ute Meta Bauer

*Files* was a project by Octavio Zaya for the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC). There was something competition-like about the idea. Thirty or so art curators were each invited to select three or four artists whose work they considered representative of the current scene. Of course it was a promotional project for the new museum, which opted for the

supermarket and kiosk as channels for circulating its brand. The launch of this international style franchise, somewhat in the style of Benetton or Taschen, deploying a major publishing campaign to nourish it with this silly little game, had a few surprises in store. The curator of the project himself was amazed that all the curators contacted had not hesitated to agree to take part in the competition. Many of them work towards a critical culture, but it seems that this proposal, so light-hearted, came as a relief from the seriousness of their more formal approaches. This was an invitation to a party and clearly outside working hours, so it did not seem a moment for antagonism and controversy. Moreover the party promised succulent dishes that had to be tried some time. It seems that among the artists selected, over 130 in total, there were some for whom the game was a little facile. They were to be included in a recreational, informative archive, a manual for art professionals. And yes, there were some artists for whom the invitation seemed a rather mundane exercise and if they were not accustomed to accepting invitations to the embassy, commercial receptions or the privileges of officialdom, what were they doing at this party? As far as *F.X. Archive* is concerned the invitation came from Víctor del Río, with whom we were working on a project at the Museo Patio-Herreriano, and we all had the feeling that we were gatecrashing a party that was not, of course, for us. A certain intellectual laziness – curricular requests, advertising explanations, door-to-door sales, etc. – usually keeps us at a distance from this kind of affair, but on this occasion banality beckoned us to play.

That was how *F.X. Archive* decided to let all those art curators into our own *Files*. Particularly this group of curators, in gratitude for the effort they were making to help advance the work of radical artists the length and breadth of the world. The problem was to give these *Files* a certain entity, since however much the entries of *F.X. Archive* share a logic of meaninglessness, a little like *How I Wrote Certain of My Books* by Raymond Roussel, it is still ruled pathologically by a certain regime. The game principle, finding homophony between the iconoclastic image or event and the meanings of the term or entry that was to name it from the broad field of the modern aesthetic project, had to be fulfilled to the letter with that paranoid drift that is peculiar to it and without which its taxonomy could not even enter the realm of 'non sense'. A first recommendation seemed to take us down the road of political commissars, since many of the images and events of political iconoclasm in Spain, especially those close to the war and revolution of 1936, are peopled with that martial figure: the political commissar confiscating the belongings of a church, the political commissar reproving a group of anarchists pillaging an ecclesiastical archive, etc.

In a book by Giuliana di Febo, *Ritos de guerra y de victoria en la España franquista*, we found the keys in which our taxonomy would develop. In a way the iconoclastic event had mounted the propaganda war in our civil conflict to such an extent that those practices had been legitimised as elements for constructing a theology of evil. The mutilated wooden figures, the churches blown up with dynamite, the

forbidden rites were more important in the war of clashing ideas than, for example, the murder of Catholic priests or the different ways in which the practitioners of the Roman religion were branded. This theological scandal brought us a chain of reparatory acts, of Marian enthronements, of restorations of spaces for worship, which made it a fundamental element of the political ritual of the Franco regime to make its victory a crushing one. Weeping for the dead priests had some element of mourning, and however much God had recompensed them for their martyrdom with a comfortable sojourn in heaven, it was not with funerals that their triumph had to be celebrated. And although in the 'bible' of the *Historia de la persecución religiosa en España 1936-1939* by Bishop Antonio Montero Moreno less space is given over to what the author calls the 'martyrdom of things', in the real propaganda war the victimisation of the nationalists took very different paths. Amongst other things, because the working classes, to whom this advertising rhetoric was addressed, found the popular figures of Christs and Virgins extraordinarily pleasant, so closely linked were they to ritual celebrations of pagan origin and popular culture that went far beyond the laws of official religion; far more so, of course, than did the priests and other soldiers of God, who bore a long history of curses and suspicions on their shoulders. The historian Francisco Espinosa has shown how in lower Andalusia, where the civil war was little more than a coup d'état lasting a few days followed by a brutal repression where the absence of an armed opponent turned it into a bloody concentration camp, the religious images destroyed in the few days' resistance that followed the military uprising on 18 July served as a symbolic compensation for the thousands of murders committed in the repression against leftist elements, the 'reds' who were systematically eliminated. The current debate about the historical memory continues to fluctuate in such a way that the abundant accounts of deaths and murders, the huge figures that accuse the fascists of ever greater crimes of repression, are compensated by the fact that in this or that village such and such a Christ of the Waters or a Virgin of the Greater Sorrows was burned.

Perhaps before we begin to point out the kinship between that reparatory ideology and the practices of art curators, who are called 'commissars' in Spanish, we should mention the complete list of art experts who came to swell the entries of *F.X. Archive*, especially to show that in the photo captions that went with the name of each of them and the corresponding photograph that this is not an isolated incident and that the intellectual operation of redemption took many forms and had many causes. The list that follows gives the entries in italics together with the corresponding text that describes the image: a complete set of samples of reading files that give us some idea of the phenomenon.

*Adriano Pedrosa*, Religious and military emotion of the procession of the Corpus in Aguilar de Campoo. A felony put right and arms surrender to God. *Agustín Pérez Rubio*, The children of Serrano Suñer, with the standard of the Heart of Jesus: 'I shall reign in Spain.' *Antonio Zaya*, The Falangist capuchin, father... who

takes the consolation of his words to our soldiers. The garments were rescued from the Marxist barbarity that wanted to strip our saints in this way. *Arakis*, Workers' writings, on boards, done by the Claretian prisoners. *Barbara Steiner*, A sensational photograph, very little known, of Republican Spain: no less than a mass in Barcelona in 1938. The confidential letter of General Torrent's chaplain puts things in their place. The masses of 1938 were no more than a concession by Dr Negrín to the requests of the 'Basque government in exile' and propaganda with an eye to liberal Europe. But the immediate protests by the extremist press left no room for hope about the possibilities of public worship in the Republican zone. None at all in 1938, as in 1936. *Bart de Baere*, Church of Benasal, looted and destroyed and, in the end, recovered. *Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev*, Next to the hermitage of La Mare de Déu del Lledó in 1938, amidst a pile of stones, the upper part of a seventeenth-century reliquary image was found. The municipal employee points out the exact spot where it was discovered. *Chiara Bertola*, Father Esteban Gómez, chaplain to the third regiment of the Carlist militia operating on the Central Front, holds a mass on campaign in the Cerro de Cabeza Fuerte, on the front line of the Jarama sector, where one could make out, before it was destroyed by the red militias, a cross marking the road. *Estrella de Diego*, A graphic testimony of exceptional documentary value: Queipo de Llano's troops were received by groups of women bearing the image of the patron saint of the town. *Evelyne Jouanno*, Deicide sadism. Piedralaves: The head, the only thing left of an image of Jesus Christ, placed by good souls in this form in token of memory and reparation. *Francesco Bonami*, Un legionario di Franco in ginocchio davanti alla Vergine di Malaga d'acapatata dalle truppe rosse. *Guillermo Santamarina*, The parish church of San Pedro de Figueres was razed to the ground. After the liberation, a mass was said on the remains. *Hans Ulrich Obrist*, Exhibition of objects of worship which the German Catholics sent to Spain destined for the churches devastated by the reds, in the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid. *Hou Hanru*, Tibidabo. Different aspects of the acts of reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus once Barcelona had been liberated by the Caudillo's victorious troops. *Isabel Carlos*, December 1937. Altar prepared for the Holy Sacrifice in a secret apartment, far from the eyes of the Marxists. *Javier Hernando*, Restitution to the Virgin of Begoña of the jewels stolen from her by the red-separatists. The Generalísimo's wife presides over the ceremony, with General López Pinto and other personalities. *John Peter Nillson*, December 1937. Tabernacle hidden at home. *Lauri Firstenberg*, In token of redress, the new presbyter José María Torres, going with his companions to the Church of Nules for its First Mass after being sacked and destroyed. *María Inés Rodríguez*, Alcoi. Parish church of the Nativity of Our Lady or St Mary, being rebuilt after its destruction by the Marxist hordes. *Mark Nash*, Robbery, sacrilege and protest demonstration. The faithful gaze - the photograph is the best evidence of their grief - at the damage caused by the sacrilegious thieves. In Valencia Cathedral savages tied a rope to the image of the Virgin, which was venerated in a magnificent niche,

and threw it to the ground, wantonly destroying it and seizing all the jewellery with which it was adorned: 35 rings, 5 bracelets and a necklace. A demonstration by Catholic heads for the Civil Government. In all of them there is a strong desire to exteriorise their protest at the barbaric deed. *Massimiliano Gioni*, Apotheosis welcome given to our soldiers, who are bearing the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on their entrance into Santander. *Nadia Rollert*, Although Guernica is the famous place, in fact the nationalist bombings of Durango were more insistent and deadlier, even if less spectacular. One of them left numerous victims when a bomb fell on the church while mass was being held; the priest officiating, who can be seen in the foreground in the impressive graphic document, was among the dead. The Basque nationalist party paid public and private tribute to their constitutive Catholicism and the Basque Country was the exception - in terms of mass being held - in the whole Republican zone. *Octavio Zaya*, The author of this book taking the Holy Chalice from its wall in the town of Carlet. *Okwui Enwezor*, The Easter Week brotherhoods were used by the rebels to legitimise themselves. Above, General Queipo de Llano presides over the procession of the Great Power. *Peio Aguirre*, Bilbao. Calvo Sotelo's birthday. Sanctification of a profaned square. *Rafael Doctor Roncero*, Agustín Aznar takes his oath as national councillor of FET and the JONS. Between the crucifix - confiscated from profaners of the Republican army - that presides over the table and the new Falangist hierarch we can see the head, like an untimely witness, of the gigantic ambassador of Hitler's Germany in Franco's Spain. *Rosa Martínez*, 5 August 1936, General Queipo de Llano's troops entered El Pedroso. One of their first actions was to prevent the Virgin of the Thorn from suffering damage in a small fire that was extinguished. The young Falangist holding the image is Manuel Vázquez Alcaide 'Pechohiero', who a few days afterwards was General Franco's escort in Seville. *Sandra Antelo Suarez*, Indiscriminate religious persecution, the open confrontation between Marxism and the church from the first day of the Republic in Seville, was a constant between 1931 and 1936, especially during the Popular Front. Once the war broke out, the explosion of anti-religious hate was impressive, of a primitive cruelty. In the image, Broken Christ from the Museo del Requeté. *Suzanne Ghez*, Prayers for the fallen. Altar of reparation at the Alcázar in Toledo. *Thelma Goleen*, General Queipo de Llano poses with the brothers of La Macarena with their float in the background. Behind the general is the division auditor who, when he became a general in his turn, would preside over the popular brotherhood for years. *Ute Meta Bauer*, 20-9-1939. Alcalá de Henares. Madrid. In the Alcalá de Henares reformatory 300 prisoners are working out their sentence. In the image, some of them are making wooden crosses, in high demand by industrialists, in a section of the carpentry workshop. *Víctor del Río*, On guard in front of the plundered church. *Víctor Zamudio Taylor*, Comrades of the Artistic Recovery Service smiling in their joy at the monstrosity and other objects of worship that have been rescued. *Viktor Misiano*, The 1919 Maura government persuaded the sincerely Catholic but not at all pro-Vatican King Alfonso XIII to officially

consecrate Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a typically French devotion, eagerly fostered by the Jesuits in the nineteenth century and flourishing between the two Vatican councils. The monument, erected at the geographical centre of Spain, fourteen kilometres from the Puerta del Sol in Madrid, thus became the symbol of the militant, politicised Catholicism – sectarian, partly because of the sectarianism of its enemies – of Spain in the first third of the twentieth century. At the outbreak of the civil war the monument was demolished by the militias, but the nationalists reconquered it during the march on Madrid; the ‘Red Hill’, thus christened by their enemies, was the field of the first battle of the raw XII International Brigade and the object of several attacks by the Lister Brigade; in his memoirs he has the good taste to call the hill by its real name. But the amputee hill would remain as a nationalist advance party until the end of the war. Yu Yeon Kim, Restoration of worship and political propaganda were exponents of the religious content of the ideological confrontation during the years of the Republic and the war. Yuko Hasegawa, But the soldiers of Spain did not take long to arrive and hoist the Spanish flag on the rubble of the monument to the heart of Jesus destroyed on the Cerro de los Ángeles. Iwona Blazwick, 7-4-1939. Madrid. Via crucis on Good Friday. The Christ of the Victory of Wonders is carried from the church of San José to the Puerta de Alcalá, for a pontifical mass before the ‘altar of the Fallen’.

