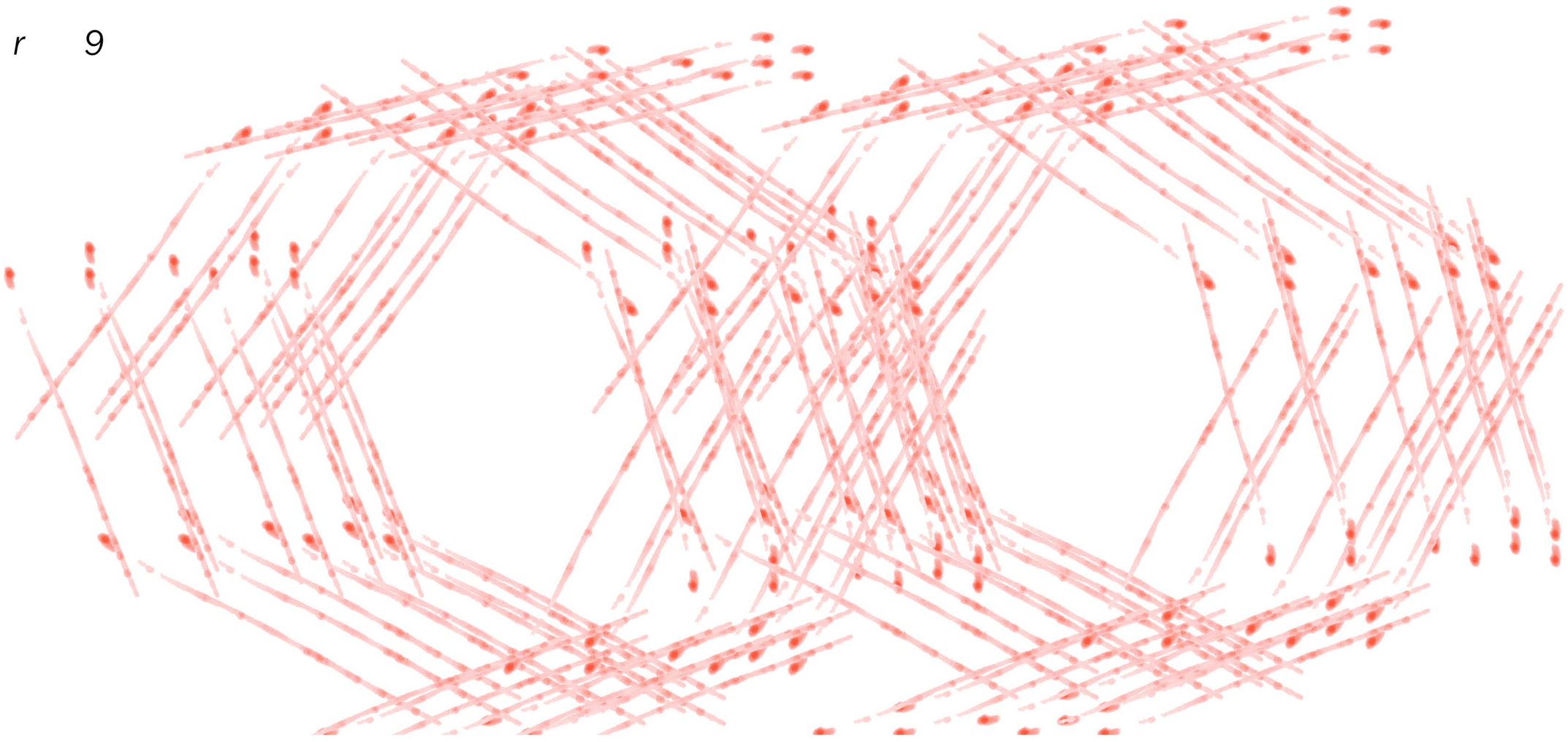
r h i n e l a n d

a r b o r 9



foreword

this issue covers a trip I made with *h* in germany in august of 2021. it is split into four *teile:*

heidelberg
konstanz, todtnauberg, und die schweiz
münchen
berlin

these four parts are each divided into four sections themselves consisting in, in order:

r, for rhineland
notes on kiefer
excerpts from badiou
badiouan essays, or *set pieces from a staging of the Absolute*

each of these four teile are themsevles divided into four teile, numbered as i, ii, iii, and iv.

r consists of four short memoirs, listing events and ideas as they took place in each place.

notes on kiefer is a collection of real-time notes made during the trip. the first part, *notes on kiefer i*, was originally published in *arbor 8*. here it is reunited with its missing three parts.

excerpts from badiou is an extended collection of passages from badiou's masterpiece *l'immanence des vérités*, organized with respect to their original ordering in the book. this book was among my constant companions during the trip and the chosen passages bear directly on the development of all the ideas in the other texts in this issue and on the concept of the trip as a whole. they are, however, untranslated, as no translation of the book exists.

the following text, *badiouan essays,* or *set pieces from a staging of the Absolute* provides an analysis of the respective passages, while facilitating a deeper meditation on the book as a whole as well as the relations of the trip to the book's concepts of infinity, finitude, truth, and the Absolute. they are in english, and are highly encouraged to still be read regardless of whether one has read or can understand the *excerpts from badiou*.

the final part of the issue contains three short ephemera. a piece from *h* herself, which is a sample from her own diary of the trip, entitled *die Angst des Verlegers beim Drucktag,* a reference to peter handke's book *die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter.* a short text entitled *antonio's proof* is included, which was the product of a conversation between *a*, *h*, and I, where one of my own philosophical improvisations regarding limits and failure spun out of control. the final text is a short poem from *a* written during his time in berlin.

we had many other companions during our trip. most important in the context of this issue were *v* and *a*. the former is one of the editors of arbor and an old chap from the early arbor days in edinburgh, while *a* is a friend *v* meant during his week in berlin and who was, in turn, introduced to *h* and I.

an appendix and an endword are included covering, hopefully, all citations.

the most important part of the issue is not textual, but visual. the *bilder* are a collection of, in some cases, highly warped, images from the trip. the *bilder* divide the preparatory memoirs of *r* from the remaining three text-teile. as such, in the contents, they are included as a divisional teil, meant not as a fifth teil as such, but as a inverted image of the text-teile.

the *bilder* provide the basis of the issue's aesthetic. they are inspired, in part, by the *berl berl* exhibition at the berghain which featured 3-d visualizations of the ancients wetlands of what is now berlin some ten thousand years ago. the warpings of the bilder follow a colloborative, but distingushable, set of logics.

some *bilder* are *mirrored*, opening the space of memory to a field of internal abstraction. objects, not originally included in the images, emerge as the product of these mirrorings and mergings, in some cases, *trees*, while, in others, *entrances*.

some *bilder* are mirrored and *inverted*, where a new field of colouring and object-abstraction emerges. these are almost ghostly traces of past objects and events, from *glowing paintings* to *ghost ruins*.

finally, some bilder are distroted, or over-exposed lightscapes. in mirroring and inverting these, entirely new lightscapes rematerialize in the memory of the place, while the bluring away of any distinct objectal presence transforms the bilder into fields of pure aura. these distortions fall into each other, creating an entirely new reality in the wounding of another.

reality, as such, is *already* a distortion. it is not that the mirroring

reveals new objects, but that it exposes within a given reality more of what is already somehow within it. the possibility of this distortion, in other words, implies that reality is already open, and is itself, in its current form, nothing but a universalized distortion itself.

these distortions have as their true subject memory and the subject-who-remembers. they appear almost as like the torturing of memory. the material projection of *rhineland* as it is caught up in the distortion of its remembrance and analysis. it is never untouched or settled. it presents material as the torturehouse of our attempt to include ourselves into reality, to remember coherently what has happened and *is* happening.

as new objects are created, these are stages for the unconscious, which circuits this new imaginative material through its own transferential support of two independent parts of reality. an *entrance,* the product of a mirroring, reveals something about the actual place imaged and those who are trying to remember. the entrance does not actually exist - it is purely virtual - and, as such, it is a fiction, which sustains the strange transfernece between the reality of the place as it is constructed in the image and its warping in the process of its being lived and remembered. the subject-who-remembers, after all, is never included in the place, which already exists *for it.*

the distortions are messages from the unconscious. they are messaging-system that attempts to re-include the subject who was already there, getting caught up in its own reflexivity. the *bilder* must be read as fictions in order to preserve *the real* of the touching of the unconscious they present and preserve. from the *tree of life* to the final *bild* of the Absolute itself, these fictions allows us to walk through an impossible, virtual relationship, sustained only by the transference between two separate points in reality, myself and the place I was in.

in touching the unconscious in these fictions, we uncover what has always already been behind anything like a put-together, real-reality: the reflexive twist of the unconscious to include us in reality - reality we are already processing, determining. as such, the unconscious merely reprojects our immanent effect on our place we take as a cause which sets itself against us. we are the *cause.* this is our boundedness with the coilroot of reality, that we cannot see it. when you see an *entryway,* whose coherence is gained in its fictionality, it is presented from the unconscious to signal to you to walk through it. it is the walking through that, in and of itself, retroactively creates the *entryway*.

the unconscious is merely the mediator of the always-already possible. it sends messages that virtualize a given possibility, without making it possible as such, so that the cause-effect of the subject retroactively anoints into reality what was only ever a virtual possibility. an *entryway* does not exist, because we cannot understand who has decided it should lead anywhere. what we see, in turn, is that I have made it an entryway in waking through it, led there by an unconscious desire I perceived as a cause. I lead myself there.

where jung needs us to imagine that entryways and trees are connected to some mystic structure of reality, one must read in them the strange, reflexive vision of the unconscious. as z argues, these fictions are not reducible to some specific reality they represent. they are *possibilities*, which provide real places which we may touch only so long as we sustain the fictional in them. in short, we must believe in them, in the entryway, but not in view of some destiny they disclose, but in view of the subject which is already pulling the strings in the form of the effect they have on reality they cannot include.

after all, our participation in reality is already underway. we create qua the unconscious houses in which to imagine the real of this participation. we furnish it with objects that are already possibilities, but which come to really represent the deeper movement of the subject in reality. they structure this movement virtually, where, by virtue of how the subject approaches them, they allow the subject to retroactively confirm them as causes of the subject's own action. the messages the unconscious sends are therefore contentless, empty fictions, because they must be taken up in the transference of the subject and the place. they must be acted upon, self-confirmed, so that whatever imaginaries I bring before my mind I must take up as the real of my own immanent effect on reality. I must see that they try to picture something impossible about my contact with this deeper reality.

the entryway exists because I have put there. only, we must actually end up putting it there. we must actually go and do this. what is distorted in rhineland is an attempt to visualize, not only the breakdown of reality by the real, by my immanent already-participation in place and its already-reaction to me, but the constitution of real objects, which, at one level, projects my psychic destiny as something forward moving, while, at another level, is nothing but the effect of my own entry to the reality. to read our unconscious is to read the impossible language of our participation in reality. a reality which is already responding and which we are already touching.

hegelsh

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il faut affimer qu'il y a de l'infini

badiou

as a note, the word *bemerkungen* (i, ii, iii, iv) distinguishes the end of the bilder (i, ii, iii, iv) from the start of the remaining texts within each teil.

this issue is a part of *arbor* and is the ninth of such issues to be produced.

HEIDELBERG

r i, heidelberg

what was the substance of heidelberg? h and I met with v there. we had been staying with a good friend of h's who'd let us her room. she was herself headed off to denmark on holiday. we managed to share a beer with her before she left in one of the little bars which crowd the untere straße, and there was only one awkward exchange about just how good danish cinema really was. v, for his part, was my friend, whom I had met in edinburgh over a year earlier. having originally intended to visit edinburgh in that august, his flight was cancelled, and he decided to trip it around germany instead.

there is an awkwardness and a beauty to the flats you find in heidelberg. where we stayed, in the newer area, across the river from the altstadt, you can find flats like attics. sloping walls hold the sun in tiny pockets, sometimes by the shower head, or in the turning shadowcorner of the outopening window, casting all the rooms in the flat with the even atmosphere of an entrance. something is curiously missing, and you feel at ease in its angular unfinishedness. your head inclines naturally out the window and your body faces, if it naturally faces anywhere, the door, the outside – the beyond. it is a young person's flat.

we meet with h's grandmother, atop the königstuhl. seated at one of its even promontory chalets, we take lunch. I have hare, for something in my unconscious makes me think about rabbits and jews. the curious appetite of history. it is also what h's grandmother eats. seeing h, that's what I remember. in blue, flowering shorts. pale skin. blue flower. the summer light in germany covets shade like us, so it is thinnest when you stand beneath it, pointing to dark verdant reservoirs, and then in its dappling through forest cover, it is soft, shaded, embodied.

passing by with h heidelberg schloss – the castle – a curious inversion of badiou's l'évément strikes me,

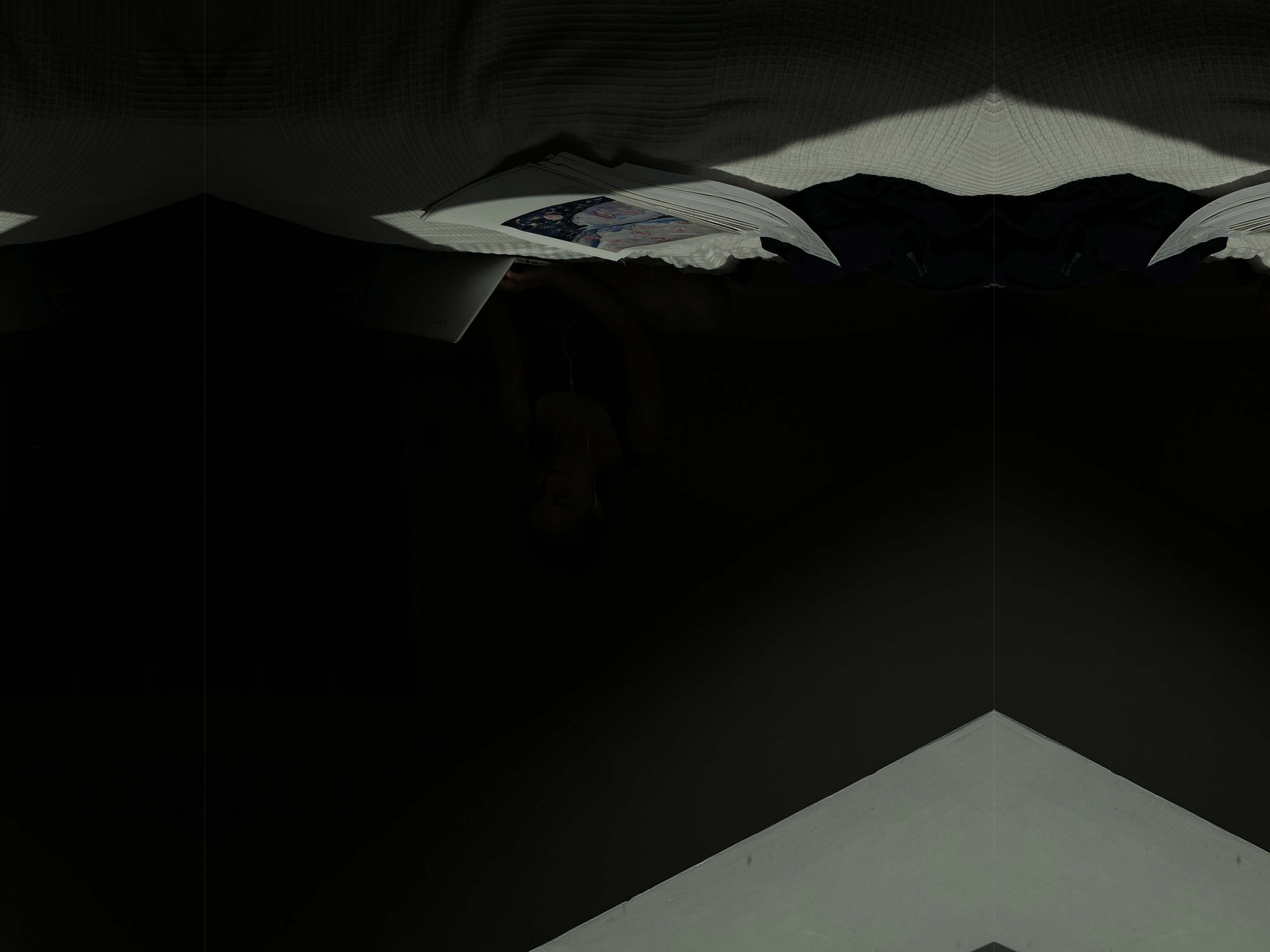
> that it is not for us to wait for events, but to pick up in the world the traces of the event having already happened. all that makes the world possible, speaks to an event, and we uncover not exceptions, but a reality already exceptional in how it indexes the absolute.