Of course the taxonomic operation was carried out in that dreamlike state where chance blends with the limited data arriving from reality. The little or the lot we knew about those art professionals did not yield enough to people a field of the modern radical project. The inclusion of many of these names was due to the dynamic of the game itself and their agreeing to take part in *Files* was the game that opened its way into *F.X. Archive* Later, once the final work exhibited in the book *Files*, published by MUSAC in 2004, had been seen, the rules of the game themselves were confirmed. The radical nature of the works shown had a clear iconoclastic intention – pornographic hymns, violent accusations, a taste for the grotesque, convulsive gestures, textual provocation, etc. – which *F.X. Archive* obviously did not escape. As the art historians José Hernández Díaz, Antonio Sánchez Corvacho or Manuel Sánchez Camargo did in their day by placing themselves at the service of that artistic ‘otherness’ signified by the mutilation of religious images or the profanation of places of worship, the work of the contemporary art expert consists of legitimising and redeeming those same practices so that they will emerge from the dark, marginal space where they are done and enter the sacrosanct space of the museum. That experience of redemption does not necessarily require identification of the mediator with the work and its message. Whether with the aim of constructing an archive of evil or a critical museum, the epistemological relation with the works is the same and it undergoes a process of semiological re-education which adapts it to the new space where it is to be shown. These operations use the same instruction manual whatever the technology applied. In this context of redemption the circulation of these works fails resoundingly, since in the expectation

to which they are reduced any utility is lacking, any common use these productions might be given. The effect they cause is religious, it needs spectators who are believers or are prepared to believe in this new church. Sacrality understood with the old ‘Batailleian’ concept of the accursed comfortably occupies the ground of a new kind. So we are talking about his curatorial activity as a kind of priesthood. If we take Giorgio Agamben’s text on the Museum in relation to the spectators, we are emphasising the work of the priests who administer these temples. It is a rather long text, but it is worth transcribing here before pursuing the argument: ‘That is why, in the Museum, the analogy between capitalism and religion becomes evident. The Museum occupies exactly the space and the function that in other times were reserved for the Temple as a place of sacrifice. Corresponding to the faithful of the Temple – or the pilgrims who travelled the earth from Temple to Temple, from shrine to shrine – we have the tourists of today, who travel tirelessly around a world estranged as a Museum. But, in the end, whilst the faithful and the pilgrims took part in a sacrifice that, separating the victim in the sacred sphere, re-established the precise relations between the divine and the human, the tourist holds a sacrificial act on his person which consists of the distressing experience of the destruction of all possible use. If the Christians were ‘pilgrims’ i.e. foreigners on the earth, because they knew that their homeland was in heaven, the adepts of the new capitalist worship have no homeland at all, because they live in the pure form of separation. Wherever they go they find the same impossibility of dwelling that they had known in their homes and cities multiplied and taken to extremes, the same incapacity for use they had experienced in the supermarkets, malls and television shows. For that reason, insofar as it represents the worship and the central altar of the capitalist religion, tourism is now the first industry in the world, mobilising over six hundred and fifty million people a year. There is nothing as surprising as the fact that millions of individuals venture to try at first hand what may well be the most desperate experience possible: that of the irrevocable loss of any use, the absolute impossibility of profaning.’

Well, for the modes of profanation to disappear, for that irrevocable loss of all use to occur, someone has to deactivate the profaning charge involved in these linguistic operations – I am referring to works of art. This activity, quite common in the world of culture, also involves staging this domestication every so often so that this continuous return to the iconoclastic gesture is a need, a law that will guarantee in the new temple the absolute impossibility of profaning. Nobody should be surprised, therefore, by the lengths gone to by our artists in their struggle to constantly surpass themselves in the waters of abjection. The machine that deactivates the political power of all this material needs the repetition and the circus effect of the yet more difficult to fulfil its function.

The same social redemption operation with which these scenes of redress and sacramentalisation functioned took place in the early years of the Franco regime in the plan for the rebuilding of cities and urban areas after the war. *Reconstrucción*, precisely, was

the title of one of the magazines that deployed this ideological operation. The attempt to rebuild modern cities in Spain is set in this same conceptual operation that later on contemporary radicalism – especially the architectural vanguard – would call postmodern. A fragment of text by Ángel Gutiérrez Valero for *Archive Cultures* about the magazine *Reconstrucción* can elaborate significantly on what we have been saying so far. It is a footnote to the report on the rebuilding of Belchite and the iconic emphasis placed on the destruction of the church: ‘The reference to the church is not gratuitous. It places religiosity in the vanguard of the discourse, and its reconstruction has to channel all the forces that operate in the reconquered territories; the rhetoric does not only show the character of Catholicism as the engine of the inventive artifice. Fixing the ruin visually introduces a larger number of semantic levels into its metamorphosis into a monument, a task in which sentimental and propagandist reminiscences take on particular virulence. The icons of destruction construct the landscape that justifies the action of the postwar; in their persistence and conservation the signs that identify those responsible and describe their actions are deployed. Restricted to its military dimension, the war is interpreted in apocalyptic terms; armies are replaced by hordes, ideals by hatred, victory by destruction. Death does not symbolise the highest degree of cruelty inherent to war: even in terms of extermination, one will always be able to reach an objective, individual identification; it will be the annihilation of the symbols, of the common elements that transcend the subject and identify the collective. Compiled in the definition of the Devastated Regions mission, these aspects are especially significant in their drafting, since the omission of the word – if not the concept – heritage is symptomatic. This rhetorical resource used in the normative text in relation to the use of the images of the ruins of the church of Belchite eliminates any ambiguity that might emerge from the use of the word heritage, especially its possible identification with an administrative figure. Its omission replaces the material consideration – edification, architecture – of the goods with a concept with symbolic weight such as representation – an aspect that goes beyond its regulation or categorisation – in a statement that transcends mere physicality, a condition heightened by the assimilation on a single level of Christianity and Spanishness, concepts that are the object of this representation.’

The analysis continues and concludes that this move towards representation ends up making *Reconstrucción* a tourist magazine, since the values it wished to emphasise ended in that theatrical space where the city ceases to be useful for most of the citizens and becomes just a stage set, with the sole possibility of representing. A magazine that turned the traditional values of ‘Spanish Catholicism’ into tourist typification. Perhaps the natural peculiarity of the Spanish case, with the triumph of the national-fascists, might make us think for a moment that the transformation emerging from the pages of *Reconstrucción* is an exception to the rule, from ‘redemption’ to the ‘picturesque’. We may say that

this exaggeration in terms is special and we have to thank the ideological transparency with which this metamorphosis is offered to us. But if we return for a moment to Agamben’s text we shall confirm that what happens here is not so different from what was happening at that time in the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War, although the terms ‘sacred redemption’ and ‘picturesque scene’ are far more nuanced. The change takes place in the sphere of the transformation of capitalist culture towards post-Fordism, the third industrialisation, the information society or whatever you like to call it.

As Juan José Lahuerta has rightly pointed out, it is in this ideological framework that we must understand the design and construction of the Ciudad Badía housing estate, its particular orography in the shape of the Iberian Peninsula and the Spanish Iberian street names. Beyond any chance events, which no doubt helped this construct to be more than an exemplary incident, the history of forms will thus allow us to approach the lessons Badia del Vallès has to offer us universally.

For all those reasons we turn to this set of entries in the general thesaurus of *F.X. Archive*.

The kinship which the play of inclusions and exclusions of the archive – both the *Files* and the *F.X. Archive* projects – establishes between the priestly caste and the new art curators or commissars is, of course, a mere game and the list of names should be understood as a generality in which exceptions will certainly abound. One of them is represented by the entry *Ute Meta Bauer*, which is precisely what we are trying to elucidate. Exceptions to the rule in the most literal sense of the word exceptional since, as we shall see, an approach to the Ute Meta Bauer field will be most productive for the development of what we have been saying so far.

I have to say that the choice of the *Ute Meta Bauer* entry for the *Empty City* project is based on a more incidental consideration, since when we located the names of Bartolomé M.U. and Uberto M.B., two cousins who had worked out sentences in Alcalá de Henares prison between 1939 and 1941, in the first census of the inhabitants of Ciudad Badía, the nexus required for our investigation was established. Let us remember that the photograph that gives rise to the *Ute Meta Bauer* entry bears the following caption: ‘20-9-1939. Alcalá de Henares. Madrid. In the Alcalá de Henares reformatory 300 prisoners are working out their sentence. In the image, some of them are making wooden crosses, in high demand by industrialists, in a section of the carpentry workshop.’ We may suppose that Bartolomé or Uberto are among the prisoners Verdugo photographed in 1939, but our investigation has not gone that far. The photographer Antonio Verdugo worked for Cifra Gráfica, a Spanish graphic information agency founded by Vicente Gallego during the civil war as a section of EFE. The name is an acronym of Crónicas, Informaciones, Fotografías y Reportajes de Actualidad. Between January and April 1939 it focused on the graphic coverage of the war and its images were published in the foreign press and the Spanish newspapers *Faro de Vigo*, *ABC* (Seville), *Sur* (Málaga), *Noticiero* (Zaragoza), *Hierro* (Bilbao) and *Alerta* (Santander). The first photographers of the agency

were Hermes Pato, Antonio Verdugo himself and Manuel Iglesias, who had a laboratory where Aurelia Pérez Iglesias developed and printed the pictures. This service, along with ALFIL, was incorporated into EFE in 1978 as part of a general unification process. Indeed, this photograph was collected recently in *Imágenes de España*, a book of photos by Agencia EFE, which unfortunately provides few facts and no information about the material presented. Indeed, in the collection of the newspaper *ABC de Sevilla* the photo is mistakenly attributed to Aurelia Pérez, who seems to be the manager of the laboratory.

The scene illustrated by the photograph has an exemplary function. We know that in Gerona prison the carpentry workshops made crosses designed to redecorate and resacralise the desolate churches the Marxists had left behind in Spain. We also know about the creation of sacred imagery workshops in the style of the wood-paste ones in Olot, and that sculpture and imagery workshops were set up in the gaols of Huelva and Málaga. But we can say that this programme began with that photo, since it was the gaol in Alcalá de Henares where the system of working out sentences was put into operation most effectively. The application of this penitentiary procedure in the context of the Spanish Civil War was the work of the Jesuit Pérez del Pulgar; one of the articles in praise of the system explained that Father Pérez del Pulgar had changed his previous calling as a scientist specialising in electricity to prison chaplain, because both electricity and prisons shared the virtue of obedience. Ángela Cenarro explains it in *La institucionalización del universo penitenciario franquista*: 'It was the answer to the problem that in the occupied territory millions of Spaniards had become outlaws overnight. As it was a solution consistent with the "purification" project the insurgents had for Spain, it contained an internal logic that is worth analysing. Working out sentences was presented as a middle way between two fairly unconvincing options. One consisted of applying the law "to the letter", with the result of "leaving a great mass of citizens who had no reason to be absent from the task of the material and spiritual reconstruction of Spain outside national life". Or, which came to the same thing, making the penitentiary problem even worse. The other was the soft solution embodied in amnesty or pardon, since it cancelled out the primordial end of all administration of justice, "the expiation of the crime and the exemplary nature of the punishment". And this option was still less appealing, since it involved acknowledging that the losers had committed no crime. Thanks to Father Pérez del Pulgar's project, the Caudillo managed to persist in his wish to exercise an exemplary justice; the afflictive nature of the sentence was maintained "as opposed to other sentimental theories of those who see in the criminal only a sick person or a victim of society" and, at the same time, the person who had committed the crime "through ignorance or insolence" was given a chance to redeem himself by using his physical strength. If for centuries work had been used in the penal system as a punishment, for the convict to expiate his guilt and repair the damage caused to society, now work became a full part "of the plans for the greater glory of the

Motherland" and the sole road to redemption, with all the symbolic overtones that entailed. It was no chance that its main inspirers came from political Catholicism. But although the analogies with Christianity were more than evident, now no one was going to redeem the prisoners, there was no figure similar to Jesus Christ dying on the cross to wash men of the stigma of original sin. It would be the prisoners themselves, with their effort and sacrifice, who would be taken back into "the fullness of social life" after they had redeemed themselves. Thus peculiar ways of achieving the ultimate goal of all penal systems, for the prisoner to return to society duly re-educated and regenerated, were established. Many prisoners remained outside the possibilities of redemption and the discourse spoken to that effect echoed that reality. The system classified the inmates subtly, according to their will to repentance, between those who were capable of redeeming themselves and those who were not. Pérez del Pulgar himself established a clear distinction between two classes of criminal. The first were "hardened criminals, with no possible redemption within the human order" and, therefore, they must not return to society: "let them expiate their guilt far from it." And the second, "those capable of sincere repentance, those that can be redeemed, can adapt to the social life of patriotism", must be the object of preferential treatment... Work, as conceived in the system devised by Pérez del Pulgar, performed many functions. The panegyrics of the regime strove to demonstrate its moral and economic virtues. In the words of Ángel Caballero, director of the Penitentiary Workshops at Alcalá de Henares, work made the prisoner "submissive and obedient", moderated his passions and relieved him from "serious worries and sleeplessness". The inmates not only repaired the damage they had done to Spain but, by learning a trade, acquired a means of earning a living for the day when they left the prison walls. Moreover, work had other no less important material advantages, from which the inmate, his family and the state supposedly benefited. The earnings he generated were what the state saved on his maintenance. Once the sums for social payments and family subsidies that the local boards sent to their wives, children or parents had been discounted, the ridiculous wage remaining was paid into an account at the Postal Savings Bank. It was supposed that this fund would help the prisoner, once he had been released, to embark on a quite specific way of life. The savings would "make the feeling, the virtues and the advantages of property vibrate in him, taking him out of poverty through the economy". And that returning to life with a job and some savings "would dignify his person, elevate his condition as a man and wipe out the stigma that in other times weighed upon him..." That the first number of the weekly magazine *Redención* was made to coincide with Victory Day, 1 April 1939, meant that its appearance was closely linked to the new period that was opening up for the history of Spain. *Redención* was the only periodical publication whose distribution was authorised inside the gaols, although it was also sent to the prisoners' families and anyone who was out on parole. It was published and printed at the emblematic Penitentiary Workshops in Alcalá de Henares, thanks

to the work of prisoners who were working out their sentences, always, of course, under the strict supervision of the prisoner warders. The correspondents were prisoners who took on the task of collecting the news worth writing about at each penal centre, which made them eligible for an “extraordinary redemption” later. Thus, censorship and propaganda came from the heart of the Franco penal system, and the prisoners were subtly forced to be accomplices in it.’