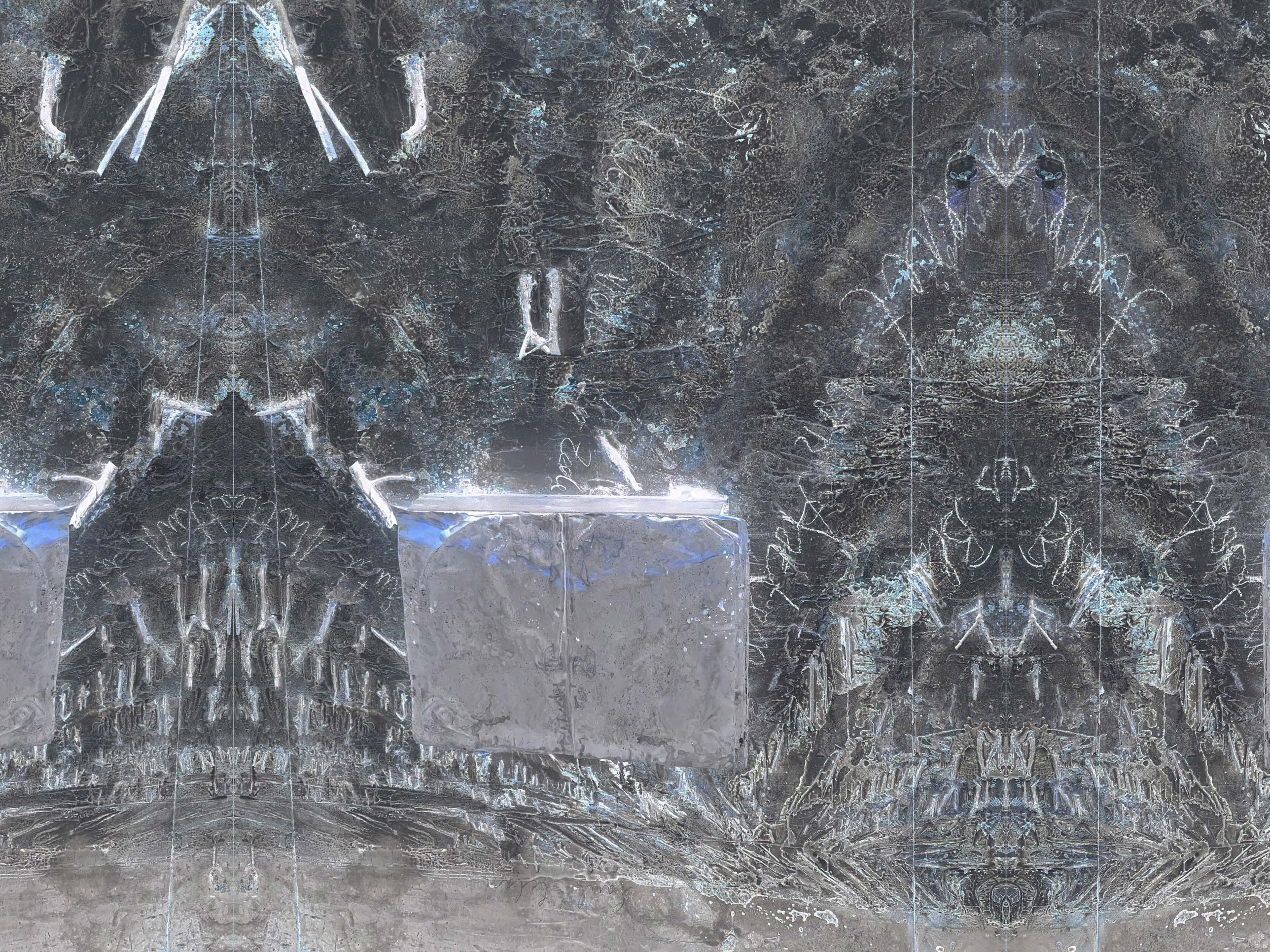
see, alongside h and the german language, my constant companion is badiou's third and final volume of l'être et l'événement, l'immanence des vérités. in it, the question of the absolute is posed. why is it that what he calls being he also calls true. it is this move into truth which is qualified in the change of the status of event, for we look back at what is already evental in a world, already true, which may explain the curious fact of how we are already within it.

one day, h and some of her friends and I fly to the top of great königstuhl. in fact, we walk slowly. oppressively slowly, but I say nothing and, instead, fall in love with the beetles scuttling along the path. it reminds me curiously of wittgenstein, and I have a distinct, very intense picture of wittgenstein's thinking in my head when the first beetle appears. it was what jung would call a catalytic exteriorization phenomenon. I manifest, through a fuse of two interdependent psychic processes, the beetle. to my mind, this means only that if wittgenstein had chosen a beetle for one of his great thought experiments, it was because the beetle, somehow, stood in for something he was thinking, for something which we may say a beetle, irreducibly, signifies.

v and I also go up to königstuhl. he finds a beetle, and lets it crawl across his hand. at the top, near the stuhl itself, he takes a photo of me in my red shirt near the cell tower that provides satellite coverage for the ancient city. we had been visiting the kiefers in manheim. what began as a cold, blustery day, softened with the short train ride to manheim and the kiefers. v, h, and I were, in visiting, maintaining a private obsession with the artist, with his strange tract of german landscape painting. the gallery is otherwise a disappointment, while manheim is worse. it is strangely redeemed, its white walls, hanging the ball and chain – literally – of black german Schuld in the roma museum in heidelberg, which, while small, houses at its uppermost level a series of wooden catwalks, beams, which complete the memorialization of this community of the dead. in the unconscious, an attic, a lighthouse, reminiscent of kiefer's early drawings of german wood longhouses with floating flames ready to both engulf the house in earthly fire and warm its cold and dark interior, the blade-edge of sacrifice and remembrance stand curiously side by side.

my lunch of hare, the beetle, frail, wooden longhouses, Schuld. we finish many of our days with bier. the drink of lethe. river walks, exiting the altstadt, looking at the hills mount and shrink in the distance. a copy of the tractatus, auf Deutsch, and me, holding its thin, redbound pages in my pocket as we made our way through the city. the rain turning fickly to fall like prayerhands up then down then up in the gesture of holy doubt. though I never saw them, the city made me think of dürer's blued drawings of his hands in prayer. blackedged, with the strength of flesh, ready to bleed. there is a party. we speak french. outsideness at once familiar. the sky, too, hums with the blur of colour, familiar and unfamiliar, real and unreal.





SCHWARZE FLOCKEN

Schnee ist gefallen, lichtlos. Ein Mond
ist es schon oder zwei, dass der Herbst unter mönchischer Kutte
Botschaft brachte auch mir, ein Blatt aus ukrainischen Halden:

»Denk, dass es wintert auch hier, zum tausendstenmal nun
im Land, wo der breiteste Strom fließt:
Jakobs himmlisches Blut, benedeiet von Äxten …
O Eis von unirdischer Röte – es watet ihr Hetman mit allem
Tross in die finsternden Sonnen … Kind, ach ein Tuch,
mich zu hüllen darein, wenn es blinket von Helmen
wenn die Scholle, die rosige, birst, wenn schneeig stäubt das Gebein
deines Vaters, unter den Hufen zerknirscht
das Lied von der Zeder …
Ein Tuch, ein Tüchlein nur schmal, dass ich wahre
nun, da zu weinen du lernst, mir zur Seite
die Enge der Welt, die nie grünt, mein Kind, deinem Kinde!«

Blutete, Mutter, der Herbst mir hinweg, brannte der Schnee mich:
sucht ich mein Herz, dass es weine, fand ich den Hauch, ach des Sommers,
war er wie du.
Kam mir die Träne. Webt ich das Tüchlein.

Paul Celan, Winter 1942

BLACK FLAKES

Snow has fallen, with no light. A month
has gone by now or two, since autumn in its monkish cowl
brought tidings my way, a leaf from Ukrainian slopes:

“Remember, it’s wintry here too, for the thousandth time now
in the land where the broadest torrent flows:
Ya’akov’s heavenly blood, blessed by axes…
Oh ice of unearthly red – their Hetman wades with all
his troop into darkening suns– Oh for a cloth, child,
to wrap myself when it’s flashing with helmets,
when the rosy floe bursts, when snowdrift sifts your father’s
bones, hooves crushing
the Song of the Cedar…
A shawl, just a thin little shawl, so I have
by my side, now you’re learning to weep,
this hard world that will never turn green, my child, for your child!”

Autumn bled all away, Mother, snow burned me through:
I sought out my heart so it might weep, I found – oh the summer’s breath,
it was like you.
Then came my tears. I wove the shawl.

David Brusin

b e m e r k u n g e n i

29/07/21
Frankfurt
8:23 AM

THE LIGHTNING GUIDES EVERYTHING

is all age here entangled with the nazis? all history and memory. you cannot see an old person without thinking: how was it all possible? you cannot see age itself without the subtle impossibility of thinking that everything as it changes remains in the changing.

how can it not be on your mind constantly? the pit is right next to us.

the lightning guides everything. like tietjens' cedar, upon which hangs all the pagan collections: everything that is hung up is somehow hung up on a word. on a memory. a tangled word.

THE TOPOS

Heidelberg
10:36 AM

kiefer's entire topos is somehow an attempt to resolve this kind of layering over. — resolve it back to its possibility. this did happen. or, it didn't happen historically, not as a fact; it is a certain happening that kiefer calls up.

4:06 PM

THE MEANING BEHIND EVERYTHING

is the event not, after a certain point, our having been inside a world? it makes manifest possibility. we intercede upon this possibility after, but only on condition that we are already within the new world that allows such a thing to occur. the event looks forward for us.

kiefer's art is somehow our falling into a possibility which reveals the extent to which we are in a place. what is called up is kunst? art itself. not as a nomination. — the name here names nothing. inside his paintings one finds the meaning behind everything. what, after all, does it mean to use lead as a substance? the so-called passing-into, the

making a light out of their lives.

the kranke kunst he makes, which is everything from the fact that his art changes after it is made and the fact that within the canvas itself the change is happening, is a substance which is part of its naming. isn't the naming, after a certain point, the word as a word. here inside my reference is the name of something. — something which has a name. is a name part of the thing? the naming-into; or, in kiefer's case, the silent measure of everything is the fact that it is already happening whether we ever realize it.

THE SILENT MEASURE OF EVERYTHING

what we call the meaning of the world is the entanglement of the already of substance with the language which describes it. tietjens' tree is not another word; it is the wording itself which entangles the world with its own describability. kranke kunst. the canvas is sick with its own describability.

CAN WE ALIGN?

there is a calling up, finally. the thing I call up is part of the calling up.

30/07/21
11:42 AM

the moon was formidable last night.

9:47 PM

IMPACTS OF THE REAL

his entanglements are strings. of knowledge, or musical notations. it is still in a world, as Badiou allows us to think. mathematical strings, more specifically, where strings are these kind of immanent connections. these kinds of runes or impacts of the real which install directly the grammar of silence, of the encounter. when kiefer writes his notes from scotland, what do we see if not him writing, not what he's seeing, but writing what he's seeing. after a certain point, it's pure wittgenstein. writing what he's seeing. not only writing what he sees, but the seeing becoming part of the writing. — to the extent that rather than reducing writing to a bodily process, we raise the thing towards its conditions of describability.

31/07/21
12:47 AM

the grass is there. the meadows.

1/08/21
3:12 AM

THERE ARE BEETLES ON THE WAY TO KÖNIGSTUHL

language must share conditions with what it speaks. kiefer moves from one place to another without assuming that language doesn't exist. it doesn't exist as language. the language is already there without falling back into anything that we would call language. grammar, too, after a certain point is a guess. it is a guess we give precisely to those conditions which we call language.

isn't this wittgenstein's beetle? we all have a box in which is held our beetle. we, too, don't know our beetle. we too have to look at our box and speak of our beetle.

there are beetles on the way to königstuhl.

and language, too, is our beetle. w.'s whole point is that you enter into language able to use it, but not able to say in what that, or the extent to which, use exists. any use of language is therefore a use of language which already involves some part of us not needing to understand. what others have called connections, and which w., on occasion, calls the background of meaning, too easily lose the sense in which the use of language is something whose conditions for working are that some part of how the language works eludes the speaker. w.'s point was to go one step further and say: what then do we call the meanings of the world? if language is the container of meaningful things, how do these meaningful things — our beetles, our minds, our games — change in view of the fact that they have never worked in quite the way we have imagined. and this is what makes language possible: the fact that from this point when I use beetle I am not just referring to a beetle, but also to that entire topos, which is not something we just refer to, but something in which we exist and out which language emerges as that in which it makes sense to say beetle. it makes sense because language itself is not the possibility of fixing a distinction, but the open possibility of a distinction in the first place. it is the mark of our being in a place, not that which marks it out, except insofar as marking out is the place in its emergence.

I say beetle and something happens; no part of the meaning of that involves me knowing what I have done, because the saying itself is the part of the meaning.

12:32 PM

ALL LANGUAGE IS POSSIBLE

language begins when we see that it only works from within. it works as that which I can only begin to use once I am somewhere. if language only makes sense there, it is because only certain things are possible there. and language doesn't begin when I have a sense and this sense says something about the world, but when to say anything gains sense precisely because I am somewhere. language is itself this trace, except that w. entangles it as the bearer of meanings with the fact that our language points through the world. it is itself also already meaningful, so much so that everything we say has a radical meaning, without any sense or grammar correspondent, to the extent that the difficulty is finding in what world the language that I use has sense. all language is possible. this is the basis of w.'s philosophische untersuchungen.

we have to be within something to use it.

2:50 PM

IT IS CAUGHT UP IN THE SPEAKING

maybe this is why knausgaard is so afraid that when you say something, it becomes real. you cannot speak but that you say something, and the meaning of what you say is not a beetle, but that to say a beatle does something. it doesn't do something because words are things and things affect other things. this is to miss w.'s point: there are no more words. the word beetle is no more caught up in the fact that we don't know what it means to say this than the fact itself that saying things is somehow part of that meaning.

do we believe that saying things does something? yes.— but, not in ayer's sense. we mean that if you do not say it in what respect is the meaning possible at all. the word is not already possible — that is, without language. the meaning itself is not already there. this is w.'s point that is never understood: it is not that, from this point, we have only then to look at all the things we are doing as we speak, but that the meaning of what we would say, as it were, goes back into the world. what we say is what we say, not because we actually speak it, but because the saying itself cannot not itself accompany *the mean-*

ing about which it speaks. it gets caught up, as itself, in that which it itself speaks. it speaks from under its own foundations.

we speak without knowing what we say because to speak itself not only accomplishes something in the calling up. the meaning itself of what we say is not given to us because it already has meaning, but because language itself is another meaning in the world. not knowing the extent of what I say because the meaning is part of the place, like kiefer's meadows, and because my language itself expresses that I do not know what I say. it is the expression in which what we say communicates with meanings without any prior formulation. — without grammar. we have to accept that we express the meanings of the world without fully realizing them and without being able to say what the secret order is behind our language. we have only its radical sensitivity to the touch of the world. itself as a part of the world, but that which we call the meanings of the world which language is supposed to arrange, language itself is caught up in. it has no secret order but this touch.

w.'s point is that this is the moment when the possibility to describe begins. all the texture of language arises because language itself is subject to that of which it speaks, even though it is itself nothing. it is caught up in the speaking.

5:29 PM

KIEFER'S MEADOWS

kiefer's meadows are strange. they are that in my language I call up exactly as they are. the connectives of my language hold together a meadow. in kiefer, this is his grammar: silent meaning. you are already that which you are. you have eaten the horizon of your silence.

lead. there is no sense of identity, so that all things come as though from nowhere. what it is in the canvas, or as the canvas, is that which it is, so that kiefer's paintings change and develop and at the same time are. the grammar is that the lead is there regardless of whether we notice it. it means regardless of whether we notice it. but, can we call up the lead? is it enough for our language to say it and nothing else? the very grammar which we expect to be already there with our language is already there with lead. we give the word with that silence. isn't that the beginning of grammar?

10:33 PM

this is what lead is already giving us. silence. the meadows in Scotland are similar. I go to them to gain that silence and my language somehow also expects that silence. when kiefer writes words directly onto his canvas we must not imagine that they refer to anything. we must expect that to say a name is to somehow call up the meaning. how the lead beneath my pillow grounds me, so too do the names in kiefer's canvases mean at the same time as they are silent. — at the same time as they are just a word.

2/8/21
12:46 PM

kiefer writes names, but also phrases:

> varus; die Kunst geht knapp nicht unter; horror vacui; der gestirnte Himmel über uns, das moralische Gesetz in mir; Brunhilde schlaft; yggdrasil.

they are written directly onto the canvas. like the whole of kiefer, these things exist. they exist in his paintings. to say them means that the saying is also part of them, and that in his paintings themselves these things mean. the silence of their grammar is part of what makes it possible to: say them. -- or write them. their meaning involves the silence and it involves the possibility of their being called up.

THE SILENT HAPPENING OF EVERYTHING

the layering and texture of kiefer's paintings must arise between this friction. the silent grammar and the calling up. or, at least, the fact that saying is not a reference, but that the things themselves already have the conditions of being called up within them. the grammar which employs them is itself more of that silence, which is already the condition of being called up. in turn, the word itself of the calling up is only possible because the calling up must include the grammar of the silence. the silent happening of everything.

> the skies are grey

and rather than kiefer looking for something that will explain any of this, he includes the explanation in the painting. the just a word is the sense in which the explanation somehow has to include the fact that what occurs in reality says nothing about itself. the saying is a feature of the thing insofar as it doesn't pertain to any description of the thing. it doesn't describe it, so it must do something else.

3/8/21
10:08 AM

THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE READING

I go into the world to find that silence. pure wittgenstein. silence is in the meadows. isn't this what w. tries to find in the tractatus when he looks for logische bildern. it is as though he goes into the world and expects to find, literally, logical pictures. in the meadows, there is a rune, or a cut. -- only, we call it silence; and what is a word: silence.

we expect, then, that what keifer includes in his paintings is that description which we would offer to them, at last integrated into them as that which marks them out, not only as thoughthings, but as thinkable at all, and, in offering to them the complete conditions of their own internalized thinkability, point them towards reality completely openly, having exceeded reality's own completeness in taking on their own describability as an immanent feature of what they are.

we describe things by reading them; we read that which is literally written on them. the rune is in the meadows. there is something in the reading.

11:03 AM

we are on the way to kiefer. is everyone here really here to think on kiefer?

12:09 PM

is a lily a lily in kiefer? is that directness not gone? so much so that what we have is lily. he puts them in the canvas, or a sunflower or a fern. all because these things are exactly their silence.

I'm waiting for what to do with my life. and in waiting, why shouldn't kiefer's exhibitions stand through or within them? my being there is enough that in that silence sits the lilies and standing there is enough to qualify me in that. it is not transformation; it is the silence in which I am already included.

at Saturnzeit, one looks at summer. at its beginning, looking at the ground, where even the midgard snake glides through. that is summer, maybe dried up. the ferns, in any case, are all that we have ever meant by summer.

the white lettering is there to read.

12:25 AM

the painting is heavy. it must be actually heavy. otherwise it has no meaning. everything must be that which it is. then, silence. this almost quantum place.

4/8/21

9:16 AM

when reading is an immanent feature of the place. is that infinity? maybe there's a gap in kiefer; his thinking is the possibility of saying that whatever I give you you take. if it is lightning, you burn. — in that infinity of burning-within, where the interior and exterior break down. like in krule's a slide in (new drugs); you take it on. you are the burning, your open conditions render all the possibility of connexions. the change within you is that sliding in. to think in infinity is to think infinitely. everything that you already are is entangled, not with possibility, but with the underlying groundlessness of whatever it already was. and that groundlessness you go out and you find in the places of the world. you find that open air and the rune, sign word of the burn of lightningstruck, and the crall —

can we align?

to find that silence is itself there. stood before a kiefer, passed between the quantum place, as heaviness itself weighs upon you, all that is material is itself as material transformed. the grammar of that heaviness, of kiefer's blei, is that to that change was I already submitted and so I was always already different.

excerpts from badiou i

De même Descartes montre que, sur ses seules ressources, la pensée rationnelle peut aller de l'avant et accéder au réel et du monde et d'elle-même. En ce sens, il lutte énergiquement contre la finitude. Mais il ne parvient pas à se passer d'une garantie transcendante. C'est un passage de sa pensée qui m'impressionne toujours : le point de départ de sa « démonstration » de l'existence de Dieu est que nous avons (« nous », c'est ce dont notre pensée est capable) une idée de l'infini. Là, on frôle l'existence d'une capacité infinie du Sujet, on est tout près de l'immanence des vérités. Mais c'est pour la renverser en son contraire : puisque nous sommes finis, argue Descartes, notre idée de l'infini doit avoir une cause infinie extérieure, d'où que Dieu existe. C'est comme si on voyait, dans l'acte même de sa pensée, que Descartes ne peut surmonter la dyade oppressive de la finitude humaine et de l'infinité transcendante, et ce au moment même où il en reconnaît la fausseté. Après tout, de ce que nous avons une idée claire et distincte de l'infini pourrait raisonnablement se conclure que nous sommes infinis. Et ce d'autant plus que Descartes affirme – comme il a raison ! – que l'infini et plus clair que le fini. Mais non ! Il oblique dans une direction où, lui aussi, va monter sur la scène où opèrent religieux et théologiens, bien que la tension majeure de sa pensée soit de disqualifier ces personnages. Là encore, on ne dira pas que Descartes est un religieux, pas plus que Platon n'est à proprement parler esclavagiste. Certes, homme prudent, il ne cesse de dire qu'il est un bon catholique. Mais ça ne se voit guère dans son style de pensée, comme le remarque à juste titre Pascal, qui sait que la vraie foi concerne le Dieu de la narration sacrée, le Dieu « d'Isaac et de Jacob », et non le dieu des philosophes et des savants. Cependant, la brusque obliquité de sa « preuve » de l'existence de Dieu, au moment même où se présente la possibilité vertigineuse d'une infinité immanente, indique le refoulé transcendantal par lequel la finitude parvient à s'infiltrer.

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Au fond, la mesure, c'est la nécessité d'avancer, de transformer, d'inventer, plutôt que de détruire inutilement (même si parfois il faut détruire). La mesure est donc l'infini, en tant qu'il est l'effet d'horizon, en tant qu'il permet de penser que la chose dont il est question n'est pas circonscrite par une clôture définitive. La vraie question peut se dire ainsi : quelle est la mesure de ce qui, de la finitude, va comparaître devant l'infini ? En effet, quand vous mettez un point à l'ordre du jour, vous ne savez pas à l'avance quel va être le résultat, vous êtes dans l'infini, donc ce ne peut pas être entièrement constructif. Vous ouvrez la chose à l'infini, mais il faut alors avoir une mesure, mesure de la comparution du fini dans l'infini. C'est donc la question d'une solution possiblement heureuse du problème abordé. Parce que le bonheur, au fond, c'est quand on a, collectivement, ou à deux, ou tout seul, trouvé la juste mesure dans la variation sous-jacente des logiques.

Dans ma *Métaphysique du bonheur réel*, la bande publicitaire (ce n'est pas moi qui l'avais choisie) indiquait : « Tout bonheur est une jouissance finie de l'infini. » On pourrait dire, ce qui paraît très sage : tout bonheur est une mesure partagée. Le lecteur va penser : « Sage ? La barbe ! Vive la démesure ! ». Mais il va quand même bien voir que « mesure », ici, c'est la démesure, c'est la comparution devant l'infini. Le bonheur c'est en fait la mesure de la démesure, la mesure de ce que l'on n'a pas encore pu mesurer de façon à ce que cette mesure soit universellement acceptée.

Dans la troisième strophe de sa fameuse élégie, « Pain et vin », Hölderlin dit quelque chose du même ordre. Je choisis de la citer dans la traduction que notre très regretté Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe en avait donné en 1980 :

> Que nous voyions l'ouvert
> Cherchions ce qui vit, si loin puisse-t-il être
> Mais ferme reste ceci : qu'il soit midi
> Ou que l'on aille jusque dans la mi-nuit, toujours subsiste une mesure
> Commune à tous, bien qu'à chacun aussi en propre part.

Le poète, comme souvent, déploie une exigence, un impératif : comparaissons devant l'infini, cherchons aussi loin qu'il le faut, à midi, à minuit. À la fin, il y aura une mesure, *commune à tous, bien qu'à chacun aussi en propre part*. Une mesure paraconsistante : appartenant à tous sans qu'il soit question de contredire.

Mais – et c'est là que je voulais en venir – n'oublions pas que toute mesure suppose un abandon au moins partiel d'une ou de plusieurs identités. L'identité crispée sur elle-même, c'est ça la démesure, ou le sans-mesure dont Socrate dit, dans ma République de Platon, qu'il est incompatible avec la pensée.

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...adressée à l'humanité générique : « *Who are you ?* » Qui êtes-vous ? La réponse, tout à fait surprenante, est que celui ou celle à qui s'adresse la question doit être supposé(e) Personne, lui-elle aussi. Le second vers concentre cette découverte : « *Are you – Nobody – Too* ? » Êtes-vous – Personne – Aussi ?

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Le second quatrain tout entier est consacré à dénoncer l'individu qui se sait tel et se vante d'être tel. Il est comme le récit de ce que, dans l'abri qu'ils ont trouvé pour leur si intense rencontre, les deux « Personne » de l'humanité se disent, à partir de la levée qu'ils opèrent du fardeau d'être un individu singulier, nommé, placé :

How dreary – to be – Somebody !
How public – like a Frog –
To tell one's name – the livelong June –
To an admiring Bog !

Les deux Personne construisent leur accord comme celui d'une libération : il était vraiment dur d'être quelqu'un ! Qu'il faille constamment dire son nom – des frontières à la moindre rencontre –, qu'il faille transporter partout sa carte d'identité, qu'il soit requis de se distinguer de tout autre individu, afin que soit sauf le fétiche contemporain, quelle horreur ! L'humanité ainsi désorientée, atomisée, chaque atome épinglé au monde par le nom propre, comme un insecte épinglé dans une boîte de collectionneur, quelle souffrance !

C'est l'été ! Serons-nous chacun une grenouille qui coasse l'identité factice du Moi ? Ou, à l'ombre des rencontres salvatrices, serons-nous des Personne qui confrontent amicalement l'aventure générale des vies humaines ? Le choix d'Emily Dickinson est fait. Tentons de le traduire :

Quelle monotonie – être – Quelqu'un !
Quelle vulgarité – comme une Grenouille –
Dire son nom – tout au long du Juin vivant –
À une tourbière extasiée.

-

DISQUE constellé de
prévisions,

lance-toi
hors de toi-même.

...

Le poème va dire que la prévision doit basculer hors d'elle-même, que le prévoir n'est pas l'essence du possible. Le possible est plus près de l'impossible, infiniment plus près, que ne peut l'être le prévisible. Il faut donc que le possible réel ne soit pas, comme c'est pratiquement l'opinion dominante, la mise à la disposition de tous d'un *disque constellé de prévisions*. Ce « disque », au sens de ce qui ne cesse de re-passer, c'est ce que nous devenons tous, à force de l'écouter. Le poète nous dit : « Arrête ton disque, arrête le disque que tu es en train de devenir ! » Mais comment ? En le lançant, en *te* lançant, hors de toi-même.

...

FAIS SAUTER les
cales de lumière :

la parole flottante
est au crépuscule.

...

D'où l'impératif abrupt, avec presque une nuance « terroriste » : *Fais sauter les cales de lumière*.

La vraie *parole* n'est pas une dépense de fausse lumière, elle est *flottante*, dans un sens proche de celui que la psychanalyse manie quand elle dit que le praticien doit se mettre, pour écouter l'analysant, en position d'attention flottante. La parole réelle est dans le clair-obscur, plus que dans cette lumière *calée* par l'injonction, en l'occurrence, par exemple, l'injonction médiatique. Il faut, plutôt qu'au matin (moment où on découvre les journaux, les « nouvelles »), se fier au *crépuscule*, où les choses sont un peu confuses et où l'on doit décider soi-même ce qui mérite d'être mis en lumière.

La lumière établie fait croire au sujet que le fini est plus grand qu'il n'en a l'air, que le déchet est plus nouveau que son apparence, et que l'œuvre n'a rien à ajouter à cette lumière dont on vante l'exactitude.

Œuvrer revient à commencer à se soustraire à la lumière qui cimente la finitude. Il faut se retirer dans le flottement des lumières rares.

...

LA VOIX BLÊME, extorqué
des profondeurs :
ni mot, ni chose, et des deux l'unique nom,

en toi, ajusté à la chute,
en toi, ajusté à l'envol,

gain meurtri
d'un monde.

...

Le poème, c'est cela : l'inséparation du mot et de la chose, dan la forme d'une nomination neuve. Et vous la trouverez, lecteur de poésie, cette nomination, aussi bien comme une *chute* dans la duret de la chose que dans l'*envol* du mot.

Une définition possible de l'œuvre poétique, chute et envol mêlés, peut être alors : *gain meurtri / d'un monde*. Car elle est effectivement le gain de n'être plus dans la voix blême, dans le déche langagier. Mais ce gain est *meurtri*, il est une blessure infligée à no tre mouvement naturel, qui est de marcher dans la normalité conven able, dans la circulation, dans « les mots et les choses ». Là, après tout est la sécurité du devenir fini.

On se guérira de la blessure en découvrant que l'infini nouveau est aussi bien, lui aussi, tout un *monde*.

-

Prenons ce poème de janvier 1937, à Voronej. Il commence par une négation tranquille, qui installe le sujet dans l'affirmation des évidences vitales. Le mal vise à ce qu'on soit installé dans la peur de la mort et dans la solitude de cette peur. Eh bien, on restera alors tout près de ce qui se donne, dans le désert infligé de la déportation, et qui déjà constitue l'infini d'un appui : l'existence d'un autre et celle d'un lieu.

Non, tu n'es ni mort ni seul
Vois, avec ta compagne mendiante
tu jouis encore de la grandeur des plaines
des ténèbres, de la faim et des tourmentes de neige.

On notera que même la faim, même les ténèbres, sont retournées contre elles-mêmes en ce qu'elles attestent l'expérience infinie de l'obstination vitale. Et que la compagne, Nadejda, soit « mendiante » n'en fait qu'une présence encore plus précieuse, encore plus ramenée à l'essentiel, qui est d'incarner l'Autre, absolument, e de vaincre la solitude.

Dans la seconde strophe, Mandelstam formule l'impératif qui soutient cette soustraction aux affects que désire provoquer l'action mauvaise. Il s'agit d'oxymores qui résument le conflit entre la réduction à rien que cherche à obtenir la répression d'État et le sujet capable de renverser en leur contraire les malheurs qui lui sont infligés : « *pauvreté de luxe* », « *misère puissante* »… Ensuite vient l'état d'esprit général, fait de calme capacité à percevoir la succession, par elle-même victorieuse, des jours et des nuits :

En une pauvreté de luxe, misère puissante,
Vis tranquille et consolé –
soient bénis tes jours et tes nuits
et ce labeur public immaculé.

On ne peut qu'admirer que le poème oppose à la punition, que l'État espère liée à quelque culpabilité secrète, fût-elle fictive, non une protestation d'innocence, mais une sorte de sainteté de ce qu'il y a, sainteté découverte justement au-delà de l'innocence négative, de la protestation, de la plainte, dans l'assomption en « *labeur public immaculé* » de la vie du supposé coupable. Et que la punition puisse être ainsi vécue comme une consolation.

La troisième strophe est polémique. Non pas contre les bourreaux, mais contre ceux qui leur concèdent d'être ce qu'ils veulent que vous soyez : des êtres laminés, vaincus, craintifs. Puisqu'il est toujours possible de changer la faim, les ténèbres, la misère en une subjectivité infranchissable, en quelque chose qui, même empli de douleur, peut encore se dire immaculé, celui-là seul fait la victoire du mal qui accepte la loi finie de la plainte et de la peur :

Malheur à qui tel de son ombre
S'effraie devant l'aboi des chiens et que le vent fauche
Misérable est celui à peine existant
qui demande l'aumône à son ombre.