We know that Uberto M.B. worked on *Redención*. And that when they were released from gaol, the two cousins decided not to return to their home town, Lebrija, in the province of Seville. It was natural that the stigmas of a Marxist past and their time in prison should lead them to go first to Barcelona and in the late seventies to end their days in Badia del Vallès. The testimonies we collected about them tell us little about their activity on the Republican side and still less about their years in prison. Their behaviour is usual in many of those ex-convicts who took the road of rootlessness by hiding a supposedly ominous past for ever. The traces they have left in the different archives consulted leave no more than these few facts either. The two also worked in the prison archive and were in charge of the technical publication of ’s book, *Musa redimida*, Madrid 1940, an anthology of poems by prisoners under the working out sentences system we have already mentioned. Of Uberto M.B.’s contributions to *Redención* we can only single out his thematic unit devoted to praising the cooperation of the women’s prisons service on the reeducation of prisoners and its influence on the Women’s Section and the Falange. Of particular interest for an X-ray of the system is one which sets out the parallels between the illumination by the Jesuit Pérez del Pulgar of Señora Romana Roldán de Polanco, president of Frentes y Hospitales and representative of the Falange Española de las Jons, and the illumination by the Benedictine Fray Justo Pérez de Urbel – this character published a brief tome on the work of the iconoclastic hordes, *Los mártires de la iglesia*, which was in fact written by the journalist now known as Cándido – of Señora Pilar Primo de Rivera, president of the Women’s Section and also a member of the Falange Española de las Jons. Both ladies visited the prison and its workshops and were presented with a crucifix each from the ones manufactured by the convicts in their re-education programme.

That is all we have been able to find from trawling archives, magazine collections and libraries. The people who knew them during the years they worked in Barcelona all insist on their refusal to talk about the past beyond a few vague references. That faded past on which the different groups engaged in reconstructing our historical memory are trying to shed light is not a product of chance either. The violence of this re-education system was programmed precisely to wipe out any trace of any history that did not fit that of the winning side. The survivors who had been involved in iconoclastic actions – many of them were shot, even though they had committed no violent crimes, simply for having dressed up as priests, mocked the local patron saint or smacked the head of a cardboard altar boy placed at the door of the church to beg for alms – were specially re-educated through the application

of the de-Marxisation campaign dreamt up by the famous psychiatrist Antonio Vallejo-Nájera. In his book *Los campos de concentración franquistas* Javier Rodrigo describes it in these words: ‘A good proof of the intention to re-educate dissidence and its practical implementation are the investigations, recently brought to light, by Doctor Vallejo-Nájera into the biopsychism of Marxist fanaticism and the purity of the “Hispanic race” in the international prisoners in San Pedro de Cardeña. With psychiatry at the service of ideology and with a series of psychological and, we fear, physical studies, his conclusions were nevertheless fairly predictable: Marxists were potentially mad or congenitally retarded, mentally feeble and therefore the eugenics required to revive the feeling of Spanishness consisted of locking up and separating the imbeciles. The difference is that the “race” in this case was of an ideological nature. As Carl Geiser points out in his memoirs, an assistant measured their skulls, the length of their noses and the distance between their eyes to “scientifically” classify them and demonstrate the mental, but also physical, natures of the madness brought about by leftwing thought. Ricard Vinyes has interpreted those examinations and analyses of the prison population from an audacious, brilliant perspective: how the Franco world structured through a “pseudo-philosophy of the social degeneration of the dissident” a global vision of the enemy and therefore of its own political being, based on Manichean precepts such as the opposition between superior and inferior, truth and error, Good and Evil.’ In *Cautivos*, Javier Rodrigo’s book on the same subject, he writes: “Re-education was, in fact, another transversal element of the concentration camps, about which we can give two examples that liken the Franco camps to the ones usually considered totalitarian. The brainwashing of the Polish prisoners of war (the 250,000 or so captured on the Eastern Front after the Russian invasion that began on 17 September 1939) in the Soviet camps of Kozelsk, Ostashkov and Atarobelsk is comparable to what had been done just one year earlier in San Pedro de Cardeña with the International Brigade prisoners. Not in the methods, infinitely more brutal in the Soviet camps – which aspired to the totalitarian creation of a new man – but in the background of a culturisation and sacralisation-dogmatisation of politics, according to which ideology can be changed through conversion. The interest of Hitler and Himmler in using Russian prisoners of war in their own army from 1944, as well as Stalin’s contempt for them, are also comparable to Franco’s attitude towards his prisoners of war: either they were “deluded” and had to be “Hispanicised” to make them useful to the national community, or they were cheap, profitable labour, or simple “red scum” worth less than the bullet that would put an end to them.’

And it is at this point that we have to go back, turn the discourse of this story in another sphere and place, the one corresponding to the *Ute Meta Bauer* entry in *F.X. Archive*. It is obvious that the intersection comes from interest in the archive, the mechanisms of constructing it, its politics. Bauer’s work asks about the mechanisms of representation of the archive itself. In one of her latest works as curator, in *(Insight) Archive*

*Móvil\_Transfronterizo* on the borders between San Diego and Tijuana, she asks the following questions: What is an archive and how are the histories of archives determined? How are archives related to memory, the production of history and knowledge, and to their hegemonic powers? What is archived, by whom and for whom? Who is talking and who are they talking to? Where and why is something archived? What is discarded and why? What is archived on each side of the border, on different sides of the same border? The project sets out to answer those questions under the aegis of a statement by the Jesuit Michel de Certeau: 'The transformation of the archivist's activity is a starting point and requisite for the writing of a new history.' The problems of the archive are constantly referred to: 'The aim of this project is to link different archives and collections and make known both their existence and the work done during years of research among a wider public on both sides of the border and among the foreign visitors who come to InSite\_05, an art project held on the border between Mexico and the USA where Bauer's work is presented; in fact *Insight* is a pun on the name of this periodical artistic event. As a case study, the *Archivo Móvil\_Transfronterizo* could be moved to other zones on the dividing line between nations with the aim of revealing the structural similarities and specific differences of similar regions and allowing future debates on the mechanisms of archivist representation' or '*El Archivo Móvil\_Transfronterizo* sets out to review and consider the concept of archive and its mechanisms of representation. The project will involve various political spheres in a discourse aimed at thinking about what constitutes an archive. That discourse will stimulate critical analysis of archives, and will try to make evident complex questions generated from cross-border phenomena' or 'more than a notion of archive as a closed entity, the archive must be understood here as an open, continuous process which includes the production of new materials. The *Archivo transfronterizo* will have a transdisciplinary perspective and will include material that refers not only to the state, the border, the immigration policies, races and cultural diversities that make up its framework, life in these frontier zones and everyday existence.' The order of the answers tries to uncover histories that do not correspond to official histories and with them to create a morphology that allows them to be compared with other border zones around the world. The archives to be reviewed revolve around subjects such as Environment, Migration and Human Rights; Identity, Gender and Women's Rights, Work (in its regional relation to globalisation); and Youth Culture. They are recurring themes in the work of this German curator. In other projects of hers such as *Architectures of Discourse* or *First Store-Women Building* or *Komplex Berlin*, her development of the Berlin art biennial, in all of them she returns in different ways to the different forms of construction of the archive and gives importance to alternative community archives, the ones that house a history that has been displaced from official history, also enabling a reading of those archives that tries, by various means, to re-read them by distancing itself from the centre of power that has constituted those archives.

We note that the *Ute Meta Bauer* entry might be an exception in the thesaurus of entries we were going to deal with. In the game of archives we have been setting up, one more Chinese box opens up. If *Files* includes *F.X. Archive* and viceversa, they are both part of this dilemma represented in the field of the archive by the *Ute Meta Bauer* entry. It is not a matter of choosing between accumulative model *Files* and accumulative model *F.X. Archive*; it is a matter of showing their differences. The *Ute Meta Bauer* entry, then, works as a question about the inclusions and exclusions of different archive policies and about whether they operate on information or taxonomy.

It is unthinkable that we should have come this far without mentioning Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish* or *The Archaeology of Knowledge* are books on which this essay is pivoting. History of disciplines and of discipline. The archive as a prison of knowledge, as an institution of punishment of knowledge, as a space for taming history. The archive as the constitutive space of the city, from the emblematic scenes that show libraries as a metropolis to the last scene of *Citizen Kane*, where the protagonist's memory is transformed into an immense city of boxes waiting to be archived. Paintings by numbers work in the same way, following Georges Perec: 'All utopias are depressing because they leave no room for chance, difference, diversity. Everything is ordered and order reigns. Behind every utopia there is always a great taxonomic design: a place for everything and everything in its place,' which we have called *The Wefts*, and concrete hip hop poems - in the style now in fashion in the suburbs of Seville, although also the concrete rap written by Caetano Veloso - which circulate like fliers and which we have entitled *The Streets*. But how can a community not be suspicious of the very taxonomies that constitute it? How can the city leave out of archivist criticism the emerging archives that send it into a crisis and reinstate? How is the community not going to try to abolish any regulation, number or place and moment of classification? What city has been able to grow without erasing the signs that classify it, without burying them in the deepest archives? How were the anarchists not going to try to burn the ecclesiastical archives, the judicial archives, the property archives, the bank archives, the police archives, money, testamentary archives... if they wanted to found a new community?

That the terms 'archive' and 'anarchy' share the Greek etymological root *arkhe* - which means 'government' and thus 'archive', with government, and 'anarchy', without government - is still a kind of contradiction. When one thinks of creating an 'archive of anarchism', one is introducing a poetics rather than a scientific institution. The oxymoron is repeated when trying to archive the iconoclastic gesture that, in a way, seeks its own destruction. That psychoanalytic impulse recalls one of the many theses bandied about by Manuel Delgado in his essay *Las palabras de otro hombre*, an interesting study of violent anti-clericalism as a manifest form of misogyny. To all the symbology set out in the book we have to add that of the female character of memory, of the archive. It is the same reading that Julio Caro Baroja makes of the Autos de

Fe of the Inquisition, also an attack on memory, and which is specified in the autos against witches, against those women who represented the living archive on which authority aimed to impose itself.

As Foucault knew, the work of the archive demands suspicion of the archive itself. A reading of alternative archives more as a form of inversion of the official archives, a defence of marginal archives as an impugnation of canonic archives. It is not a matter of constructing other identities from the revelation of archives buried in the disciplinary institutions of society, but of calling into question, throwing down the archives of a history that claims to be unique and central.

In *Rebelión en Sevilla*, the man who was the last governor of Republican Seville, José María Varela, tells the story of Señorita Zero, a librarian and archivist of the city, a militant Catholic activist, whose hobby was jotting down the names of all those who were to be sentenced to death and going to visit them in their places of confinement so that she would be the one to announce the news of their imminent execution in person. The story of Señorita Zero goes like this: 'With a true missionary vocation she found, after 18 July, a missionary land at the very gates of her native Seville: the prison yards offered themselves as the China, the Japan, the India or the Congo of her dreams. There were the heathens. Hundreds of men without faith. Hundreds and hundreds of heathens on the eve of death. Hundreds and hundreds of souls she could snatch from the devil. Her heart leapt for joy when she received from Burgos that signed order which opened the doors of the prisons of Seville wide to her so that she could enter and carry out her missionary task with no hindrance whatever. Goals, gaolers, prisoners and regulations at her disposal. No hindrance for the angel who was going to announce the good news of the doctrine of the lord. Free flight for her wings. And she was the angel. She would be the angel for those wretches who, day after day, evening after evening, awaited her lined up in ranks, and saw her arrive, submissive, obedient, and who in that deep silence showed how great their respect for her was, she so insignificant, so tiny, her person so wrapped in holy modesty. "The new ones, aren't they? How many? How few today?" The remark depended on the number of neophytes. "Look. God has entrusted me with a great mission, me, so insignificant, so unimportant. You see who I am... Nothing, nobody. A zero. Nothing more than a zero. No name and no value whatever. Señorita Zero. Well, He in his infinite goodness has charged 'Señorita Zero' with no less than the salvation of your souls. He, who sees you in danger, who knows that you are in the gravest danger, wants to save you. And he is using me to accomplish that. He wants me to make you see the abyss you are plunged in and help you climb out of it. How? By preparing you to confess. By leading you, repentant, to the feet of the confessor. You've never confessed before, have you? Now you are in the hands of human justice and that cannot be merciful, as His is. That is why you must make haste. Today you are in this world; but tomorrow, perhaps this very night... Who knows? You are in God's hands, but He is now permitting you to be in the hands of human justice

and that is not so indulgent, nor should it be. What would become of us if the judges always pardoned, if they were not just, but harsh? You must, then, be prepared. I am going to prepare you..." She knew she was with fierce men, men who did not respect God or the authorities, neither divine nor human law, burners of churches, ravishers of nuns, torturers of priests... human scum. They were wild beasts, worse than wild beasts. She did not dare even look at them. But God gave her strength to stand before them and talk to them. And her stomach so delicate, without a murmur, without nausea, bearing that pestilent stench of cold food, of human rubbish. How God helped her! All these would confess a few hours later and tomorrow, if God allowed them to see tomorrow... all for divine mercy, of which she was a simple, tiny instrument... The devil's advocate, that would be my report if one day a move were made to canonise that Zero.'