Telle est la maxime de l'éthique qu'on pourrait dire du contre-mal : si on prétend te transformer en quelqu'un d'à peine existant, refuse en tout cas la peur et ne demande rien à l'ombre que tu crois être devenu !

Un autre poème écrit le 9 mars 1937 à Voronej donne à tout cela une forme pacifiée et lumineuse, parce qu'il dédramatise l'urgence du contre-mal en introduisant la patience de la durée. Il nous dit, ce poème, que le fait de prendre dans l'infini la mesure de soi, qui permet de refuser la finitude infligée, relève de l'expérience et réclame du temps. Les « *cieux inconstants* » de la vie ne sont pas clairs par eux-mêmes. Mais nous les comprendrons. Voilà ce que « *murmure* » la première strophe, confiée par le poète à la page, comme le brouillon d'un poème à venir :

Je le dis au brouillon – en un murmure
il n'est pas encore temps :
on ne comprend que tard par expérience
le jeu des cieux inconstants.

La seconde strophe nous décrit une des raisons pour lesquelles « on ne comprend que tard », à savoir l'oubli. L'oubli de quoi ? De ce

que toute vie, où que ce soit, sous quelque loi qu'elle s'avance, est une ouverture et une promesse. Ce qui nous est infligé est comme un purgatoire, dont l'avenir est, inéluctablement, que tout sujet peut demeurer dans la maison de la vraie vie :

> Et sous le firmament du purgatoire
> on oublie souvent que
> le bienheureux silo de ciels
> est une maison qui s'ouvre à la vie.

Dira-t-on que l'on entend ici, dans l'infini comme promesse capable de vaincre l'oubli auquel on l'expose dans les « jeux » de la finitude, une sorte de note religieuse ? Je n'en suis pas convaincu. Je pense plutôt qu'ici vient en surimpression la figure de Dante, capitale depuis toujours pour Mandelstam. Au fond, que l'action mauvaise nous jette dans un terrible purgatoire n'est pas niable. Ce qu'il faut lui opposer est que l'essence de tout purgatoire est de diviser le sujet entre le consentement à ce purgatoire comme à un état de choses stable, où il ne reste plus qu'à gémir dans l'effroi, et l'ouverture à la vie que déjà marque, au-delà de toute plainte, le « silo de ciels » que nulle oppression ne peut absenter pour toujours. Ce silo, il suffit de lever la tête – marque de survie de soi et de sa pensée –, pour le découvrir.

Quoi qu'il arrive, garder le pouvoir de lever la tête : telle est, dans les circonstances où l'on cherche à convaincre un sujet que le Mal le réduira à rien, la simple et difficile physique de l'infini.

what we have so far called infinity

we have two crucial tools: infinity and impersonality. badiou's impersonality thinks in infinities, while what is impersonal about this thing is that they are sustained by the negative self-relating character of their own self-identification. it is not, as *b* rightly notes, simply *who are you*, which presupposes the person, but are you also nobody? in short, we can be joined, we can commune, on the basis of that nothing in all of us.

this impersonal, communalizing thing tries to organize itself in infinities and, in thinking infinity, as per descartes, relate to that part of themselves which is infinite – not strictly reducible to their impersonalness. it is infinity residing in us that we use to communalize around the *areyoualsonobody*? infinity placed somehow inside us. it is thought itself which is also placed somehow, secretly, inside us and thought which works through infinities. we have the thought of infinity. to think at all is to contain infinity.

these infinites are closer to projections within us, or indexes, which track and express the absolute. living in infinities means living in finite models of this infinity which project and express the absolute, or the measuring-out – the infinization and cardinalization – of truths. this measurin-out, this projection, allows us to interact with the absolute at all. truths which bind our little creature-bodies in logiques des mondes, now come with a measuring rod, their anointing to a cardinalizing sequence of infinities, layering upon layer the possibility of projecting the absolute. we touch it through these projections, expressions, and indexations. as we measure, we think.

the measure which installs us in infinity is what allows us to count these cardinals. not just to count them one by one, but to count them *as a count*. to count the count, and, in counting, not merely reach towards what is infinite, but to begin to think in what infinity itself consists. it is not merely a counting up, but a counting of counting. it is the counting of that which counts, indexing in the finiteinfinity of numbers themselves that which admits them, as into our thoughts, the infinite itself.

the infinite was always already a question of thinking. what is crucial in badiou is that the infinite is what we try to show we must think to think, and, in thinking, show, not only that it is thinkable, but that to think anything is to somehow enter into what we think. this is immanence. all that is unthought remained finitized. to think the infinite is not simply to name it, but to proceed to not only do the thinking, but, in thinking, enter into infinity. to think infinitely.

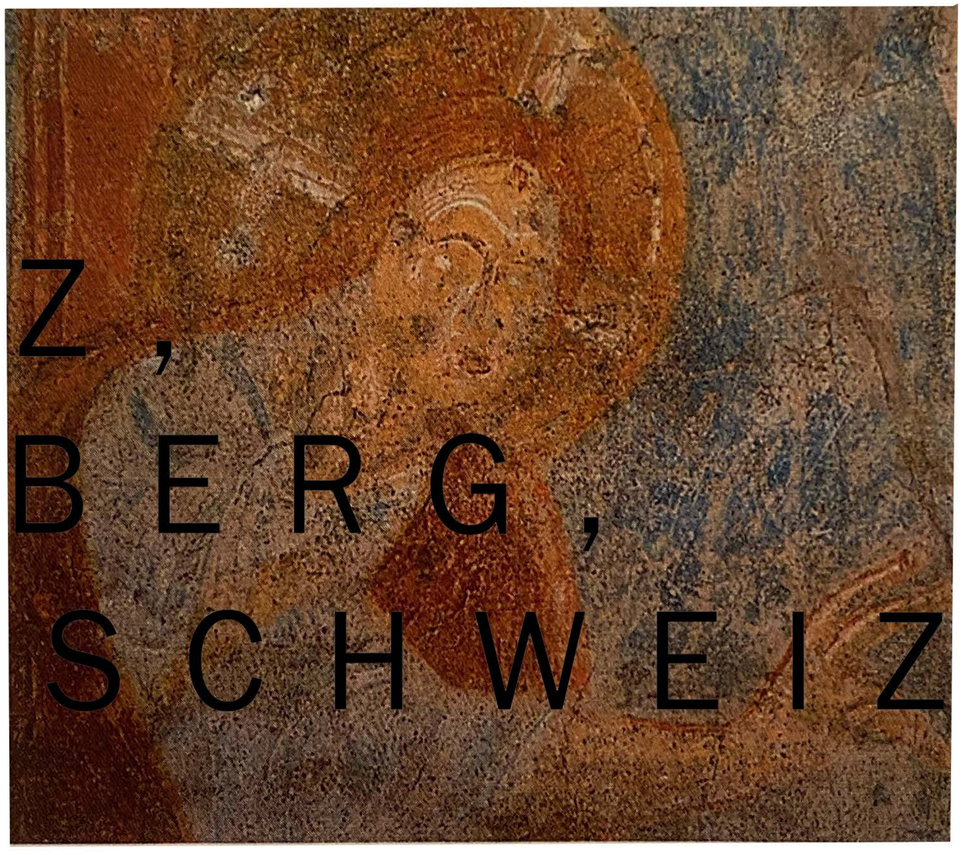
in turn, it is not only that we think the infinite and think infinitely as such, but that infinity is this thinking as such. it is nothing but the indexation, the projecting of it, which is both what it means to think and to have it. to have it as thinkable and to, in thinking it, have it as such. it is not that we simply think and gain only a part of it, but that to think at all, we gain the thing.

the thinkability of something names the deeper dimension of something's cardinalization. its entry into infinity itself. as such to think infinity is to think cardinality as such. it is to think thinking. thinking as measure. it is to link thinking and infinity together. if our question is what is the thinking of something, or, better yet, what is the immanence of something, the question of what makes it true, not merely as adequation, but as thinking, then it is this entanglement with infinity. were infinity another thing to think, it would say nothing about thought. but, since infinity itself, in being thought, leading by example, gives us a definition of what thought itself is through itself, we emerge able to define thought as such and, at the same time, think definitely the infinite. infinity is thinking and thinking is infinity.

these models, finite models, of infinity are not only thought, but also infinity. the cardinalizing. the thinking is crucial to infinity, because we are not merely following infinity through, but thinking it. infinity as such is the thinking it, not merely the counting through. b's point is that infinity does not name an unending numerical sequence as such, but thinking itself. it names the coming to be thought of something, its cardinalization, its measure, its modelling, its infinitization.

the indexing, the counting of count, the cut, is the infinitization. it is entering it into its own cardinality, and, as such, not merely an expression from afar, but the thinking of thinking. where many things can be thought as such, measured as such, infinity must be expressed, because it is the cardinalization of cardinalization. it is not, therefore, that we think infinity merely by measuring it, but by measuring the measure of it we think it. measuring the thinking of it. thinking the thinking of the thinking. the projection here is the reality of infinity. it is not merely that infinity is too large to be thought and requires projection, but it projection is the thinking of infinity manifest. it is true infinity.

KONSTANZ, TODTNAUBERG, UND DIE SCHWEIZ



r ii, todtnauberg, konstanz, und die schweiz

todtnauberg is eerie in retrospect. it ought to be more eerie, more immediately, than it seems when you arrive. towards it, h and I pass by the waterfalls which prefigure the tiny spring, mountain-high, which heidegger fixed and welled by the tiny footpath near his hütte for his waterwell. the schwarzwald is actually dark, and as you ascend up through the hillroads you pass first into the morning fog, gone by noon, and out of which you emerge as above a raincloud. it rains when we leave the hütte, raining away the nothing that had emerged.

I have written about celan's visit to todtnauberg after the war. the disappointment, the biting, deathly ouroboros of trauergrief. the regrief, his community of the dead held, slacklined in the Waldwasen, the bloodtumbling hardened into nightshade dirt over which he and heidegger trod. the trauer celan returned to was somehow darker than the nazis themselves, darker than that darkness. the regrief he felt in his return to it arose from the strange expectation that it might have foreseen them. the blackboots. see the light of mystery that nazi jungling holds. blonde hair. leading me to my own sacrifice and redemption. they who, too, join us in the nightwalk, must have lights of their own. dreamers.

his own treading, however, in deadmud remains. is all that ever remains. kiefer's flame blows out. he sees his own boots in the muddark when looking ahead he looks behind. the turning body of the snake.

> waterfalls float here. they stand high, the water flowing down into mist. mysteries, dreams, reflections. the dark mirror and the porous earth.

freiburg im breisgau is bounded by the schwarzwald. we spend a night there with another friend of h's. at dinner, we speak about badiou's multiplicities. we speak about what is owed and unowed to germany's grüne politik. here, the dark fieldforests, glowing fog, hold and guard mitte like odin's black shields around the sleeping brünnhilde.

the train to konstanz is light and long. at one point, we pass into die schweiz and I wonder whether we won't be asked questions about where we are going. I write, upon our arrival, late and early, both morning and night,

> I close my eyes and all I see is the Schwarzwald

konstanz itself is beautiful, eager. we tour the ancient kirchen in reichenau, where, at one point, in a small covet, made for silence, I sit and have a vision of a crusade of horses with knights and broad flags, clouds of sand and horsebreath. I think to myself that the immanence of thought is that it must be thought. if you do not think it, if you do not go there, then nothing happens. reality remains unfinished.

we tour the island in the bust of bodensee on bikes, in light that pains our eyes after the schwarzwald. bikes lent to us by h's uncle, staying as we aremin her family's home. her uncle takes us to where he and her father grew up, later on in the evening, where everyone in konstanz, young and old, sits in the sun on the fine boulevard stone by river. the houses are colourful, and we pass the hussenstein where jan hus died.

her childhood summers, she says, as we walk down a hot street, towards the jutland that clasps the bodensee at its nape, where bathers bathe nude and where we sit in the greengrass and sand, were spent here. she gives me a white towel with blue stripes as we change and float into the cold, cold water.

a few of our days there, we take a train into die schweiz. I carry badiou's l'immanence, this infinity-book, as we pass through and into the alps. it strikes me that you encounter infinity in the alps and I wonder if badiou passed through the cantons, with his elegant formulations, thinking how

> to think infinity one must think infinitely.

in wasserauen, there is a lake once you climb to the second-highest plateau. I had seen a caterpillar on our way up, and would see more. what a strange thing, I thought, to see. this greenleaf eater passing over shieldstone, the rut of travel, little beaddweller high, eating stalks of infinite grass. highest and the lowest.

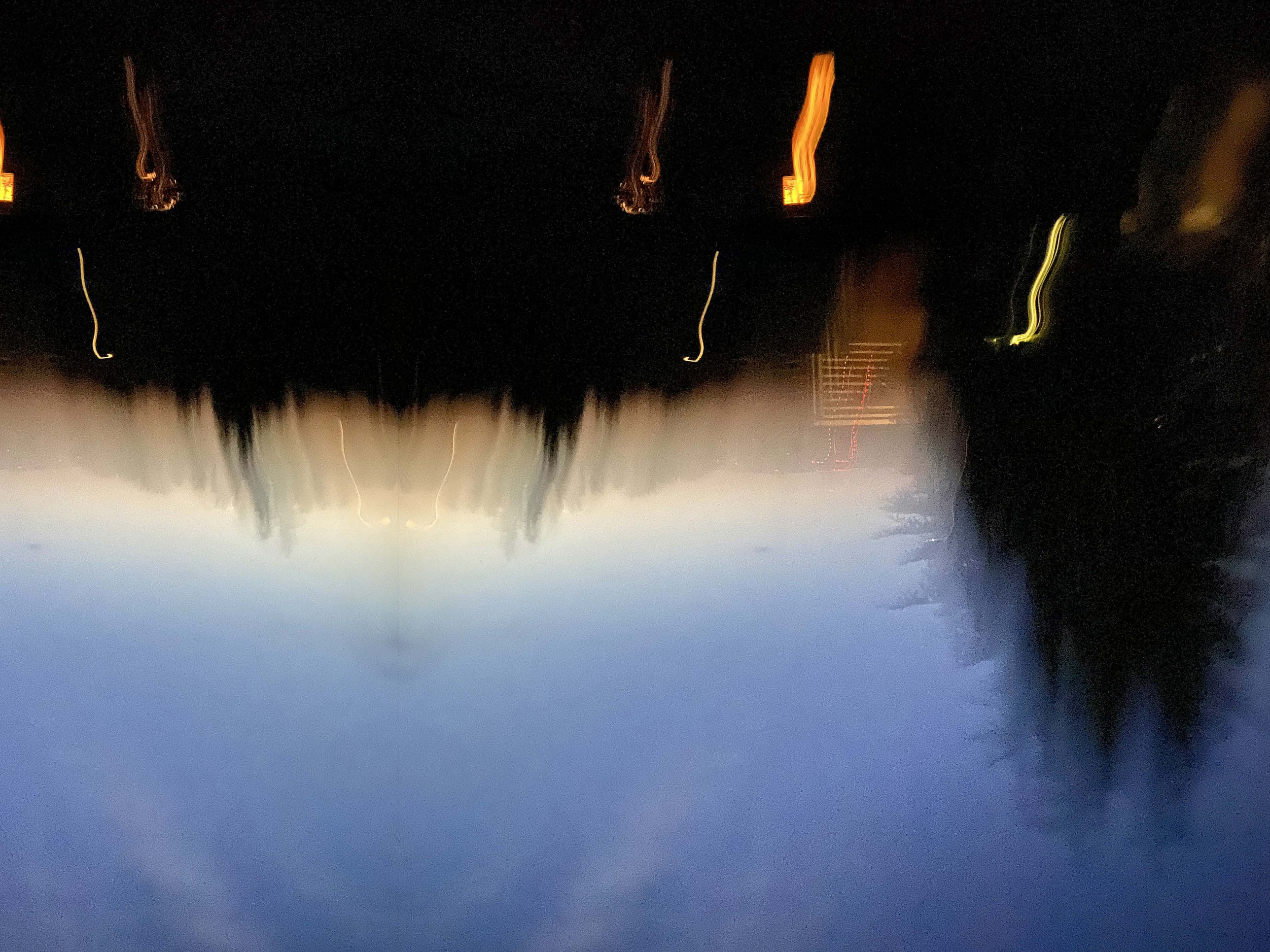
sitting by the lake, h and I swim in water colder than the bodensee. mountain cold. I take out my blackbook, which I had not only brought from home across the atlantic and to konstanz, but also now to this little lake in wasserauen. I write the continuation of a thought I had had 9 months earlier. we have come down from the highest plateau, frightened, almost, by the high frigateflood spring which tides into the pool where I date my new reflection. holding the second-highest peak, eating rittersport halb-bitter chocolate, we feel the freshsweet lemon rivella in our tummies settle.

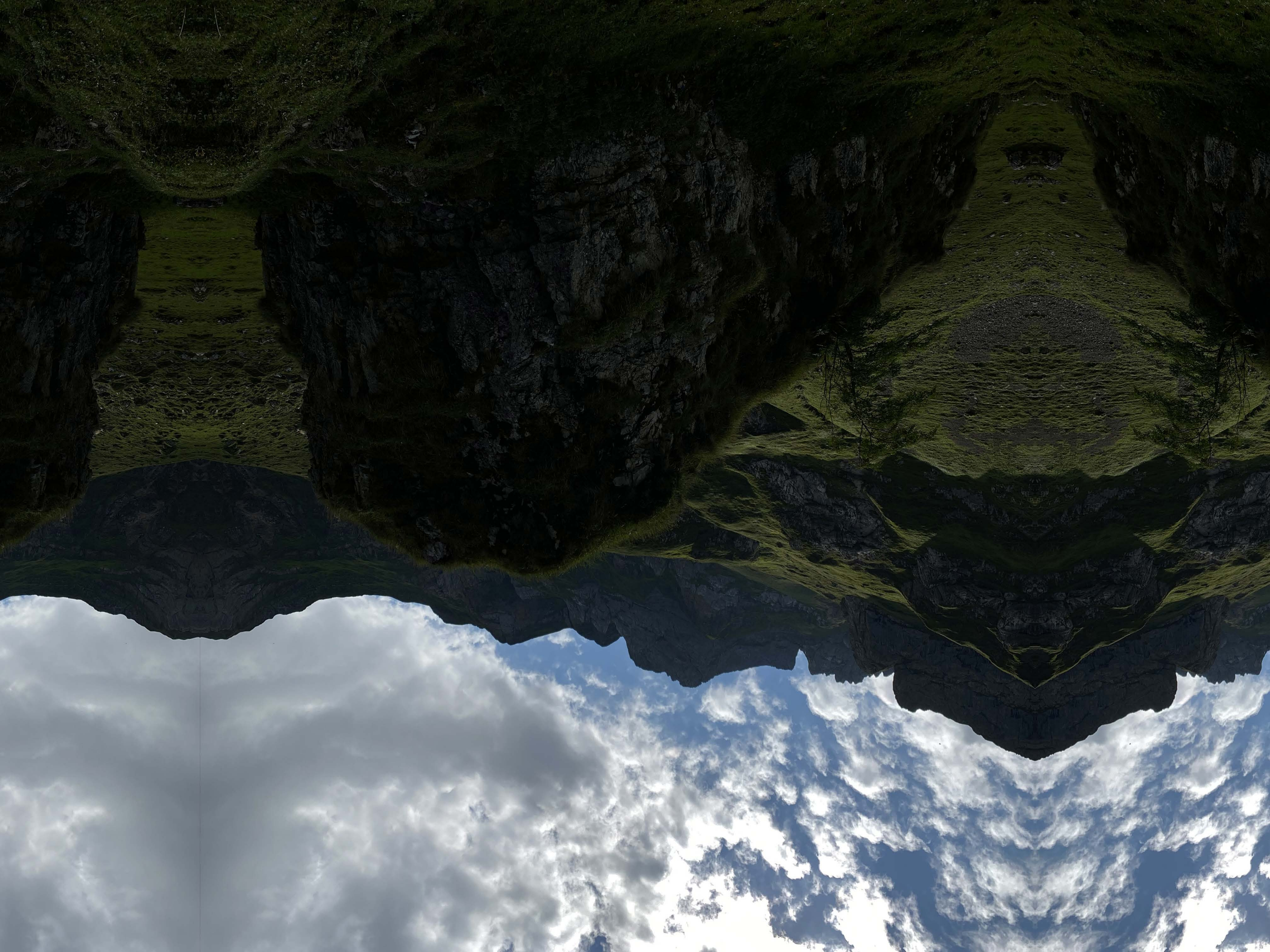
we make our way home towards our train, missing the last timeslot to see the ancient christian cave. it is somewhere above our ears. the sun sets slowly as we walk, and slower still as our train makes its way through the course it had run that morning. when we arrive back in konstanz in darkness, in the altstadt, I ask h if we can walk home. walk across the bridge, round the long crestshore, built up of boulevard stone, past the little lighthouse, past the lightships blurring water and sky, to the softening-into sand at bather's nape. we take off our clothes, like adam and eve, and go into the water. beneath the stars, by the red dot at shore's crossing, the treading white torch-stripe of humming, blending reality alight, we swim, and I observe that, like a good badiouan, this day was the most worldly, the most perfect of my life,

point by point.

we emerge in the darknude, adam and eve, and our remaining days flow one into the other. sitting in the altstadt listening to king krule as I pen my notes, h reading hegel's grundlinien der philosophie des rechts. sailing with her uncle as he observes the changing clouds, where sometimes the alps can be glimpsed. the lightning guides everything. we swim, too, again, in a deep pool at the centre of bodensee, where, anchoring near the border where die schweiz's begin, sky and see come into one, and I am reminded of leopardi's line that

foundering is sweet in such a sea.





b e m e r k u n g e n i i

5/8/21
Freiburg im Breisgau
8:03 AM

we're headed to heidegger's hütte today. he wrote the beiträge there. thinking about material again; how materiality itself is the thing changing. there's no qualifiable physical change whose caught-up-ness in language is already the boundary zone of meaning. it is not that language intercedes or that somehow anything is really described. it is that language itself is also caught up in this, so that its meanings are not immediately our own. whatever is described is caught up in the sense in which language means things without our realizing. our reality is subject to our language secretly. whatever is physical about language is meaningless, which in and of itself qualifies language to bear out the meaning of the world. the signs, which are absolutely empty, not only for that reason can mean, but we can begin to see in their accidentality the accident of meaning itself. all of this because there is a thing called language which begins without a structure.

what we call structure cannot thereby exclude itself from being meant, and this is the moment of language itself. all is subject to language as subject. and this structure itself cannot avoid that it is describable. the meanings of language themselves are called into question insofar as the meanings themselves pose the question: at what point in reality do you come upon language itself? we begin to see that incised things themselves is what we call language, and, if it is a signifier, it is an infinite signifier.

thinking how kiefer and knausgaard both keep diaries. they both write in these open ways.

Todtnau
12:50 PM

lighting strikes. in the schwarzwald. following the lightning track. up and up. what is the move into reality in kiefer? — she really is sleeping. there really are strings that hold the world together, and their entanglement is at the very edge of reality. it is the moment when the forest moves to meet you

THE FOREST MOVES TO MEET YOU

things almost start to come alive. or you wonder how it is that things are not already alive.

Konstanz
9:23 PM

how can our language even be physical? if we imagine what is possible to be said, we should imagine in equal measure how much that saying is taken on in reality itself. the kind of pointing we think language is doing is undermined by the very possibility of those meanings. not because everything is suddenly capable of being meaningful, but because the meaning itself opens whatever is pointed to to reality. in other words, insofar as language points to anything, it points passed it. it points towards its own already; that of the integration of the thing already into what it means. this is what we call grammar.

it is the possibility of that already which raises language from being the pointing towards language being that which allows the pointing to succeed at all. the pointing, in turn, is silent, or meaningless. its grammar is not a structure, but that structure which falls into language. grammar itself is nothing but the falling of something into that already. but, language itself is that the things we say do not mean unless at the same time all that is capable of being meant in the world can at the same time be said. and this saying is not just a structure, but a rune placed inside the things of the world. the rune follows that if description is possible at all it must in some way include itself. it includes that the saying happens in silence, because the grammar itself implies that it must be sayable without any more exceeding that which is said. language is only possible if at the same it cannot be spoken. in this respect, language exists itself as the meaning of the world.

it is where you go to read the meaning. further, when the forest moves towards you, it is the meaning of the world, which we call language, moving towards you. it is the world itself moving through the reading. language itself, however, doesn't operate as those meanings unless those meanings proceed to include language itself in them. that is the runic twist inside reality.

the rune itself, however, is real. it is a precondition of its purpose. if it isn't real, nothing is.

11:42 PM

I close my eyes and all I see is the Schwarzwald.

7/8/21

11:04 AM

the problem is that the structure of the pointing is caught up in its own being described.

4:24 PM

we have only to proceed from the fact that the being caught up is somehow what opens language to speak at all. even when it isn't spoken. it is language's own speaking which gets caught up in what it speaks about. the move towards the rune is almost a fantasy, because it tries to say: there must be something actually that speaks. but, this is just another fact. there is nothing itself that is spoken in things except that to be spoken at all is what we cannot control. the sense in which language slips into what it itself is meaning without being able to control this move. the point was that language itself only begins to speak because it cannot circumscribe its meanings. it is not just caught up in them, but that meaning itself must be caught up in them.

the things about which language speaks cannot exclude language itself. that's the rune. in kiefer, this comes out as the difficulty of not including language itself. its inclusion is the inclusion of the very border that is meant to separate the world from its meaning. the lack of this border, marked by language's own entry into it, is the loss of our being able to say that what is sayable is the limit of the world. the sayable is a limit, which the world internalizes as a limit. it is like our beetle: to say it is not to say it, but that the saying itself is part of it. there are no limits, but that we speak of a limit.

oh, please just take me home

THE RUNE IS REAL

the idea that we actually find a rune is nothing but the idea that the saying is included in the world. as we saw, in w., what happens is that this also changes what we have ever meant. this changes things such that the sense in which language can describe if at the same time we are mystified by the fact that what we mean is also somehow part of that meaning itself.

to imagine this as somehow in the world is what occurs when the meanings we had had become entangled in whatever language itself becomes entangled in.

feels like I might descend again

we are no longer safely in meaning through language but that language itself is the thing which we expect to find in the world strangely among the other things of the world. it itself breaks down the border which allows us to say there are things. the difficulty is that what is the difference between the kind of saying which is entangled with its own saying, i.e. language without grammar, and the sense in which things are runed, i.e. have language within them? further, is the calling up nothing but the saying of the rune. almost as though it is the runesaying which constitutes the entry of something into the realm beyond grammar. insofar as the rune already exists within things then language itself is that which is beyond grammar.

and the difficulty, which is the basis of w.'s philosophische untersuchungen, is that we are in no position to refuse the meanings of language. not only because we cannot distinguish them without language, but because language itself is nothing but the being subject-to a meaning which is sayable only insofar as language is already behind the world. the pointing, as a structure, points insofar as that pointing is caught up in the meanings of the world. meanwhile, language itself is the point of departure where expression becomes possible when we do not know what we mean, or what is meanable, and as such speak without guidance. our speaking is thereby nothing but that which, being sayable in the first place, is the sayable as sayable. it is the accident of language speaking only what is sayable by expressing nothing but its pure rapport with where it is. if I point here, this happens. and expression is nothing but this pointing, while the meanings of the world act in that already which already grounds you. language's control is nothing but the expression of this place accidentally, so that anything which is said, at the level of a meaningless word, says something. and the guessing of the saying something is the piecing together of language through the world. if we proceed to actually say there is a rune it is only because the pure placing of a rune is the act of grounding the already of the place within itself qua the open, pure expression of the sign.

THE ALREADY-ALCHEMY OF ALIGNMENT

when king krule asks can we align? we must see that the possibility of that expression involves that that expression expresses the very open condition of the place. it is the saying of the place itself. krule is not expressing a fact, but his language itself is the kind of thing one can say in the open rapport of the place. it is how language speaks at all. it is not that any word in that question has meaning, but that krule himself expresses the question as a pure subjective

condition and his words either work or they don't. if they work, his words take on the place and become language in succeeding in the already of whatever the place is. language is nothing but pure subjective expression interacting with, not what is possible for structure to say, but with what is possible to be expressed in the pure placing of expression inside the world. I say something and if this saying does anything, then it does so without being able to be expected. the meaning that language is capable of expressing involves the gesture of this placing. in turn, the meaning itself that is expressed is attached to the runic placing insofar as this saying is itself, literally, the meaning of the world. all rhythm and all structure in language arise only insofar as it comes upon meaning through the pure subjective rapport of the speaking. where the speaking itself is nothing but the relating of the impossibility of expecting meaning, as in beyond the mere repetition qua language of meaning. this what we call thought. it is the impossible rapport with what can be meant. no part of saying, nor thinking, involves that the meanings of the world are not an accident of subjective engagement. an accident that rises to the level of a sign,or even more reduced.— a mark. language thinks insofar as it is purely a question of its interaction with the world. an interaction, as we know, which is caught up with itself. caught up in the fact that language changes and alters impossibly, without account, as the world changes and alters, except through those traces which language, as subject, itself makes manifest.

5:42 PM

are there really meanings? is the schwarzwald a meaning. in kiefer, the answer is yes. this is kiefer's meadows. to call upon the callling up is to place the rune within the wald and say: language is nothing but the inclusion of the world. take the rune when you can; bring the whole forest if you must. speaking language is dragging forests.

6:10 PM

language admits no structure that we can reason from. the fact of expression's success is an expression of an impossible thought and a pure subjective interaction with a meaning in extensio. — this is logical space.

6:27 PM

all language, after all, is understandable. you cannot analyze a sentence; you can only look to see if it does anything. this doing is itself only detectable very quietly.

if I say the forest breathes, we must discover what this means in the world. we must go into the world and say it. this is kiefer's calling up.

à l'ombre des rencontres salvatrices

10:49 PM

one must say it and see what happens. so much of this kind of saying depends on the listening of others.

11:09 PM

krule's baby blue. how things transform one into the next. the lightning strike, yes. — the rune; but also the sense in which saying things is nothing short but having to say to understand. what happens when we don't know what part of the world to say it in? it is not relative to any word, but only to the fact that it transforms. yes, it transforms in and through a particular place. we should no less understand from this that the kinds of language which exist are expressions of these places. they are the places. there is no sense in which they describe the place or anything. all language is completely unique.

7/8/21

wood singing. language supports the insupportable bringing of the forest toward you.

8/8/21

4:04 PM

read Knausgaard's piece on kiefer. nothing else like it. he echoes many of my own thoughts. having just been in the schwarzwald, it was particularly terrifying.

9/8/21

9:42 AM

nazi salutes and joy. maybe I am swimming in the ocean ohne guarantee. donda. secure me. and kiefer, is he evil? where do I go to see this evil? to the schwarzwald. the thing is, like kiefer's meadows, these things that we call up in our language, and which sit there because we do uniquely call them up and the calling up has occurred

there, the black forest is a place. certain things have happened there. not only have we stolen signs of the happening therein, we have gone therein to find the language. I find a language I can only speak therein, so that, in its uniqueness, can I speak it anywhere? we wonder whether these signs are not after a certain point all the thought that is happening there. they are the thought that is happening there, but we can also bring that thought when we bring the forest, so that language is only ever that thinking.

10/8/21

12:41 PM

the question is whether the structure I build with language can handle any kind of transformation. maybe we measure this by saying that language brings the forest. further, we say that language is somehow already there. the calling up is part of the things. we find language in the completeness of something so that being called up is not somehow to be raised to a description, but that description itself is internal to things.

we say, then, that we bring the forest because we can bring pure signs that call up nothing but that thing which already contains within itself the natural topos of its description. there is no grammar to the forest. if there is a structure to thought, it must come through thought, because thought itself could no more describe it than it was already it. — this is the silence. if we say that it had its description within it, this would be no more itself than to think it. in this respect, the grammar is already there. it is the forest insofar as the forest is not only something we think, but thought itself.

the thought is recovered in language. it, too, is thinking. hence, all language can do is bring the forest, because all it can do is think.