## Premature Architecture

A thesis from 1985 claimed that Ciudad Badía could not be considered a city because of the total mobility of its inhabitants for work and leisure. The logic of those journeys, of that total mobility that would make Badia more of a camp, nevertheless did not extend to the field of sport. The building of a municipal sports complex on the outskirts, inaugurated in 1977, provided a space for pivoting the large number of social relations that eventually formed the Badia del Vallès residents' community. Although the complex was built on the edge of the city's radial perimeter (drawn in the shape of the Iberian Peninsula), from the very first day it became the most important symbolic space there, a kind of Atlantis if we continue with the play of geographical similes. The Badia sports complex was the largest sports facility in this part of the Vallès, while Barcelona Autonomous University adopted it as its students' own venue. The heated swimming pool and the football field became the spurs that 'mobilised' the people of the district. The membership numbers achieved by the managing body - only comparable in Badia to entities like the Peña Flamenca supporters club - and the success of its footballers made the buildings a model for the city, encouraging residents' associations, awakening municipal competence, and becoming a landmark for the citizens.

Likewise, we can observe a certain symbolic compensation between the fame of Badia as a city of crime and its efforts to be recognised for the sporting accomplishments of its inhabitants. The most significant case, of course, is that of Busquets, the outstanding goalkeeper of Barcelona Football Club, who bore his origins in Badia del Vallès as a permanent surname. Although his peculiarities - dissipated life, extravagances in the game, lack of discipline, etc. - often made that surname more of a suspicious nickname, the whole of Catalonia began to recognise Badia in the goalkeeper's sorties from the area, in his feints against opposing forwards, and in his kicks into mid-field.

The sporting antecedents we can find when establishing a prehistory of Badia would mean nothing in an orderly sociology of this city habitat. Nevertheless, the symbolic hypertrophy of our empty city does make it particularly important that Dr Moragas, husband of Elisa Badia, the owner of part of the land upon which the Badia housing estate was built, was the Barcelona team doctor and an institution at the football club. And that Miquel Badia, in the archaeological chain of owners of that land, should be the one in the Catalan Parliament to greet the representatives of the Popular Olympiad that was to have been held in Barcelona from 19 to 26 July 1936 and was aborted by the military coup. During those revolutionary days, the press emphatically recalled Miquel Badia's claim for football as 'a truly popular folklore and religion' and dubbed the German football team 'Ernst Thaelmann's eleven', as the players had joined the antifascist columns who were marching off to the front in Aragón. Miquel Badia's last public speech, which justified his anthropological arguments in favour of modern, socialist and popular sport, was the one published in the newspapers as a 'public defence of militias who played unusual games of football with the heads of wooden saints'; no doubt a reference to the events of the Holy Christ of Salomó, which we shall discuss later. The fact that the revolutionary Barcelona of those days should be inhabited by hundreds of participants - 6000 sportsmen and women and 20,000 spectators - in the sphere of socialist sport from all over the world who had gathered to celebrate the Popular Olympiad as an alternative to the official Games that had been manipulated and taken over by the fascist states, would leave a singular mark on some of the nationalist propaganda battles against the official government of the Republic. Those incidental combats provide the framework for the iconoclastic events in Salomó and some other effects spread by fascist propaganda. In the parish of San Antonio, in Madrid, two militiamen, the forwards Cachuca and Castorín, tore the head off the titular saint and played football with it. When the game was over, the 'centre forward' sat down to eat some sausage, leaning his chest on his rifle, which he accidentally fired. The bullet entered beneath his chin and blew his brains out, his massacred body falling near the headless image of the saint. In Barajas de Melo, in the province of Cuenca, all the images were decapitated and football tournaments were organised with their heads; in the later fascist repression the order was given for the reds to be shot in groups of eleven 'players'; in Los Vallares, province of Jaén, the images were mounted on fairground swings and the heads of the monastic saints, highly appreciated for the roundness provided by the tonsures, were used in various football matches in which women also took part. Many of them had their heads shaved after the war and though María Esteban escaped, her hair was falling out until the day she died, etc.

Monseñor Montero Moreno had already pointed out that 'aware, in the end, of the main practices of Catholic worship, there was always someone who would imitate one of them in those burlesque episodes'. But the importance of those stories takes things much farther. As Manuel Delgado says, there

is an absolute symmetry between the stories of the discovery and adoration of the images and the stories of their persecution and destruction, which gives the iconoclastic event an exemplary character. The fact that the 'divine vengeance' for the anticlerical aggressions should find symbolic fulfilment similar to that of the aggression itself confirms that those stories mark a form in the behaviour of the collective, a form which has come down to our day in incidents of a sporting nature. The point now is not to mark football and other mass sports as repositories of the structural violence that shakes our societies but to observe how the forms of that violence are necessary for the constitution of our community, whether they appear in the garments of the festival or those of political and social conflict. The events in Salomó, in the province of Tarragona, can be understood as a correlative of the symbolic adjustments that sport traces on the community, as we are recounting in *The Empty City*.

'Salomó was known throughout Catalonia for the existence and veneration of a miraculous Holy Christ. When the persecution of 1936 broke out, the venerated image was the great target of the revolutionaries against God. It was taken to the football field, the property of the Parish, and satanically destroyed and burned, except for its right hand, which, piously picked up and kept safe, is the one on the reproduction that replaced the one profaned in that persecution. Later, on that football field where the Holy Christ of Salomó had been burned, wheat was sown. And everyone could see, some with devotion and others in fear and trembling, that where the wheat grew the strongest it did so in the shape of a cross, on the exact spot where the image adored by some and hated by others had burned.' Thus the story is introduced in *Màrtirs del Penedès* by Salvador Novell i Bru in 1984. Various versions of the story are given later: where the wheat does not grow is the very spot where the Holy Christ was burned, leaving a hollow in the shape of a cross; a game of football was played with the head of the Holy Christ before it was burned and the sacrilegious man who played in goal lost his right hand in the war; the only thing that remained of the Holy Christ was the round crown of thorns worked in silver, which was given as a trophy to the winner of that sacrilegious football match; another even more distant and cruel, the parish priest of Salomó, Martí Francàs Escaler, was caught in a nearby wood, where he was sadistically martyred: his genitals were cut off and a game of football was played with them before his eyes. An enlightened version of these mythological events is given by Antoni Virgili, a historian who is currently the local chronicler in the town of Salomó and whose account, not free of curious scientific explanations, reads: 'I have had the good fortune to have spoken to eye witnesses and people who were present at the riots that ended with the profanation of the church of Salomó and the chapel of the Holy Christ since; although they were very young, they learnt "a hand" to those who were orchestrating those events. At night, after dinner, the sympathisers of the Revolutionary Committee met and set about burning everything there was in the church. They burned the high altar on the spot and also set fire to the chapel of the Holy Christ, burning the

paintings and altarpieces in the lower part. They took the rest outside and burned it on the football field. They threw the Holy Christ on the fire whole: they did not cut off the hands or the head and, therefore, no-one played a match with it. A rumour did go round that they had done so, but it is not true. People also said - more in the neighbouring towns than in ours - that when the image was thrown onto the fire the flames that shot up lit up the night for a time: none of that happened, of course. They threw the rest of the wooden material onto the bonfire: benches, altars, images, and so it burned for hours, creating a thick layer of ash, which even burned the earth. For that reason, when the fields were sown - it is true that they turned it into a ploughed field although it had been made into a playing field in 1934 - the wheat barely sprouted in the circle where the bonfire had been. And so it is not that the wheat grew more strongly or in the shape of a cross in the place that was burned, but that it barely sprouted, and there was no shape of a cross or anything like it, but it was due to the fire itself, which had left the earth barren. As for the crown, we will take a photograph when we have steps high enough to take a good picture, from close enough, but we shall have to wait to undo the scenario of the Dance of the Holy Christ, which is when we shall have everything necessary.' The crown of thorns, the only thing that remains of those events, is the one we have printed on the balloons that enliven the *Premature Architecture* entry of *F.X. Archive* The Dance of the Holy Christ is a folk celebration that is still observed in Salomó and we believe that the football match in 1936 acts as a mirror story for it, a countercultural myth in the most literal sense of the word.

The Dance of the Holy Christ represents with music, spoken texts and dances a mythological story about the construction of ties in the community from the acceptance of new trading practices in the feudal economic structure that characterised the city and the legitimacy attained in the eyes of religious authority, in other words, a story about the introduction of modern capitalism and the acceptance of its practice by the Catholic church. The narrative tells how the merchant Josep Nin - with uncertain Jewish origins helped by the toponym Salomó and its coat of arms with the seven-branched candelabra - rescued the image of a crucified Christ that he found abandoned in the stores of a Mahometan trader on the coast of Algiers. The journey to the land of the heathen was made because of the famine that was laying waste the land, and exceptionally wheat was purchased from the heathen in exchange for gold coins. The merchant had to choose, however, between the wheat and the image, and in denial of the merchant's reputation for usury he chose, not without some divine intervention, the wooden Christ. The most surprising scene takes place in the miracle before the Muslim governor in which the image of Christ is placed on some scales with the gold coins on the other side. With just a few coins, the weight of the gold exceeds that of the enormous wooden crucifix, thus resolving the issue, and Josep Nin returns to Salomó with the wheat and the Holy Christ. Of course, after that event the fields in the district grow wheat again and the merchant is given all the honours of the city. That

alliance is sealed with the fire of the lamps that will forever light the Holy Christ, fuelled with oil from the lands of the Nin family. The performance also has all kinds of dramatic and choreographic ingredients, among them the great acrobatic figure in which the community imitates the figure of the Holy Christ outweighing the gold and crowning the mount of his altar. Although modern performances have reduced the violence of the dances, their historical references - before the current historicist updating they were subjected to by Fabià Puigserver and the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona - show a continuous adaptation to the fashions and affectations of each period. Likewise, the original text commissioned from Marc Fuster was renovated by the inclusion of contractual elements in each new version. And so the 1940 version by the parish priest Marçal Martínez includes the 'burning' of 1936: 'For centuries and centuries / never was mistreatment given to / and no-one made mock of / an Image of such worth. / Only the savage hordes / of accursed Marxism / bastard sons of a town / which was always a good Christian / broke so much respect / betraying Fatherland and town / and amidst sacrilegious mockery / burned the Holy Image.' Just one more detail remains, since the football field began to be used at the wish of the parish - which ceded the adjoining land for the purpose - from the end of the twenties and as a regulation ground from 1934. We must bear in mind that the Dance of the Holy Christ had not been celebrated since 1925 and that the football operation was carried out by the church to draw the faithful. The order and the Dance of the Holy Christ were not restored until 1939 and 1940 at the wish of the Falange Española de las JONS, unless we count the exceptional reverse celebration three years before, since we can agree that nothing else was celebrated with the popular assault, rescue and burning of the Holy Christ in July 1936.

The *Premature Architecture* entry in *F.X. Archive* illustrated by a photograph of the crown of thorns, adorned with plant motifs, worked in silver and vaguely disfigured through having been thrown onto a blazing fire, naturally refers to the chain of events that we have been recounting so far. Of all Isidoro Valcárcel Medina's presentations that bear that name, perhaps morphologically we should choose the *Building for the Unemployed*, the *House of the Wind* or the natural *Earth-Air* project, but the association with the generic *Municipal Stadium* and *Monuments Square* he planned for the city of León in 1990 is immediate. The file as it appears in *Comings and Goings of Valcárcel Medina* reads: 'The municipal plan to move the football stadium to a less central area has been received here with an enthusiasm that clarifies certain realities. The old ground will be used to concentrate the so-called "Monuments Square", all the statues, images, monoliths or whatever that are dotted, or could be dotted, around the city. The usefulness of the measure is clear insofar as one visit will be enough to bring oneself up to date with all the monuments of the city. As far as the stadium is concerned, it has been proposed according to another of the author's projects on the change in regulation and organisation of football facilities and competition venues. Emphasis has

been placed on security measures (moats, police, separation of fans...) and first aid (doctors, surgery, helicopters...). At the same time the spectator's autonomy has been reduced to a minimum in order to hinder his natural "fury".'