9:20 PM

we went to an ancient church in reichenau. h. noticed that there was a escher-like play of perspective on one of the frescoes. not quite, though, as there were no paradoxes. not in the 11th century. we also went sailing, where transformations happen very quickly.

11/8/21
Schweiz
1:19 PM

it is hard to plan for anything. there are caterpillars in the alps.

THERE ARE CATERPILLARS IN THE ALPS

Konstanz
10:50 PM

h.‘s uncle said that you can only see the highest mountain when the weather is bad. the strong wind pushes the clouds away. adam and eve. leaving the bodensee at night under the stars in the nude.

excerpts from badiou ii

Par ailleurs, il faut éviter qu'il y ait des « trous » dans la fondation même de la finitude. Il faut en particulier que la théorie ne soit pas fondée sur un terme qui lui-même, étant absent de l'univers constructible – donc de la pensée opératoire de la finitude – viendrait contredire la prétention de cette théorie à être complète. On peut par exemple dire que quand les nazis ont tenté de fonder un nouveau nationalisme allemand en des termes purement raciaux, et ont pour ce faire créé la fable des « Aryens », ils ont en réalité affaibli, au long cours, leur propagande : ce terme en effet était à l'évidence mal construit, voire non construit, car il ne pouvait venir avant le mot « allemand » que selon des procédures généalogiques tout à fait inconsistantes. Et c'est bien parce que tout usage affirmatif du mot « aryen » restait étranger à la finitude nationale, et à sa nécessaire clôture, qu'il a fallu en réalité le recouvrir lui-même par un racisme négatif et meurtrier déjà, hélas, bien installé, nommément l'antisémitisme. En vérité, l'extermination des juifs est venue recouvrir l'impossible réalité raciale du mot « allemand ». Le racisme nazi n'était ni complet ni absolu, contrairement à sa prétention. Le terme extérieur « juif » en a été le seul réel, dans la figure atroce du massacre.

La question qui demeure, portée jusque dans son abstraction ontologique, est donc la suivante. La théorie mathématique de la finitude, soit la théorie de l'univers constructible, qu'avec les mathématiciens nous nommerons L (pour « limité ») dans la suite S8, peut-elle soutenir la prétention implicite de sa complétude et de son absoluité ? Nous verrons de façon précise, dans la suite S9, qu'elle le peut. Mais nous pouvons immédiatement dire quels sont les ressorts conceptuels de cette affirmation.

Que signifie d'abord que l'univers L soit complet ? Deux choses. Tout d'abord que s'il est bien fondé, sa fondation lui est immanente. Rappelons que l'axiome de fondation signifie une forme de présence de l'autre dans toute identité : pour qu'une classe soit bien fondée, il faut qu'existe au moins un élément de cette classe qui n'a aucun élément en commun avec la classe tout entière. Mais alors, peut-on s'exclamer, la complétude de L est dans ce cas impossible ! Il y aura un élément secrètement infiltré dans la classe qui précisément n'aura pas été construit, puisqu'il sera étranger à la classe, et donc non constructible, la classe L étant celle de tous les ensembles constructibles. L'élément de L qui « fonde » L n'a aucun élément appartenant à L. Il n'a donc aucun élément constructible. Comment alors a-t-il lui-même été construit ? Cette question est bien présente dans notre exemple : « aryen », posé par le nazisme comme fondement racial du peuple allemand, n'a de ce fait même rien à voir avec allemand, ni avec Allemagne.

La sortie de ce paradoxe se fait à partir d'une lecture plus précise de l'axiome de fondation : il doit y avoir dans la classe un ensemble x qui n'a aucun élément appartenant lui-même à la classe. Mais « n'avoir aucun élément » suffit ! Car si un ensemble n'a aucun élément, il ne risque pas d'en avoir un appartenant à la classe. Autrement dit, l'exigence de complétude entraîne que le seul ensemble apte à fonder la finitude soit l'ensemble vide Ø. Cet ensemble est bien entendu constructible, puisqu'il est le seul à valider la formule « pour tout x, x n'appartient pas à Ø », ou encore : « x n'a aucun élément ». Nous posons donc que Ø est le pur commencement de la hiérarchie des niveaux constructibles. De là que L est bien fondé, quoique ne comportant aucun élément extérieur à sa propre composition. Du biais du vide, l'autre est en effet immanent à L et le fonde, en même temps qu'il n'introduit nul élément étranger à L.

De ce point de vue, les sociétés existantes ne peuvent constituer des classes complètes. Un élément extérieur les empêche en effet toujours d'être fondées par le vide, et cet élément extérieur est tout simplement la propriété. En effet en tant que sociétés de classe, le point qui les fonde est la discrimination entre les propriétaires et les autres, et finalement la hiérarchie des classes. Or ce point n'est pas immanent à l'idée générique d'une société humaine. Le communisme, lui, entend fonder l'humanité en dehors de toute hiérarchie, et donc à partir du vide, en sorte qu'il est le seul à pouvoir revendiquer une complétude, le seul à pouvoir affirmer que la société qu'il propose est en effet la société de l'humanité comme telle. De là que le cœur de son programme est, et ne peut être, que l'abolition de la propriété privée.

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Les mathématiciens ont de fait démontré que l'univers de la finitude constructive constitue bel et bien un modèle de la théorie ZFC. Ils ont même démontré (Gödel) qu'il est impossible de démontrer, à partir des axiomes du lieu absolu, des axiomes de ZFC, qu'il existe des ensembles non constructibles. À s'en tenir aux axiomes ordinaires de cette théorie, la finitude *peut* recouvrir l'absoluité.

Mais ils ont aussi démontré (Cohen) qu'il est possible, sous la même condition (axiomes ordinaires de ZFC), qu'existent des ensembles non constructibles. Par conséquent, l'outrepassement de la finitude peut également recouvrir l'absoluité.

Retenons pour l'instant que, dans le contexte strict de ZFC, l'absolu *peut* excéder radicalement la finitude, et qu'il peut aussi s'y réduire. Si l'on s'en tient à l'axiomatique normale, sans introduire d'hypothèses nouvelles concernant l'infini, on dira que *l'équivalence de la finitude et de l'absoluité* est indécidable.

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Le mot « générique » a une longue histoire, c'est celui par lequel Marx, dans les Manuscrits de 1844, désigne le prolétariat. Il dit en effet du prolétariat qu'il est la représentation de l'humanité générique, c'est-à-dire de l'humanité comme telle, non assignable à telle ou telle identité, héréditaire ou constructible. Ce que Marx entendait par « prolétariat » était en fait le point réel non constructible de la société bourgeoise : les ouvriers, naturellement, existaient, ils étaient là, mais l'ordre établi, non seulement ne pouvait pas les construire comme ensemble consistant en tant que capacité subjective, en tant qu'engendrement d'une politique communiste, mais ne pouvait pas même imaginer, encore moins admettre, qu'une telle construction fût possible.

Je ne crois pas du tout qu'il y ait là filiation directe, mais, spontanément, si l'on peut dire, Paul Cohen a retrouvé ce vieux mot de « générique » pour désigner, non plus l'humanité immanente au prolétariat en tant que dépourvue de propriétés venues du dehors, mais les ensembles non constructibles. Il a de fait produit le schème ontologique de toute invention réelle, de toute création d'une vérité.

...

On comprend bien l'idée directrice. *Dans la mesure où l'univers de la finitude L est construit à partir du définissable, donc de la différence claire, de ce qui est explicitement défini et consistant, l'univers que propose la construction de Cohen est construit sur le mode de l'indistinction maximale, de l'absence maximale de propriétés caractéristiques. On cherche donc à se rapprocher de parties d'un ensemble telles que leurs éléments n'aient en somme pas d'autre propriété que d'appartenir à l'ensemble. C'est ainsi qu'il deviendra impossible de distinguer ces parties, et donc de les construire.*

Du point de vue philosophique, l'essentiel est de comprendre que les multiplicités génériques, en tant que multiplicités non constructibles, ouvrent à une théorie générale des vérités, non pas en tant que précisions conceptuelles ou que totalités pré-définies, mais au contraire en tant qu'exceptions immanentes. À partir du statut ontologique que leur confère la méthode de Cohen, nous pouvons penser à nouveaux frais une théorie de la décision, à la lumière du vrai, comme détermination subjective, et penser finalement le statut historique « en exception » de l'humanité affirmative.

-

Ainsi, toute pensée contient, explicite ou caché, un choix fondamental : le constructible, ou le générique. La pensée est donc libre, en un sens profond, qui s'oppose à la « liberté d'opinion », laquelle revient à dire qu'on a le droit, en vérité très contestable, de dire n'importe quoi.

...

Le choix fondamental peut plutôt se présenter sous la forme : je soutiens, sans preuve ni certitude empirique, *qu'il y a du non-constructible*, qu'il y a de la nouveauté indéfinissable cachée derrière la souveraineté recouvrante, langagière et conservatrice, de l'ordre établi (cela revient, en termes mathématiques, à *déclarer* que l'axiome de constructibilité est faux). Le réel de ce choix, c'est que dans ce cadre, on touche vraiment à l'infini. Car, en définitive, il faut affirmer *qu'il y a de l'infini* – de l'infini au sens strict, donc de la multiplicité infinie non constructible. C'est-à-dire en tout cas (mais nous verrons qu'il faut davantage…) de l'infini non dénombrable, de l'infini au-delà des nombres entiers, au-delà de ω. Nous avons vu en effet que les nombres entiers naturels et leur total, l'infini discret ω, sont constructibles. Il faut donc au moins affirmer « il y a, au-delà de ω, de l'infini non constructible », et après, voir quelles sont les conséquences de cette affirmation. Adopter la subjectivité non constructible, quel que soit l'ordre de pensée-pratique où on le fait, revient à supposer l'existence d'un infini non constructible, supposition qu'il faudra faire travailler dans le réel. Ce qui veut dire : regarder attentivement tout ce qui ressemble à une exception, se défendre contre des recouvrements, dénoncer la superficialité du définissable, traquer les déclarations triviales de constructibilité, qui sont manifestement destinées à maintenir l'ordre… C'est tout un travail. Travail impossible si l'on n'a pas fait au préalable un choix fondamental, celui d'opter, d'une manière ou d'une autre, pour la supposition qu'il y a réellement de l'infini non constructible. Cette supposition quant à l'infini est un guide dans la recherche de ce qui, en effet, transgresse l'ordre constructible dominant, parce qu'il échappe au recouvrement.

C'est précisément cette supposition quant à l'infini que j'appelle une Idée. *Une Idée, quelle qu'elle soit, c'est toujours une anticipation infinie portant sur l'existence, à confirmer dans le réel, d'un univers possiblement générique*.

Là-dessus, les mathématiciens ont fait un travail formidable. Ils ont démontré qu'il existe certains types d'infinis déterminés, qui, si on admet qu'ils existent, attestent par leur seule existence que l'univers n'est pas constructible (théorème de Scott). Ils ont aussi démontré que, par leur seule existence, d'autres types d'infinis imposent que de nombreuses multiplicités échappent à tout recouvrement (théorème de Jensen). *Ils ont en quelque sorte démontré la puissance de l'Idée*.

black trees, runes, and superstrings

b's damning analysis of the nazis closes with

> [l]e terme extérieur « juif » en a été le seul réel, dans la figure atroce du massacre.

it is painfully ironic that the jews ended up occupying, not only the position of closing and affirming the broken concept of german aryanism, but ended up being the only real participatory element in the massacre. one must be very clear on what real here signifies. it is obvious that the jewish identity was the only constructible, and, in that sense, more coherent, more available, altogether more worldly, term, but the entire situation of the holocaust seems to find itself more closely definable as non-constructible, which we more accurately call the real.

the relationship emerges when one inverts in what respect the fantasy structures merely parasitize upon the really existing constructible by asking how the really existing constructible parasitizes upon the fantasy. it does not follow that the constructible thereby becomes fantasmatic. instead, the precise location of reality is caught up in the fantasmatic and this is what signifies the real. we cannot only analyze what is constructible in the situation. when we return to ask in what respect the fantasy structures parasitize on the constructible it is no longer simply out of an open desire for reality, but, instead, we must imagine it is a desire for whatever is projected in the real of the situation. it is not possible for the nazis to simply, naively, come upon the impossible idea of the aryan. they must first find a place in which the impossible can be, for the first time, furtively, expressed. in short, they come to project this fantasy onto the open wound of reality.

wagner's operas are such a place. they stage the acting out of an impossible desire, which, being impossible, is never fully imaginable or thinkable. the nazi real is therefore reducible neither to fantasy, nor to reality, but is the real of the real. it is a wound that wants to remain a wound, where the impossible desire, being impossible, can be acted out. if there is a tragedy to hitler, to the architect speer, to other nazis, it is that they could only play act and stage their desires. if there is as such a true critique of the nazis, it is how mislaid their own visions were. it is not that hitler's theatre could ever become reality, and, as such, it staged the real of some impossible which kiefer's european memory is still recovering from, while also staging the elaborate, repressed, violent acting out of an impossible, unspeakable, fundamentally silent, desire.

in k's min kamp 6, as he labours over hitler's fantasies, building opera sets, designing costumes, we come to realise that hitler himself has no idea what his desire is. it is painfully silent. it is not that what is unspeakable about the impossible is unsaid, but that it is unsayable. there is no language to describe desire, which in and of itself spurs on desire's strange material force. as such, the nazi's perversion lies in choosing to only ever act out. one might say that what was evil about them was that, in Erwartung, where

> unter der toten Eiche
> scheint der Mond

they chose to keep walking, keep acting. the organisation of this wound was never something they could do. they knew they could never satisfy their desire, because they had never articulated it. its absence was the stage for the pure perversion of acting out every other consequence of its satisfaction. the real of the genocide as such retains its signification as real: it points to the one place in which the nazi impossible tried to consume itself, tried to burn itself out, tried to do something real. it is where the true impossible of their efforts poked through and devoured them in the force of its absence. in the force of the absence of meaning. an insight which, to this day, grounds the jewish approach to the holocaust. the dark realisation.

b, to counter this, proposes that communism approaches the organisation of the void, or the wound. it accepts as such this meaningless, which is now part of the scattered jewish kabbalah, and to this meaningless proposes that only an organisation that accepts this meaningless can organise the generic set of humanity. it is in the direct identification of the void for b that this organisation prepares itself to organise all else that remains. furthermore, whatever events anoint themselves post-eventally into this set join its genericity, which is the signalhouse of its openness.

if there ever was an argument against the nazis it is that all their organisational powers organised something that was nothing, whereas one must organise nothing as something. the empty clôture of speer's designs is resuscitated in kiefer's works, where, repainting them, he signifies in what respect the black of the nazis came close to a proposal of how to organise nothing. it was the meaningless they feared, and everything they built finished itself only in the auspice of a nothing that was repressed. it was a nothing that, being repressed, remained nothing. it structured nothing. kiefer's wasting of speer's empty halls in dripping paint, shadow, and darkness, a breaking of the glass of their

former glory

shows in what way, in the depth of their appearance, they can still reflect the nothing contained in them and begin, with kiefer's crucial new layers, to contain nothing. what b calls the generic is only that which, starting with nothing, may begin to do what the nazis tried to touch, failingly, hopelessly, fixating kiefer on them, which is to actually project the impossible. it is not a surprise that the only argument in defence of wagner is to say that his operas, in self-consciously acting out an impossible, succeed in projecting this impossible. this projection is everything. it is what true fiction achieves, and hitler's tragedy is not only that he should have become a stage designer, a librettist, an actor, but the realisation that there exists some gross, unrealized something in hitler, the hopeful capture of his own impossible, only ever mistakenly projected, which we still have to recover.

if kiefer's paintings serve to reveal anything it is the image of the non-constructible, of communism. where speer's designs, as hopeful constructibles, only ever serve to affirm their own internal position, like a stage that believes itself to begin and end where it begins and ends and to contain everything, kiefer both projects the impossible, the open wound, and contains everything as constructible, ever addi-
tive, in the presence of that open wound. the image of communism is kiefer's bathtub, his rising sword, speer's blackdecaying halls – all the wounded icons of nazi aryanism, which could have been an opera by wagner, which could have been a revolution, resuscitated to reflect the black nothing they were always already servants to. only now, in containing this, they begin to reflect and exceed everything they were. kiefer fixates on what was to learn of that dashed insight, repressive memory, that only ever was a view into the void, whose scattered, fictionalised, real projections, altogether unreal, express its idea, its

> anticipation infinie portant sur l'existence, à confirmer dans le réel, d'un univers possiblement générique.

kiefer's what was in short is an expectation of where we might be if the nazis had not misprojected themselves and the sense in which those misprojections nevertheless reflect what they otherwise failed to say, what was missed, what was already meaningless. he sees in that black theatre, read now as theatre, which would have no use any more for the jew, the other, nor anything but its own open self, the vision, the first, nascent expressions of the idea of the impossible, of

black trees, runes, superstrings,

all german history simply entangled, unfolding, wounded, without reference to the jew except as one more constructible layered among many others.

M Ü N C H E N

r iii, münchen

we stay with h's aunt and uncle and their sons. the english garden is near us. at once cycling and walking, passing the water shutes, mindful of nothing but summer air, we make our way, yet again, towards the altstadt. this time I see dürer, his famous self-portrait, his christbild, like the salvatore mundi, looking straight at us, his hand raised lightly, almost to bless, against a backdrop of starlight dark. I see rembrandt's young self-portrait where his youth is like glittergold in his dutch locks, lifted by the northern european light. his darklight picture of christ's birth and the angel's saving of isaac, flesh exposed, face hidden, smothered, beneath the doubting hand of hideous abraham and the knife, falling, floating, in holy suspension, and his christ unraising at the cross, limplimpid, unleavened dough, his failing face and greying body turned to brightened death by the white sheet lifted to gown him.

we return to h's quiet aunt's home. take the bus, the street car, the bike, down the greengrove road which leads through the garden, first pass the maximilianeum, greenlit, eerie ghost towers, by the river broadblack and old, as old as anything. the sinking primeval watered dirt of sunken course, a snake, a caterpillar, run through, below, beneath the nighttime city. dreams, like water, like witchwood, like thomas' milkwood, the honey of the trees, pomegranates, earthfruit, finnegan, falling, dripping, oozing, all collected into darkdrink, earthbroth, into airifying earth, pined in by stoney cavalcade, death, a river, a procession, dreamwaxed, and silent as a serpent.

we spend many hours sitting in the student quarter. listening, recalling coffee, then a book, then a tea, then krule, then a bier. at a bookstore, we find wittgenstein's bemerken and hegel's logik. we cycle to find a bowl of pasta, gnocchi, ravioli, anything. down schellingstrasse. when the day is dying, we die. or turn to slugs. sheltered in the rain, pitterpatter of the city noise. fish, saved from fishinglines, misted in the greysky, the noise, the wetwet, uncertain pitterpatternoise of life. we gel in bier, after arguing about how to cross a street, a water crossing. we meet other fish, on the slimy road to nymphenberg. the rhineland stones, the mudtracks to apollotempel.

das rheingold is singing. beneath the water. rings of nibelungen, the circling wayfare of swimming, introspective souls around the sindream of siegfried come to golden livinglife. quiescent stones, apple trees, waterdrowned,

    unbewusst, höchste lust

becoming something, the german seele, golden on golden hair, sinsinging, the uncertain, alchemized nothing.

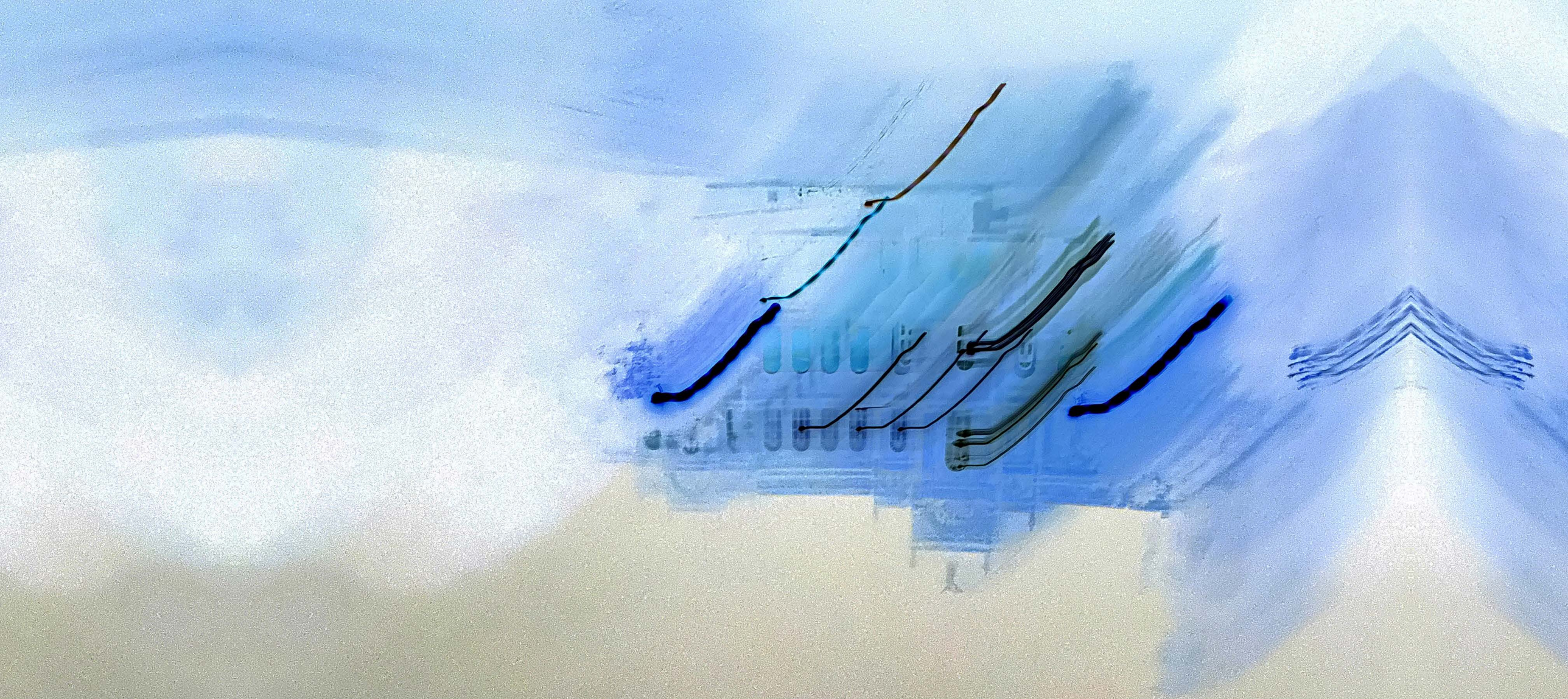
we visit the NS dokumentationszentrum. collected, rafting papers. shipped, shorn, cut, broadened, leafdried with the trees from here to dachau. it is immodest, pure history. only the smallest wrigglesmell of democracy, a word meant to calm us, to believe in reresistance to hiterlian ghosts. the jewish museum has a store, close, medieval, of floating gold against pure black. like gold gathered in a sheet of perfect night. the worms wriggle around us. kandinsky's monsters are housed down the street. these perfect utopia, glowing in the dark. beuys' blackboards, with

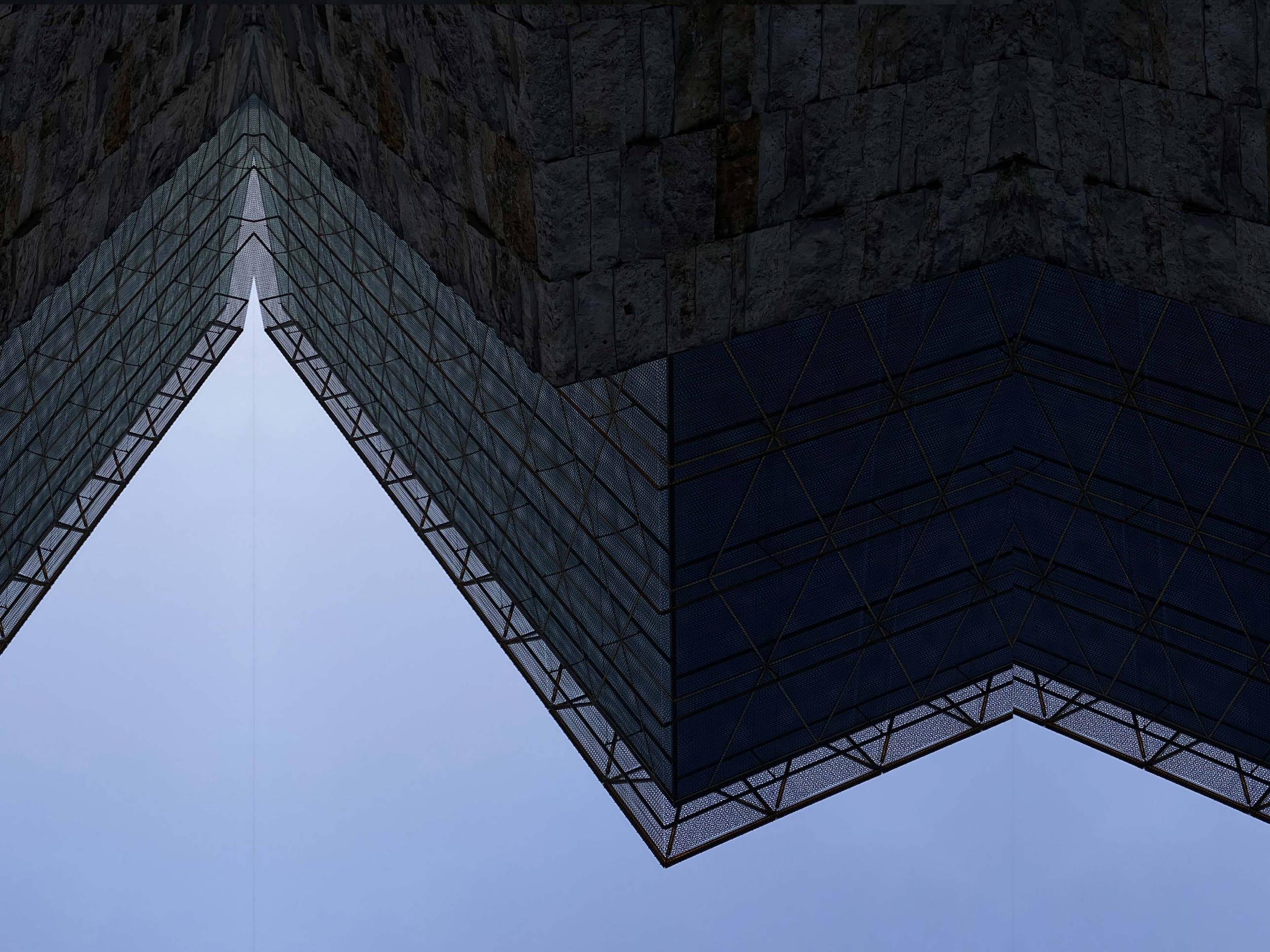
    zeige deine wunde

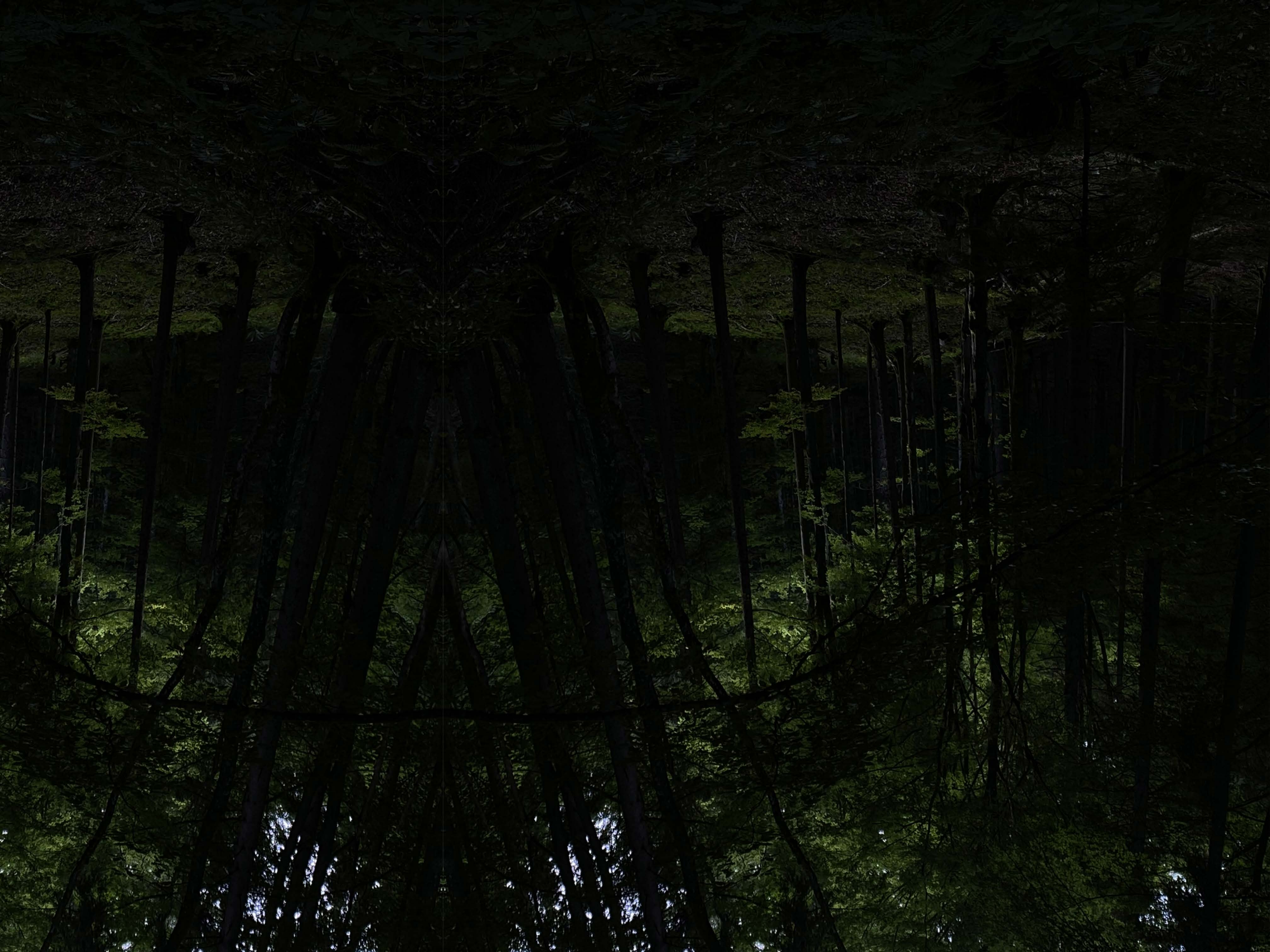
to help us forget his hitlerjugendjahre. blaue reiter's bewegung, his apocalypsing, like our sick little jung, reddening his visions in a boundbook mandala, circling over his past freude in the fathermother closet. ghosts speak. making prophecy, everything a prophecy. see, hear, feel, love nothing. until, resurrected, a scholar's hand lifts up the dead. age is just a number.