We have to understand Valcárcel Medina's proposal as part of a process of identification of his artistic ideas with those of the city. The selection of images for his *State of Siege*, from 1994, made by José Díaz Cuyás may serve that purpose: 'The art public is the citizen, in the noblest sense; in other words, he who is in the city. / It is a different thing to leave the city to enter the place of art although, of course, that place is in the city. / It is that leaving the city so as not, in fact, to leave it shows the nonsense of urban, urbanised art and, by similarity, art as an element of urbanity. / I feel an imperious need to establish a link between the public and the space occupied by them, their space, which thus becomes public space. / The urbanisation we are undergoing is, however, the farthest thing from a city... / And as art is urban ground, we - urbanised without an *urbs* - become that nonsense I was talking about / We show at every step that we are uprooted from reality. But not uprooted in a literary aspect, but in a real one. We are really uprooted because, precisely, we are uprooted from reality. / If I leave for the city from my place of rootlessness, it is not that I am doing the opposite of what I have said: (leaving the city to enter the place of art), no; it is that, if I want to enter, I need not (or I do not have to) leave, because all is and is found in the city.' Understanding his work as the construct of a vast city, we would assign to *Premature Architecture* the space and place where the symbolic triggers the endless struggle of agonistic games, the unstoppable speed of aggressive competition, the construction of capitalism on the basis of the competitiveness of the social group. But in Valcárcel Medina the expression of that struggle between uneven forces, the exhibition of that field of tensions is simply shown. To liken monumental statuary and football competition in a single paradigm could not be more obvious to the eyes of the sociologist or the cultural anthropologist.

And so it is important to learn Valcárcel Medina's tool, which we are going to make our own. The point is to add his paradigm to our story to try to understand how agonistic games - sports, competitions, role-plays, etc. - embody the social body in their symbolic deployment, construct the forms and life of the city, weave the relations of the community marking the economic, political and social character that constitutes them. It is not that they have to choose, like a modern Don Juan, between being a statue or being a sportsman, between being a football player or being a monument. As José Díaz Cuyás points out: 'His *Premature Architectures* are a paradigmatic example. In them two contradictory systems - two reasons - which the city keeps active and in a permanent battle confront one another, that of the common utilitarian logic of the building and that of the private and privative logic of the public construction. Nothing more opposed to utopianism, to the imagined desired, than those architectures linked to what their author defines as an art of the obvious, in other words, that art that would

consist of showing what is evident, not what one brings with one, but what is there before everyone's eyes.'

Let us replace Cachuca and Castorín, the militiamen punished for playing football with the head of St Antony, with the figures of Christopher Lasch and Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio and let us put them on the playing field. We will concentrate on a single play, the one that deals with the agonistic quality of the game and its importance in the modes and forms that make a community. No-one denies those ties, though their quality is gauged in a different way. Ferlosio's attacking play comes from one of the essays in *El alma y la vergüenza*, entitled *El deporte y el estado*. Lasch's sudden counterattack is in his essay *La cultura del narcisismo*, to be exact *El ocio como escape*, the last chapter of the part entitled *La degradación del deporte*. I should say that the plays are presented with some modifications, but basically they respect the game plan of both trainers. The most artificial part of it, the theatrical nexus that unifies the two texts, is no dramatisation but a reflection of the two authors' taste for shouting when it comes to discussing sport.

'But the fact that agonistic sport, in the repetitive and unlimited succession of its own internal vicissitudes (like, for example, the results of the matches or the breaking of some speed or idiocy record by thousands of a second), cannot be considered of public interest in no way means that the invasive and crushing existence of sport as a social phenomenon is not, especially the unprecedented atrophy attained by football, with its alarming power as a one-track-minded obsession-inducing demerger of the masses and, moreover, protected and promoted under the concept of state interest. You cannot imagine how even my friends reacted when once I happened to say - though concealing the unilateral nature of the statement behind the warning "to put it in the elementary, expeditious jargon of the students of '68" - that mass agonistic sport is intrinsically fascist! It is true that, dispensing with Greco-Roman antiquity, the agonistic passion had its games peculiar to each nation in the modern era, but it was only after the internationalisation launched by the restoration of the Olympic Games when the states began to take an interest in their champions. Nevertheless, after the experience of fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, which discovered and exploited agonistic sport as a formidable educational instrument for the most fervid corraling of the masses in ultranationalist hubris, it is strange that democratic states have not looked with fresh suspicion and reconsidered with greater circumspection the very origin of agonistic sport, but have given themselves over unreservedly and even enthusiastically to its cult and dedication. To some extent, it may be simply put down to the fact that a state, however democratic it may be, does not lose the servitude of prestige, and once victory at sport has been set among the "obligatory prestiges", no state can afford to renounce it, and all the less if, as in the Cold War, it was "scoring a goal" for democracy against totalitarianism. However, I believe that there is another deeper, more important reason for states to foster the cult and cultivation of mass agonistic sport: its instructive value for moral education and for the demands for social adaptation best suited

to liberalism and the market economy. Once again, therefore, we find ourselves looking at an issue of social education. If the cult and exercise of pure antagonism void of all meaning or content other than victory as an end in itself, as is proper to agonistic sport, made that the ideal education for Nazi nationalism, as a pure impulse to domination, and for the conception of politics, according to Carl Schmitt, as a matter of "friends or enemies", then the agonistic mentality (the "predatory temperament" of the old master Veblen) that sport teaches and nourishes occupies a central place in the capacities that allow the individual to triumph in the free competitive market. And it had to be the newspaper *ABC* that, in its issue of 9 July 1996, pointed out that second and admirable educational exemplariness of agonistic sport, in a zigzag on Induráin from which I extract these words: "They say that the magnificent Navarran cyclist has never been to the liking of *socialism*, insofar as that sickly system always ranted against individual excellence because it set a 'bad example' for its fellow citizens and set about inventing that 'engine of history' which is 'egalitarian envy', the best way for nations to end up going nowhere and exhaust and consume themselves in their own motionless, dozy mediocrity." The author of those lines forgot that left-wing regimes have nurtured mass agonistic sport with no less watchfulness than the fascist regimes and that not even Fidel Castro had the elementary decency to withdraw his athletes from the Olympic Games in Mexico City after the vile slaughter of left-wing students in the Plaza Mayor, so valuable did he consider for the prestige of the state - which was virtually equivalent to his own - the medals the Cuban champions might manage to win! Be that as it may, it is no less true that liberalism can extol the supreme values of agonistic sport for free market societies, enlightening them with their all too familiar string of virtues: the will to self-affirmation and self-fulfilment, the desire to surpass, the aspiration to excellence, the ardour of competition, the love of work, the spirit of sacrifice, indifference and resistance to effort and pain... all of them, in the end, simple functional perversions that are common to the Hellenic and Christian cultures or taken from one or the other... I have always thought it fairly unlikely that the fascistic essay *El origen deportivo del Estado*, dated by Ortega twenty-five years after the publication of the *Theory of the Leisure Class*, by Thorstein Veblen, could well have been written deliberately against it. Well, it was in those very pages by Ortega that I discovered that the word 'ascetic' was taken by Christianity from the Greek word *askesis*, which referred to the harsh training exercises the Greek gymnasts subjected themselves to to turn their bodies into instruments of victory. And so there would be some kinship between the gymnasts of Hellas and the 'athletes of Christ' or 'of the Faith', even confirmed apparently by certain practices of the first Christian ascetics, hermits or especially stylites, who challenged one another in competitions, for example to see who could last the longest fasting on top of a column, with only the day and night for roof and shelter. But those competitions are merely incidental; the important difference is that while for the Greek gymnast the body must be

cared for, strengthened and trained as a specialised instrument for the agonistic function, for the Christian ascetic it is the 'beast' that must be crushed, lacerated and mortified for the greater freedom of the life of the spirit, dedicated exclusively to God. However, the main thing is what remains in common: the appetites of the flesh and the passions of the soul, 'disordered' by definition, must be subdued and repressed like a despicable mutinous rabble until they have been subjected to the will and command of the captain, whether the *logos hegemonikos* of the stoics or the ferrule of Christian holiness... Indeed, originally they would be no more than the ends of mastery of oneself and contempt for the weaknesses of the soul and the flesh; the grim self-satisfaction of mastery of oneself and punishment of one's own flesh foreshadowed the furies of domination, just as now it is that evil passion for victory that feeds the 'spirit of sacrifice' of athletes. And if the church itself has bestowed its blessings on the 'Olympic spirit' of Atlanta, it is because in the heightened and admired nobility of the 'spirit of sacrifice' of the athlete, who subjects his body as if it were his own race horse to all the punishment and effort required to carry it to victory, he feels the great moral satisfaction of glimpsing the old kinship that joins him to the dirty, resentful self-satisfaction of the flagellant who discharges on his own body all the hate that has been instilled in him for the clean joys of the flesh and the warm recreations of love... 'And the people, what are they saying lately?' someone asked in one of Chumy's jokes. And the other one answered: 'They're still saying the same thing: Gooool!'

'The anguished outcry of the true fanatic - who brings to sport a notion of what is reverential only to discover the corruption inside it due to the spread of the "entertainment ethic" - better illustrates the degradation of sport than the reservations of the left-wing critics who aspire to abolishing competition, highlighting the value of sport as an exercise that promotes health and provides a more "cooperative" concept of the activity; who, in other words, want to make sport an individual and social therapeutic tool. The previous analysis, however, minimises the scope of the problem and distorts the cause. In a society dominated by the production and consumption of images, no aspect of life can remain immune to the invasion of spectacle. And the responsibility for that invasion cannot be attributed to the spirit of unmasking. It emerges, paradoxically, from the very attempt to create an autonomous sphere of recreation, uncontaminated by the world of work and politics. By their very nature, games are always situated on one side of working life; nevertheless, they retain an organic link with the life of the community due to their capacity to dramatise reality and supply a convincing representation of community values. The old connection between game, ritual and public festivities suggests that although the games take place within arbitrary boundaries, in spite of everything they are rooted in shared traditions to which they give objective expression. Sporting and athletic competitions are a dramatic footnote to reality, not an escape; a lofty restaging of community traditions, not a repudiation of them. Only when games and sport begin to be

valued exclusively as a form of escape do they lose their capacity to supply us with that escape. The rise of an escapist conception of "leisure" coincides with its organisation as an extension of the production of commodities. The same forces that organised the factory and the office organised leisure, reducing it to a mere appendix of industry. In accordance with that, sport was dominated not by an undue emphasis on triumph, but by the desperate urgency of avoiding defeat. The trainers, and not the captains, of the team organise the game, and the managerial apparatus makes efforts of every kind to abolish risk and uncertainty, which is what contributes so fundamentally to the ritual and dramatic success of any competitive activity. When we can no longer play any sport with suitable commitment, the sport loses the capacity to exalt the spirits of both players and spectators and transport them to a higher plane of existence. Prudence, caution and calculation, so prominent in everyday life but so opposed to the sporting spirit, begin to mould sport as they mould everything else. While deploring the subordination of sport to entertainment, our author takes for granted that separation of work and leisure that originally brought about that invasion of the game by the criteria of the world of work. He does not notice that the degradation of the game comes from the degradation of work, which in turn creates the need and the opportunity for commercialised "recreation". As Huizinga suggested, it is precisely when the recreational factor disappears from work, from the art of government and other cultural expressions, that men do not turn to games to provide a dramatic restaging of their everyday lives, but go in search of amusement and sensations. Here games and sport, far from being considered too seriously, as Huizinga mistakenly concluded, become "something with no consequences". As Edgar Wind shows us in his analysis of modern art, the trivialisation of art was already implicit in its modernist exaltation, which meant that the experience of art will be more intense if it takes the spectator out of his routine habits and concerns. Modernist aesthetics guarantees the social marginal status of art while exposing it to the invasion of commercialised fashion: a process which culminates, through a curious but inexorable logic, in the postmodern demand for abolishing art and subsuming it in reality. The evolution of sport follows that same pattern. The attempt to create an autonomous domain of the purely recreational, absolutely isolated from work, gives rise to the opposite: to an insistence, in our authors' terms, on the fact that 'sports are not separated or apart from life, nor are they a singular "wonderland" where everything is pure and sacred and aside from criticism'; it is a matter of business, subject to the same criteria and held up to the same scrutiny as any other business. Our authors' positions are symbiotically interrelated and both emerge from the same historical development: the irruption of spectacle as the dominant form of cultural expression. What started out as an attempt to clothe sport in a religious significance, and indeed to turn it into a surrogate religion, culminates in the demystification of sport itself, in its assimilation to the world of show business.'

We will deal with both game plays alike following Giorgio Agamben's reasoning concerning Walter Benjamin's *Capitalism as Religion*: 'We might say that capitalism, taking a tendency already present in Christianity to the extreme, generalises and absolutises the structure of divisions that define religion in all spheres. Where sacrifice marked the passage from the profane to the sacred, now there is a single, multiform, incessant process of separation that absorbs everything, every place, every human activity, to divide it from itself, and which is totally indifferent to the sacred/profane, divine/human caesura. In its extreme form, the capitalist religion produces the pure form of separation and nothing remains to be separated. An absolute profanation which leaves nothing behind coincides with a consecration that is equally vacuous and integral. As is the case with commodities, where the separation is inherent to the very form of the object, which is split into use value and exchange value, and is transformed into an ungraspable fetish; and so everything that is activated, produced and lived - including the human body, including sexuality, including language - is divided from itself and dislocated in a separate sphere, which no longer defines any substantial division and where all use becomes for ever impossible. That sphere is consumption. If, as has been suggested, we call the extreme phase of capitalism we are living through spectacle, where everything is exhibited in separation from itself, then spectacle and consumption are the two sides of the same impossibility of use. What cannot be used is, as such, consigned to consumption or spectacular exhibition. Which means that profanation has become impossible (or at least it requires special procedures). If profaning means restoring to common use what had been separated in the sphere of the sacred, the capitalist religion in its extreme phase signals the creation of an absolute impossibility of profanation.'

If we return to the art of the obvious, after reading these lines we can understand that the gesture contained in our *Premature Architecture* was right in formulating itself as a criticism of separation. In a city where everything is art, the coincidence of the public statuary and the football stadium is not an accusation of the spectacular character of football or its economic dimension, as symbolic capital administered and manipulated by the powers of the state, but an ironic call to intervention in the *res publica*, in the citizens' republic, in the common, just there, acting on the elements that construct the community. That is why when we reconstructed the story of the destruction of the Holy Christ of Salomó it was unthinkable to do so without considering the possibility of the football match. As in the case of the collective dances of the Dance, the possibility of the game is there and so is the possibility of playing it in community.

On the coasters we have entitled *The Plan* those models of sports associationism are developed for work in cooperation. The point is to extrapolate the work done in Badia del Vallès, the city with the highest percentage of residents' associations in Spain. What underground line links the Club Futbol Sala La Sardana de Badia del Vallès with El Caracol Maya,

an association for solidarity with the indigenous communities of Chiapas? Or Club de Fútbol Veteranos Atlético Troya de Badia del Vallès with the Associació Catalana d'Amics del Poble Saharai? They are traces that naturally cannot be seen without irony, without laughter, without a certain mockery. Lines that cannot be understood without the spirit of the game. Why should it seem so absurd to compare Indymedia with Associació TIC (Tecnologies de la Informació i les Comunicacions) Badia del Vallès? What unbridgeable gap makes it impossible to compare Hangar with the Associació de l'Art de Badia? Where is the impossibility of granting a common territory to madeinbarcelona and the Associació socio-cultural PROBVOS de Badia del Vallès?

Eduardo Galeano says: 'In its present form, football was born over a century ago. It was born speaking English, and it still speaks English now, but now we hear it praising the value of a good sponsor and the virtues of marketing, with the same fervour that before it praised the value of a good forward and the virtues of dribbling. Championships answer to the name of whoever pays. The Argentinian championship is called Pepsi Cola. The world youth football championship is called Coca-Cola. The intercontinental clubs tournament is called the Toyota Cup. For the fan of the most popular sport in the world, for the enthusiast of the most universal of passions, the club shirt is a sacred mantle, a second skin, another chest. But the shirt has also become a walking advertising hoarding. In 1998 the players of the Rapid Club in Vienna showed four slogans at once: their shirts bore advertisements for a bank, a business and a make of car, and their shorts advertised a credit card. When River Plate and Boca Juniors play in Buenos Aires, the classic of Argentinian football, Quilmes plays against Quilmes: both teams wear on their shirts the brand of the same national beer. At the height of globalisation, River also plays for Adidas, and Boca for Nike. And, to put it bluntly, we can say that Adidas beat Nike when France beat Brazil in the final of the '98 World Cup.'

For The House we decided to work on a particular case in the dynamic of competition in Badia del Vallès: the only 'liberated' apartment in a city where one hundred percent of the apartments are subsidised housing. We must except the Guardia Civil barracks, which belongs to the Ministry of Defence, and this apartment, 5ª Calle Cantábrico, number 33, liberated by fraudulent means in the nineties and nobody knows how the crime was achieved. How to mark the only liveable space in Badia that plays in the free market? Has that peculiarity marked its physiognomy? Have its living conditions changed because of that liberal situation? Have any of its installations noted that economic surplus value on the market? Did the new rent assessment improve the working of its doors and windows? The only thing that occurred to us was to mark it with a dance, a dance that would measure its space, a device of gestures that could gather, not without a certain irony, these new intangibles. Never were traces so much like marks.

Enrique Vila-Matas says: 'When I read that what the footballer Saviola misses most in Monaco are the autographs he signed when he played for Barcelona

FC last season, I felt a sudden, sharp nostalgia for the days when I signed dedications for my books and was always complaining about how my readers exhausted me when in fact, if on some public occasion nobody came to ask me to sign, I was desolate, afraid that I had been forgotten.'

Of course, we are not talking about football; we are talking about how a city is made.

We began this essay with the claim that Ciudad Badia's condition as a city is denied on the grounds of the mobility of its inhabitants. In 1996 in *La ciudad nonata* Valcárcel Medina lectured us on the uselessness of that statement: 'According to that, our civilisation, which has been urban for centuries, is being deurbanised (and I say that in all senses of the word). But it is not happening as a result of the abandonment of the city, quite the opposite! It is happening because, while its volume swells ceaselessly, people settle in it with no urban spirit. The large numbers of people who, living in the city, repeat the journey on working days, as I said before, with no option of surprise, and on holidays they do not leave the house or they go on an outing... Those masses of people obviously do not live in a city... And I do not want to get into the idea that they really live nowhere; but it would not be bad to do an analysis of how the average man today lives his circumstantial changes of home. The fact is that he does not live them. And everyone here knows that nobody among those who "propagandistically" live in "nature", as they say, have stopped living in the city; they keep city hours and habits that are a repetition of the ones they have or had in their everyday life in the city. But in the end what interests us here is the "not living in the city" of its inhabitants; or, to be more graphic: of its users. Not using the city gives rise to the unused city; in other words, a useless piece of apparatus is dumped on us. And that apparatus, that inhabitation machine, that nucleus of coexistence, deteriorates through lack of use; the gears seize up, the arteries rust, the light is consumed uselessly. So that waste of fluid that has no *effect* is the *defect* fostered by the urbanite who does not feel like one. But he does not feel like a "citizen" because his life, which is inexpressive anywhere, does not allow him to live in the city, as it would not allow him to live in the country.'

## Descoberta da linha orgânica

This is *Descoberta da linha orgânica*, a canvas of ninety-by-ninety centimetres from 1954. It is a constructivist painting. Within this square, Lygia Clark has painted the spatial interplay between two other squares, one stable, on the bottom left of the picture, the other above, on the right, unstable, in motion, falling. It is true that it can be read in reverse, one square seeming to pour out its essence over the other. In both squares two loose lines freely trace that falling space, perhaps containing the discovery to which the title alludes. The fall of the square and its meaning in these lines that are pouring it, its organic meaning: here is

a discovery that will constantly mark the production of form in Lygia Clark's work.

An immediate reading led me to associate this 'fall' of Constructivism towards organic form with some images in *F.X. Archive* that depict the demolition of great religious monuments, with a heavy load of stone, images of destruction with strong symbolic overtones since their nature as a milestone, once constructed, now destroyed, is maintained. At first that association took us to the destroyed image of the monument of the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús in Antequera, in the province of Malaga, with its great smashed blocks of stone scattered on the ground in a diagonal layout, while to one side lay the main stone plinth. The meaning was the same, the collapse of a tower, of a little heap of stones aligned vertically. The fall of the tower, the fall of the square left a trace in the air, organic lines, curvilinear traces. The constructivist force of Clark's painting, in which the lines were rightly maintained as straight lines, faithful to the generating principle of the picture, gave rise to another interpretation. The destructive gesture was also a constructivist gesture, the point was not an opposition between the stony and the organic, it was a conclusion, a constructed, man-made discovery. And so, reviewing the abundant iconography of these sacred monuments destroyed at different moments of iconoclastic violence, we found in the photo cycle that provides a detailed illustration of the destruction of the monument in El Cerro de los Ángeles, in Getafe, Madrid, in the exact geographical centre of Spain, an image of workers hauling on a rope tensed by the power of a mechanical tractor with which they were trying to pull down the Monument. It was in the tension of the rope that we found an equivalent to the two aerial lines in *Descoberta da linha orgânica*. Little did we imagine the set of metonymies we were going to make between this group of photographs and the work by Lygia Clark.

*Arquitetura fantástica* from some ruins of the Monument on which a great iron beam transmuted into an angel's wing is poised against a drawing of a starry space, with half-destroyed figures cut out against the sky, while a soldier, with his rifle on his shoulder, is watchful. *Trepante* with the lines of shadows arranging themselves among the cracks in a great heap of stones, rocky debris from the destroyed Monument. *Arquiteturas biológicas-estructuras vivas* with a group of workers tied together by ropes, baskets and loose shirts (the same folds in the shirts and the carved stone) which bind them to the Monument that they are about to destroy with levers and drills. *Pedra e ar* with the organic image of a heart of Jesus, torn from among the emblems of the Monument, with some bullet holes, the crown crushing the representation of the entrails that are drawn in striations, also aureolas, also striations of destruction. *Máscaras sensoriais*, the face of an angel, detached from the Monument, whose nose, eyes and mouth have been mutilated, but which wears a more ecstatic expression precisely because of that damage. *Máscaras abismo*, a phallic shape corresponding to the head of Jesus that crowned the Monument, whose features have been erased by gunshots and blows, 'the stones that have fallen on it from above and the bullets that have pierced it from

below', since the militias had used it for target practice. It is this very image that we have printed on the packets of condoms, which, at the entrance to *Descoberta da linha orgânica*, can be filled with air or helium and let fly, climbing on high.

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the cult of the sacred heart of Jesus, oddly enough an attempt by the French to purge Catholicism of entrails, began to spread across Spain. The local clergy, especially the Jesuits, were determined to make the country a safe bastion. The idea of covering the national territory with these spires, phallic monuments with a sharp vertical elevation, placed on high ground and hill tops to the astonishment of Christians and people in general. The plan, brought into operation from 1900, consisted of turning Spain into a Monument. Indeed in many places the metonymy has reached the word and it is understood that by adoring the Monument one is in the presence of the sacred heart of Jesus. The bull's skin would thus be shot through in a kind of topological acupuncture that would banish the evils of a nation of nations in which secularism and open hostility towards the Catholic Church were on the increase. The Jesuit militia made great efforts with these public monuments and crowned the highest buildings in provincial cities with them, competed with the factory chimneys where the industrial fabric was being tentatively woven, adorned the highest mountains and threw their shadow over the urban masses of any city.

Symbolically, the consecration in Spain of the sacred heart of Jesus caused much controversy among a citizenry in search of self-government, already tired of the religious and military guardians who seemed bent on excluding the country from the new myth of modernity. The events around this hideous sculpture, its construction, its destruction and later reconstruction, were what stirred the need to extend the idea of the Monument throughout Spain over the twentieth century. The monument business began in 1919 and immediately became a national cause with the defence of Christ's precious vital bodily organ. It was erected on the so-called Cerro de los Ángeles, a chapel in Getafe dedicated to the Virgin of the same name, near Madrid, which was considered the geographical centre of Spain. The travellers who came to Madrid from the south could see its silhouette from far off: that was the intention, to symbolically occupy the magnetic centre – not in the polar but in the obscurantist sense – of the nation. A famous photograph of 1936 and the corresponding film sequence – a firing squad shooting at the Monument in the style of Goya's *Executions of 3 May* or rather, because of the perspective, of Manet's *Execution of Emperor Maximilian* – bear witness to the force of the iconoclastic event that led to the nationalist-Catholic military coup on 18 July of the same year. The suspicion that it was a theatrical montage in the service of the anarchist revolutionary cause has never been dispelled. Indeed the nationalist variant of the photograph, abused by European fascist propaganda, was indeed a photomontage in which the silhouette of Jesus on top of the Monument crumbled. A crude photomontage, it must be said, since the cutout of the photograph left its traces by

confusing part of the silhouette of the head with a cloud and giving the impression that not only were they emptying Christ's head but also putting a pair of horns on it. In *Langages totalitaires* Jean-Pierre Faye offers us plenty of proof of the importance of rhetoric in fascist propaganda, of how they convey the most disturbing effects in the way of saying things, far more than in the specific message they set out to denounce or exalt. That is why it is relevant to introduce the story summed up in the writings of Emiliano Aníbarro Espeso and Ricardo de la Cierva: 'The sequence conserved in Getafe opens with the photo that shows the shooting of the image of Christ by a squad of militiamen from Madrid on 28 July 1936 at the orders of a virago who barked out the order to fire. The same scene was repeated on the days that followed, on which the assailants clambered up the monument uttering coarse blasphemies and smeared it with aggressive daubs. But insult was not enough: demolition was required, and five successive attempts were made. The first at three on the afternoon of 31 July, the feast of San Ignacio de Loyola, when a few dozen militiamen (always from Madrid) laid several charges of dynamite on the altar and between the two sculptural groups at the sides. The charges exploded but the image did not fall. The following day, 1 August, and at the same time, the second attempt was made. The explosion was more violent, but the statue of the heart of Jesus remained standing. In their surprise, the assailants reacted with horrible blasphemies and left a guard by the monument before withdrawing. Nothing happened over the next three days, 2, 3 and 4 August. On the 5th, when a seagoing convoy from Ceuta managed to cross the Straits despite the attempt by the red fleet to prevent it, a hundred or so cars from Madrid drove up to the Cerro de los Ángeles, sacked the Convent of the Carmelites where they destroyed the images in the church, but did not attack the Monument. However they did so the next day, 6 August, when they tied the pedestal to a steel cable drawn by a powerful tractor; it was the third attempt, which failed like the others when the cable broke. Desperate at the new failure, they flocked to the town of Getafe where they seized piles of pickaxes, spades, chisels and hammers with which they returned to the Cerro intending to smash the statues to smithereens, with stone cutters' techniques. They caused some damage but the task seemed too long and they decided to make one supreme effort with better applied dynamite. The fifth attempt was consciously - a black consciousness - prepared for the morning of 7 August. Duly advised by "experts", the men and women of the Madrid militias climbed up to the Cerro armed with the most powerful drills with which they bored shot holes. At nine in the morning the three main charges exploded and the whole Monument was reduced to rubble. The demolishers celebrated their glorious victory with a sacrilegious masquerade in which the cry most frequently heard was "Beardy's down!" From that day on the Cerro de los Ángeles changed its name to Cerro Rojo. Once the Monument had been thrown down, those savages vented their fury on the most significant ruins. They did not notice that the relief of the heart of Jesus, on the breast of the image, had been spared

from the bullets, but they hammered the head of Christ to pieces, leaving it a shapeless, unrecognisable mass that even today is astonishing to see along with the other ruins that have been preserved.' That demolition was followed by many others. In *F.X. Archive* we have images of those in Antequera, which we have mentioned before, Montjuich and Comillas as well as others with no exact location in Andalusia, Aragón and Valencia. In his pamphlet *Estampas trágicas de Madrid*, Juan Gómez Málaga writes the caption of these images with an exclamation in which he wonders, 'How far did the new creations of the intelligentsia go?'

The association between this entry and Ciudad Badía starts from a chain of events. Of the three we are going to mention, the first is directly linked to the reconstruction of the Monument in the Cerro de los Ángeles. One of the companies that took part in the building of the Badia housing estate in the early seventies had been formed for that occasion and is known to have used prisoners of the regime who exchanged their labour for a prison sentence. The concession of the land for building had been made by Decree on 25 January 1963 and at that time the cement factory still had its headquarters in Getafe.

Secondly, a topographical coincidence resolved in the form of an anecdote. The first town plan for Badia included the construction of a building for Catholic services. Section D of the report reads: 'Religious use. A parish church will be located with a residential building attached on the plot named CP-1. The place chosen corresponds almost exactly to the geographical centre of the future city, easy to see and reach, and placed on the main axis that will run along avenida de Burgos. At present a suitable building project is being drafted and its immediate implementation by the national housing department is scheduled.' Circumstances led to the building of the church being abandoned due to mistakes in the calculation and indecision in the budget. In 1975 the parish of La Merced was housed in the huts used for the building of the housing estate, until 1979 when the church was finished. Of the initial construction all that remained was a chunk of concrete, the remains of the foundations that had been hastily abandoned and was known in Badia as *the stone*. Let us extract some information about that monument: 'The stone is a wall of cement which was placed opposite the Peña Flamenca supporters club hut. A piece of wall that rises at Calle Costa Brava and along avenida Burgos. A lump of cement forgotten by the people who built the city... There the first residents' meetings to prepare the occupations were held, the meetings of the anarchist groups and the rehearsals of some local rock bands... There Clara and Luís fell in love, so did Carmelo and Esther, Joaquín and Antonia, Samaniego and Carmen... It was a meeting point. There we created the Aljamía band. We sang *El cóndor de los aires*, *La verja de Barro*, things like that. Luís saw us from the balcony of his house and came down with his guitar, that's how we met... The stone marked a whole generation. We met there in the evenings and Saturday afternoons: most of us were working, and naturally we had to go home early.

We were 18 and we were very anarchist. It was quite different from what came later. We could already make a criticism of Marxism... One day we went and they'd taken away the stone because of some works; we'd arranged to meet there and now, because of the town council, nobody knew where to meet... It was definitely the most important monument in Badia, the only monument, however much they want to find Romantic or Romanesque stones now, I'm not quite sure what they say it is... And as it was in the middle of the street, nobody said anything and they went and took it away, with machinery, because the chunk of cement was big and it was difficult... Where the stone was they've put a supermarket now, a Mercadona, and it's strange because people still meet up there.' The small publication we call *The Stone* tries to set up this story and recalls the monument.

The third follows this circumstantial method, perhaps moving the elements but repeating the argument. The film we have entitled *The Film* and which features the voiceover of seven women - Beatriz Preciado, Eva Serrats, Marina Garcés, Valeria Bergalli, Marisa García, Pamela Sepúlveda and Deborah Fernández - started from the following circular: 'You'll see, in 1975, the Badia housing estate - an old subsidised housing project that the late Franco regime planned as a hostel for the excess immigrants - was finished, but through an error in calculation nobody had thought about the drinking water requirements, and this delayed its allocation and possibilities of habitation for two years. At that time José Antonio de la Loma was looking for locations for his project *Perros callejeros*, a film about juvenile delinquents on the outskirts of the big cities, which development in Spain was throwing up as a new phenomenon. The film was half way between opportunism and a certain Pasolinian sensibility, a project - since in the end it was a whole series of films - that was the offspring of a certain Christian paternalism, since the idea was that most of the actors, El Torete, El Vaquilla, etc., should be real delinquents. Indeed, in later films the director includes them in the plot in his desire to regenerate that lost youth. The film combines a whole load of moralising about redemption and the exploitation of sensationalist elements: violence, morbid curiosity, drugs, soft porn, etc. The fact is that the empty housing estate was the ideal setting - not the only one, of course, Barcelona itself, Hospitalet, Castelldefels, Gavà, Sant Adrià del Besòs or La Mina - for this first film: police chases and urban desolation found their ideal landscape in this city without people. When the film was released, from 1976 the Badia estate began to be inhabited. From the late seventies to the mid eighties, this city near Barberà del Vallès and close to Terrassa and Sabadell, was identified in the urban imaginary of Barcelona as a 'crime city' and an urban legend identified all the habitants as 'Gypsies', drug dealers and criminals. In a survey in the book *Ciutat Badia-Badia ciudad*, a resident of Badia referred to it: 'In fact, there's a film, *Perros callejeros*, that was shot in Badia and did Badia a lot of damage, and it was before people came, when it was still empty.' The official synopsis of the film says: 'A gang of kids, not sixteen years old, in a suburb of Barcelona have specialised in car theft. They also

engage in bag-snatching, robbing shops to sell off the goods cheap, assault on couples in secluded places to steal everything they have, and abuse of the women. Sometimes caught out in their misdeeds, they embark on ferocious chases with the police; they do not care what they do, driving up onto the pavement, in the wrong direction or jumping road blocks, and at times they are seriously injured. They assault an armoury and feel strong enough to rob a bank. The leader is called El Torete and among the members of his gang are El Pijo, El Chungo and El Fitipaldi, all regulars at the juvenile courts, whose outdated laws cannot put a stop to these boys' career of crime. From bad to worse, El Torete arouses the wrath of El Esquiao, a powerful Gypsy who controls the district. When he runs away with his niece and leaves her pregnant, El Esquiao sets a trap for him and metes out a cruel, exemplary punishment. Nevertheless, El Torete does not give up and after he has recovered, putting a tremendous willpower to the test, he takes one of the most terrible revenges, which in the end makes everyone aware that the problem is there and it has to be solved. A problem that is not restricted to the Catalan city, but is to be found in any excessively developed modern city.' Well, the synopsis hides more than it tells, for example, it is worth pointing out that the 'cruel, exemplary punishment' is no less than castration, which is also the main instrument of the revenge whereby El Torete, driving a Citroën DS, castrates and kills El Esquiao, smashing him over and again into a wall on a piece of waste ground on the outskirts of the city, splattering his body and his parts against an abandoned wall, a canvas covered with graffiti and slogans that were a faithful reflection of the political concerns of the community. And indeed, it seems that in all the cases listed we are talking about castration, emasculation, the mutilation of a phallic shaped figure, vertical, of the demolition of a Monument or, put in the affirmative, the *Descoberta da linha orgânica*.

I think we need not insist on the metaphor. A high tower that falls down and a monument that collapses are evident similes for castration. It has been repeated ad nauseam about the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York. However, clinical medicine can help us with a rather more complex approach to that architectural functioning of emasculation. One example: 'Clarck was in psychotherapy twice a week for two years more or less, before starting psychoanalysis of five sessions a week. Through the work on his psychotherapy and the first part of his analysis, we managed to reduce his social anxiety significantly, the moment when his natural talents and generally pleasant personality took him to major achievements in his field and a rapid advance in his work. We analysed his difficulty in standing with other people and giving presentations as based on a strong body-phallus equation, in which standing up was having an erection and therefore being in danger of it disappearing. The work on the oedipal implications of that symbolic equation and that fear led us in many directions and revealed a rich conscious and unconscious life fantasy about his body and his parents' bodies, about what would be found in the interior of a vagina, and an intense interest in certain

landscapes and architecture as body equivalents.' The patient, the architect Mr Clarck, not only showed that phallic impulse at a formal level, the symbolic efficacy of a town hall, a church, a police station or the local courts were also determined by the phallus-body equation in the style of the classic city centre. Even his house, in a middle-class district on the outskirts, suffered at times from that phallic identification, especially when he was outside it. The fact that Mr Clarck rejoined a normal family and working life after seven years of therapy – indeed, the analysis is still continuing – is encouraging for our metonymy but is no justification for what we are searching for. What interests us about the psychoanalytical account is not so much the accuracy of the diagnosis as the efficacy of the narration.

If, as Slavoj Žižek says reading Lacan, castration is Symbolic and 'through it the subject exchanges his being (an object) for a place in the symbolic exchange, for a signifier which represents it', and therefore castration can be strictly likened to Alienation, an alienation like the one described by Marxism, in the sense that the workers are alienated from their surplus value, a reading of castration that would coincide with Claude Lévi-Strauss' account that associates the myth of emasculation with processes of symbolic exchange, the 'castrated' subject being a subject stripped of all possibility of gift, with nothing to exchange but his own labour, the strength his body can provide – and here Marx. In that way, the subject, his 'castrated' body, becomes in himself the only possible object of exchange, the surplus value of pleasure Lacan proposes – pathology: the woman whose clitoris has been ablated has to learn to enjoy her symptom, the 'castrati' have to make enjoyment of their condition effective – comes from the 'sadistic' acceptance of reality, of facing the world aware of its cruel and exact dimension. There are a number of consequences of all this for the construction of any community. For example, that void left by castration needs to be filled with some kind of object that gives meaning, that provides the human group with the same interests, for example, the nation object – and here for Žižek is the reason for the rise of nationalism in the construction of any state. The democratic system itself would be accepted, in his words, 'What is to be done, then, in the face of this fundamental quagmire of democracy? The modernist procedure (linked to Marx, which consists of unmasking formal democracy, in bringing to light the way in which democratic form always hides an imbalance of contents) involves coming to the conclusion that formal democracy as such must be abolished and replaced by a higher form of specific democracy. The postmodern approach, on the other hand, would require us to assume that constitutive paradox of democracy. We have to adopt a kind of "active oblivion", accepting the symbolic fiction, although we know that "in reality things are not like that". The democratic attitude is always based on a certain fetishist split: I know very well (that democratic form is only a form stained by blotches of "pathological" imbalance) but in any case (I shall act as if democracy were possible). Far from pointing out its fatal defect, that split is the very source

of the strength of democracy: democracy can become aware of the fact that its limit is in itself, in its internal antagonism. That is why it can avoid the destiny of totalitarianism, which is endlessly doomed to invent external enemies to explain its failures.' Up to a point there can be no 'love thy neighbour' since that inevitably becomes a destructive hatred, since I love you but there is something that is more than you, the condition of the alienated subject made object, and so I mutilate you. That symbolic operation therefore demands a cyclical process of historical time for the community. The relationship established between castration and Oedipus is total in Lacan, whether the absence – castration – or presence – Oedipus – of the phallic centre, the relation with an empty interior space, something that is filled and emptied, is absolutely necessary in the process of construction of the community.

We might understand this story better from the one constructed by Susan Buck-Morss around the centre of the city of Moscow for her *Dreamworld and Catastrophe*. The failure of the constructivist project, of which Malevich's Suprematism is a sublimation, demands a refutation of time – to apply Debord's words, the best thing about the historical avant-gardes is that they are linked to their moment, 'a historical project cannot aspire to eternal youth protected from vicissitudes' – to which the revolution-reaction process of the community – which does not function dialectically but as the dislocated reel of an editing table – is not inclined. She writes: 'In the early 1930s a site was chosen in Moscow for the building of the Palace of the Soviets. The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, built to commemorate the Russian victory over Napoleon (and completed in 1883 under Tsar Alexander III) was dynamited in order to clear the ground. The destruction was filmed. After the Soviet Union collapsed, this short newsreel was shown in Russian theatres and on television "hundreds of times". One could say without exaggeration that this fragment today (1993) is the most shown piece of the Soviet Chronicle. In a significant number of films, the precise moment is shown in slow motion or repeated over and over... as perpetual... immortalized destruction. Construction of the palace began in 1939. It was interrupted when Germany invaded Russia. After Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech in 1956, plans for the Palace of the Soviets were abandoned definitively. On the site of "two non-existent buildings", the cathedral and the palace, a huge swimming pool was built. The Moskva open air swimming pool... almost in the city centre, open all year, in summer and winter, is generally and on first impression considered to be a pioneering move of town planning, not to drive people out of the stone landscape, but to give them more bodily exercise, more nature, sun and air. The pool is a gigantic circle... Swimming in winter, in the midst of an icy, snow-covered city, with curtains of steam spilling into the street, is both fantastic and daring – almost like wanting to pull down the banks in Wall Street to make room for kindergartens, as stated in a report of 1992. In 1994 the Russian government eliminated the swimming pool and began the restoration of the site of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, exactly

replicating its appearance of 1883. This project, completed in 1998, indeed played the course of history backward, mimicking in reverse the movie of the cathedral's demolition. In 1919 Kashmir Malevich had written: "One should have more regrets over a screw with a broken thread than over the destruction of the church of Vasili the Blessed."

Let us take another reading. For Félix Guattari castration is indeed a phantasm and a capitalist mode of regulation. A desire that bites into the forbidden fruit and interiorisation of bourgeois repression. Identification with Oedipus is also total, 'resignation to Oedipus, resignation to castration, girls renouncing the desire for the penis, girls renouncing male protest, in a word, "assumption of sex". That something common, that great Phallus, the Lack of two faces that cannot be superimposed, is purely mythical: it is the One of negative theology, it introduces lack into desire and brings out the exclusive series to which it sets an end, an origin and a resigned course.' And he goes on with Gilles Deleuze in the *Anti-Oedipus*: 'It will be necessary to affirm the opposite: there is nothing in common between the two sexes and yet they never cease to communicate, in a transverse mode in which each subject possesses both, but walled off, and communicates with one or the other sex of another subject. That is the law of partial objects. Nothing is missing, nothing can be defined as a flaw, as a lack; and the disjunctions in the unconscious are never exclusive, but are the object of an inclusive use that we shall have to analyse.' Basically, it is a matter of not accepting the dictatorship of reality in any of its appearances, as opposed to the individual construction that pivots in the presence - Oedipus, superego, etc. - or absence - castration, lack, etc. - of a centre the community multiplies i.e. the castration-erection of monuments is a broad, spatial and not only temporal movement, the demolition of the Monument is a gesture, an action that is trying to become a rule, continuously over and over again because it aims at the abolition of all centres, the rhizomatous expansion of the community. 'When the notion of group phantasm was conceived in the perspective of institutional analysis, the first task lay in pointing out the difference in its nature from the individual phantasm. It then appeared that the group phantasm was inseparable from the "symbolic" structures that define a social field as real, while an individual phantasm focused the whole of that field on "imaginary" data. If we extend this first distinction we see that the individual phantasm itself is plugged into the existing social field, but captures it under imaginary qualities that confer a kind of transcendence or immortality on it under whose aegis the individual, the ego, plays out his pseudo-destiny: what does it matter if I die, says the general, if the army is immortal. The imaginary dimension of the individual phantasm is of decisive importance on the death impulse, and so the immortality conferred on the existing social order involves in the ego all the cathexes of repression, emasculation, the phenomena of identification, of 'superegoisation' and castration, all the resignations-desires (to agree in general, to become a low, medium or high rank), included in them resignation to die in the service

of that order, while the same impulse is projected outwards and turned towards others (death to the foreigner, to those who do not belong to our group!). The revolutionary pole of the group phantasm, on the other hand, appears in being able to live one's own institutions as mortal, being able to destroy them or change them according to the structures of desire and the social field, when the death impulse becomes a true institutional creativity. So there lies the criterion, at least the formal one, between the revolutionary institution and the enormous inertia the law passes on to the institutions in an established order. As Nietzsche says, churches, armies, states, which of these dogs wants to die? From which one deduces a third difference between the group phantasm and the phantasm called individual: the subject of the latter is the ego as determined by the legal and legalised institutions in which "one imagines", to the extent that even in its perversions the ego adapts to the exclusive use of the disjunctives imposed by the law (for example, oedipal homosexuality). But the subject of the group phantasm is no longer anything more than its own impulses and the desiring machines that form with the revolutionary institution. The group phantasm includes the disjunctives, in the sense that each one, stripped of its personal identity, but not of its peculiarities, begins to relate to the other following the communication appropriate to partial objects: each one passes to the body of the other on the body without organs.' The community makes itself, in that continuum of emasculations and ejaculations, that diversity of the actions that make the social body free itself from the individual phantasm, from the death impulse that irremediably extinguishes the subject. The social institution moves forward despite that, does not have to subject itself to a centre and its 'nomadic wanderings through the empty spaces of the cities has the logic of its own meaning, now I open a hole, now I cover a hole, the riddled space of the community'. Guattari's criticism of the *architectural utterance* in *Schizoanalytic Cartographies* is based on that premise to make neighbourhood community spaces 'plateaued and pierced', with a thousand holes and a thousand plateaus, forgetting about the deep and the high if we want to make a community.

Let us return to our story, the *Descoberta da linha orgânica* entry in *F.X. Archive*, and to how, from the gesture observed in Lygia Clark's painting it was important to develop other entries in the thesaurus, to make it more complex than a mere iconoclastic action. In the chain of photographs and their corresponding entries, all titles of works by the Brazilian artist, it is made clear that the utterance they make does not have so much relation to the first story about castration but is fully identified with the second. Nevertheless, it is important not to lose the first link, very closed around the phallographic moment that Susan Buck-Morss is also narrating about Constructivism. In the constructivist painting *Descoberta da linha orgânica* a series of operations are triggered which can only be read in terms of community, in pursuit of the collective, multiple phantasm advocated by Deleuze and Guattari, from the works that follow in which emasculation is generalised until it acts in the orbit of cannibalism

and the organless body, following a logic of mutilations, which Georges Bataille had already pointed out as the set of mythological instruments required to construct society. It is interesting, because here Bataille was referring to these actions in an illuminist orbit, above and beyond the fact that they were performed in sacrifices to the Sun god or that some psychiatric patients mutilate themselves after having stared obsessively at the sun – here he has much to say about the painting of Van Gogh. I am referring to the fact that a positive, scientific if you like, spirit can be observed in these sacrifices. The observation is appropriate to the precise observations established by Guy Brett between the work of Goya and that of Lygia Clark. In the state where we find *Descoberta da linha orgânica* we can go even further into that climate in which Goya's work, full of group magic, organic caprices and castration of the senses is achieved in the atmosphere of the Enlightenment, responding positively to questions from that century, always trying to illuminate the issues and terrors that tormented him. Lygia Clark's relation to Constructivism is maintained in this sense and that is why her actions take the shape of group therapies, community cures and scientific ablations. The obsession of both artists with shutting down the senses is simply a response to the need to atrophy them, to broaden their field of action, to develop them to their maximum potential. Far from trying to hide the world, to escape from reality, those principles, developed in parallel to those artists by the different sciences of their respective historical times, aim to present it and not just represent it. The famous Goya adage 'the sleep of reason produces monsters' is a principle in psychoanalytic healing. And operating on those very same monsters.

What follows from Guy Brett's words swings between dream and verborrhea, between rhetoric and communal delirium. 'Nevertheless, the artist suggested holding a stone in her hand as "proof of reality" while the inner demons were being set free.' In a certain sense, Lygia Clark's idea seems to be that she was responding to certain objections made by Lacan-Zizek to the anti-oedipal interpretation of castration produced by Deleuze-Guattari. According to the former, the idea of the latter would be hidden in language, would overfly the world on the surface without descending into the Real and inexpressible world 'of blood and earth'. That second sense is clearly a reference to Heideggerian nihilism. Zizek points to the same definition when he tries to follow Vattimo in his definition of the work of Gadamer, whom he accuses of enabling the urbanisation of the province of nihilism only because he decides to operate in the fantastic terrain of language. 'Fantastic' where we suppose there is a 'phantasm'. Habermas's original recommendation went beyond that, when he proposed an 'urbanising work' for hermeneutics he was referring precisely to the limit it establishes in the consideration of languages, myths, signs, stories and that real world 'of blood and earth' ruled by Nothingness. That tension between the specificity of the real and the abstractions of languages is fundamental when it comes to defining the phantasm that constructs the community. Because they both agree – with Oedipus-against Oedipus, with

castration-in-erection, etc. – that it is a matter of making Community of a Phantasm and Reality at the same time. The discussion is important in terms of the work of Lygia Clark – 'My mouth opens, my jaw drops to the floor; with my hands I try to keep back the dribble that is running, to cut it off, bring it to a standstill, it continues to run without stopping, I am a heap of entrails. From within I now see from without, there appears the figure of a man with his arm cut off,' for example, cannot be structured around darkness – where reality hides – without operating from within language – the Phantasm –, from the frameworks of a specific precision for language, understood as the Enlightenment-Constructivism structure we have talked about. Guattari proposes to open up the frame of the world, to devastate Reality, to cannibalise it and resuscitate it made multiple. When Zizek denies that 'ecologists, feminists, pacifists and other social movements can aspire to constructing a community' without the pathological stain 'of the rest which has constructed our states: bourgeois democracy, totalitarian nationalism, etc.', he is only expressing a vacuous paternalism, a direct descendent of the phallus – Oedipus or castrated – on which he wants to turn a single, unique and universal phantasm. The timeliness of the work of Lygia Clark aspires to Reality by understanding that the Phantasm is always communal.

In an apparently innocent text on art and architecture from 1957, Lygia Clark says what organic lines mean to her and puts forward, with clearly constructivist ideas, what the constants of her work will be. But it is in the final anecdote, in the family scene described, that we find the most significant impulse for what we have been trying to tell. 'The artist will even be able to investigate according to lines which I would call "organic", functional lines of doors, variations of materials, fabrics, etc., to modulate the whole surface. I am going to explain how I use those lines in my works on show. The plastic problem is simply the "valuation or devaluation" of that line. It was from that observation that I found the relation between this line, which I investigated in pictures, and functional architectural lines. I set out to work "modulated surfaces" made of plywood, first cut in different sizes and studied, trying to integrate pieces of that real line with contrasting colours. The models are insufficient to illustrate the full problem because they only show a worked stretch, when the solution should cover the whole room. The artist must be careful, since human sensibility has its limitations in the face of an excess of colour. My experience is minimal, since in order to develop a practical application of the idea, I should be working with an architect and a sculptor (who would work in my way of seeing, in a functional sense, planning furniture, sculptures in the form of appliqués, etc.). The key question of the colours would be resolved by a psychologist, who would bear in mind the reactions of the individual to certain chromatic harmonies. The lines of variation of the materials themselves will provide the artist with an opportunity of modulating the whole surface of a floor, using that same line as a graphic module for a composition. In fabrics, the artists could base their work first on the width of the cloth, use that line of variation not just to modulate but also

to make a series of changes in rhythm, studying the possibility of inverting different strips of material. On stages in theatres, different rooms could be obtained with changes in the orientation of plates, which would be economically beneficial. On large staircases the line has its function, since it is created by the existence of two or more planes of the same colour. If they were polychrome, that false line of the planes would be partially or totally integrated. In prefabricated houses people could have various rooms, varied rhythms, once dynamic, chromatic panels had been made. In my opinion, this is the most revolutionary thing that will be presented in the near future, when new techniques and malleable materials will be available for the artist and the architect to plan man's future habitat. He will be the artist, totally integrated into the collective. He will also take part in the search, in which the man of tomorrow may compensate for his inner dissatisfaction by having a chance to own a habitat of his own, completely dynamic and mutable according to tastes and whims, even functionality. To think that this integration limits the artist is absurd, since he is looking for a harmony of rhythms within an equation proposed by the architect, which corresponds to the system used by specific painters who almost always suggest mathematical formulae to develop a particular rhythm. To conclude, I believe it is very important for young architects to look for a closer contact with visual artists to study and go deeper into this and other experiences of the same kind as have already been done. Do not call the artist at the end of a project, having that "patriarchal" attitude towards him of the miner of the hinterland who, offering his friend a good meal, leaves his wife behind the kitchen door, hearing eulogies of the food she herself prepared.'





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