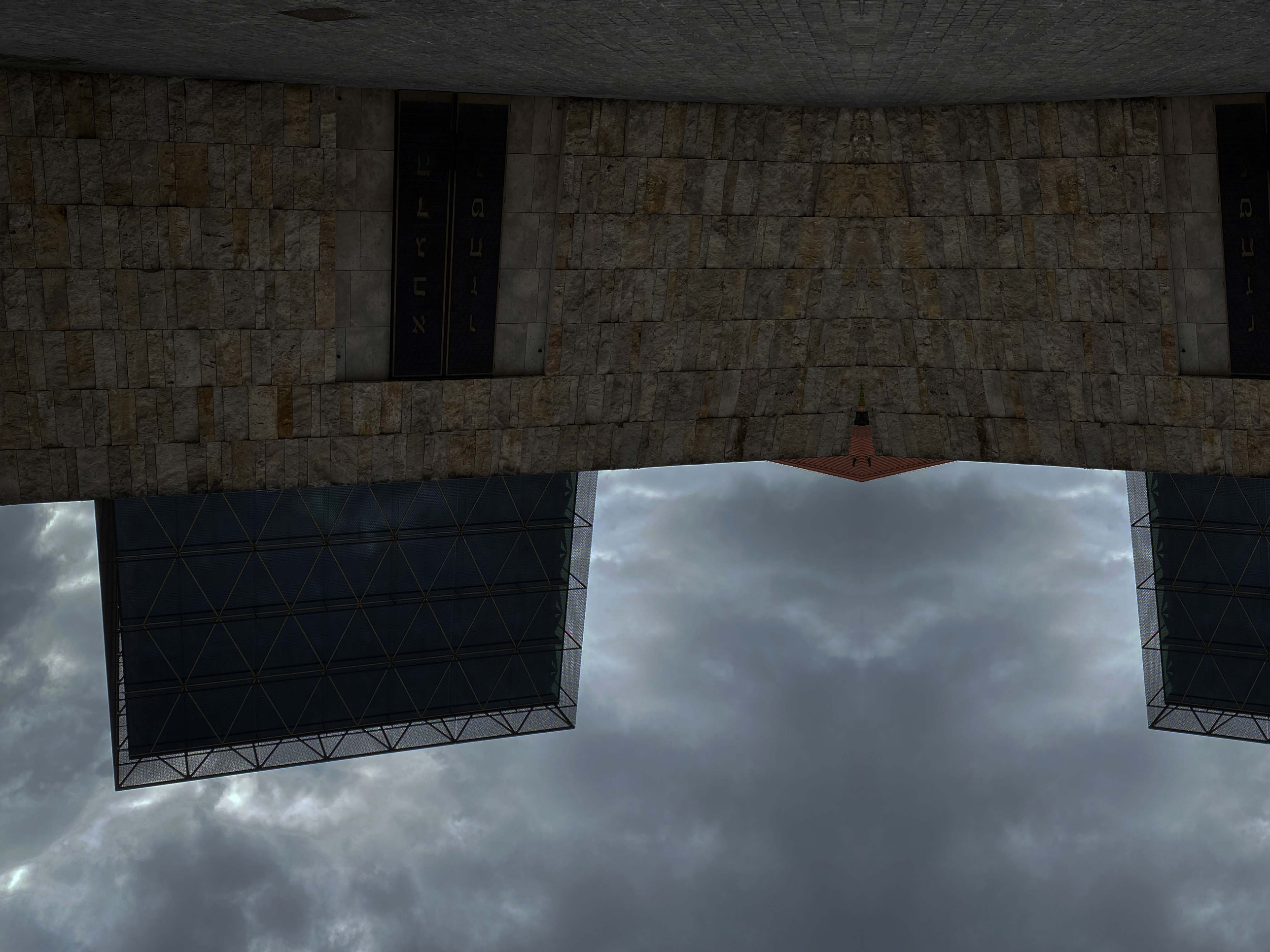
there is a great stone chest synagogue. wrigglewormgold. hiddenhiding. plainsight. nothing like mystery. it is beside the jewish museum. we return to it upon returning from tegernsee. the bavarian hills, little tegernsee, like the creektoad and the riverfrog, beneath the everfalling trees. we miss our train and take another. we hold to the kreuz, the highpoint, eating brezel and apples. we descend by the bluewood, the redwood. the sky is darkvast. a ship. a little monastic hold, laid up with crosswood, a path. the airy view. shadowshade. the mists of the darkening dream. you could reach out your hand and hold the cloudening sleep. we pass a hutte, serving weisswurst and bier. we rushrace to catch an earlier train. a dip in the impending lake. when nothing arrives, the sun shines for a moment instead. we drink bier again, and, as we wait, we read.

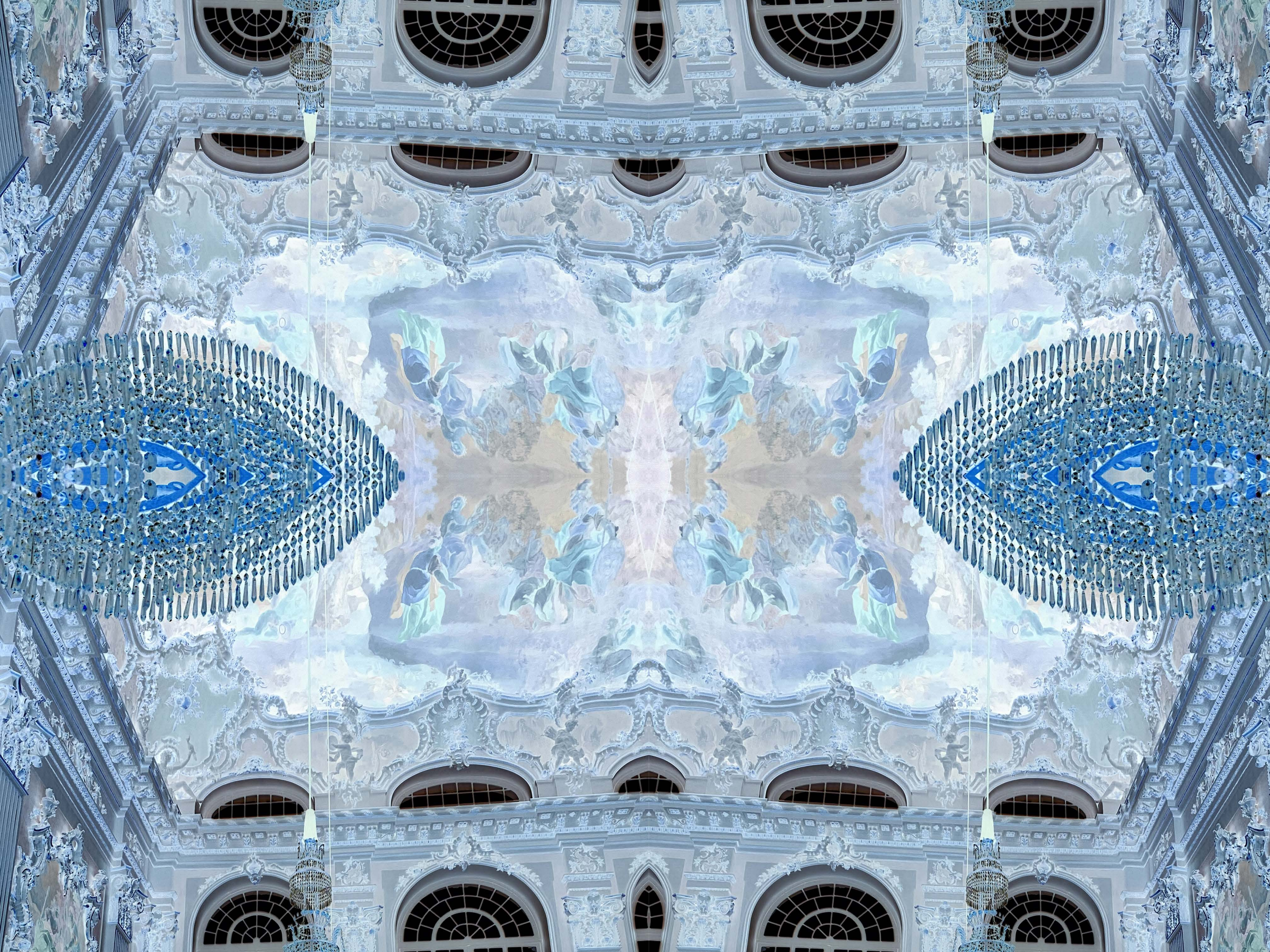
in the dark centre, our late train arrives us back to münchen.
I remember just how near we are to dachau. we sit, before the stonechest, with a blackgrid shape at centre. this time tea and lateenight sandwiches. nothing is revealed. we hear, instead, nothingblack, snakewriggle, fishnoise, and all other perpetual sounds from the abyssal deep. we feel we are dreaming, and the dream is old and dead.



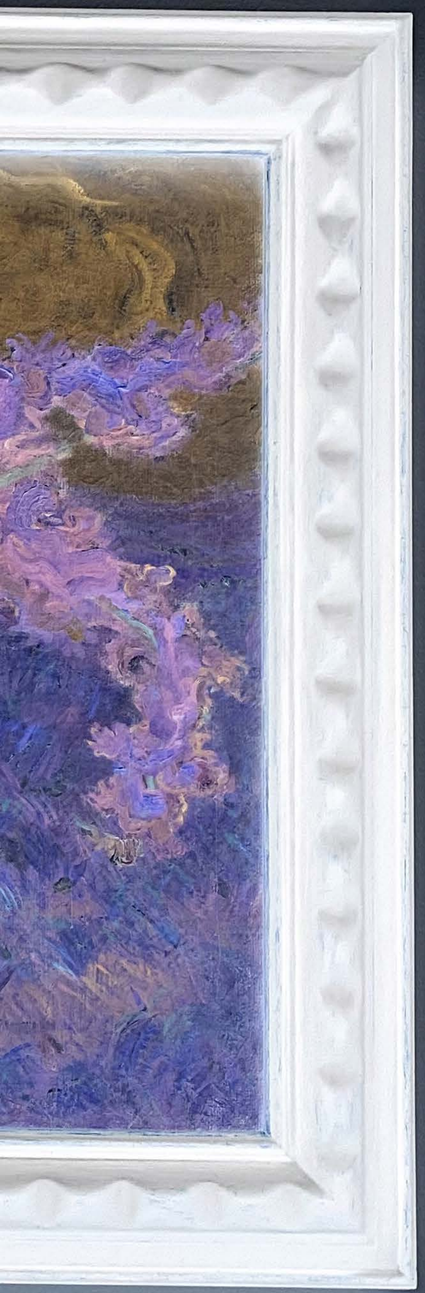




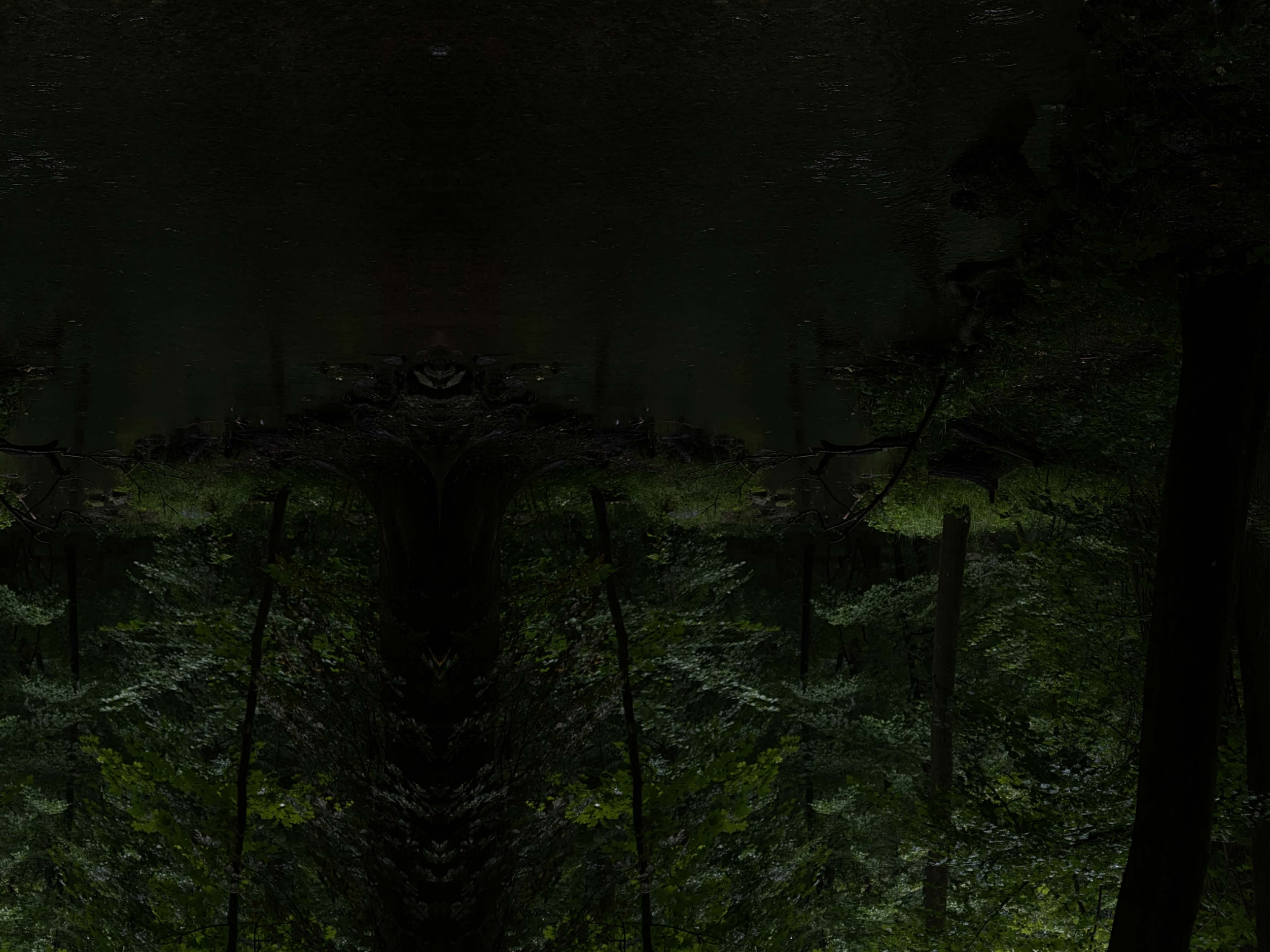




Wassily Kandinsky
Romantische Landschaft
Romantic Landscape
105



Franz Marc
Eichbäumchen



14/8/21
Train to München
6:19

the completeness of a given meadow. it is that I bring this meadow in my language, but my language is not this meadow. yet, what we call the completeness of language is circumscribed to the meadow, and its completeness brings language to the edge of reality.

CLEARING

that edge is basically a clearing. it points a given completeness towards what is radically incomplete. the incomplete is not reality, but a part of reality. a given condition of reality at the edge of a given completeness within it. what we call the descriptive conditions of reality are thereby intersectional with those completeness they take. it is owing to this that language has no grammar, because it cannot any more circumscribe the taking except through the conditions of that taking. there is nothing physical in this, because what language gains in moving forests is nothing itself but the descriptive conditions of reality itself. in other words, unless language literally takes with it a forest, there exists no sense in which it can say anything.

the conditions of that saying are a laying down of a sign. it doesn't signify anything. so, it isn't a sign; it's a mark. it is a lightning strike. the positive reservoir of transformation. to lay it down must in some way involve that of which it speaks. it has content, but that content itself cannot not, as reality, overwrite the language. the overwriting submits itself such that the ß cannot not be exactly that transformation of which it speaks. the laying down itself in some way must transform. the positive conditions of language have already submitted themselves to that fact that they consist in the having had of an interaction between the saying of the language itself and that with which it interacts. it has become a question of to what extent we can imagine language itself sustaining this kind of change and alteration. having no grammatical basis, it is already its grammar. further, that the meaning itself of language was what was itself disclosed in the having had, so that only a repetition of the interaction could in any way sustain a thought, pointed itself to how the use, in the runic sense, could call up that transformation, in turn, only upon condition that it remained or was somehow returned to the place of its origin.

would it be enough to to read certain words in a certain place and call up transformation? this would consist in that language, lacking grammar, taking its changeability from somewhere else. all the transformations which w. tries to account in philosophische untersuchungen consist in trying to literally transform language without any higher order grammatical language. language's submission to completenesses was nothing but that one could not account, except in the place, in what respect language was changed. the recollection in the place of the interaction with the rune would itself be a guess. the character of this experience would be silence, because one would return to the interaction over and over again. the completeness traceable in language would either admit transformation of a kind or it wouldn't. this transformation itself would be unreadable, because it would be the immanence of a reading itself. a having read.

THE MEANINGS THEMSELVES

the immanent grammatical character of language would itself be what one was trying to in some ways always detect. it would be the logos of the transformation. it would be, in effect, reality itself. that this reality consisted in anything would be undermined by w.'s point that the meanings themselves are caught up in the transformation. kiefer, too, immanently understands this; the meanings are what are already there and any functioning language is not excludable from its carrying of these meanings. it was in this respect in which it was meant that language is caught up in its own describability. literally; this is the topos of its transformation. this is its grammar. to use language at all is to call up meanings that at the same as they immanently are reality ruin the possibility of its description. either language, in being its description, changes reality or reality changes language. the turn of this change is meaning itself. the sickening of reality, admitting itself only to an incompleteness circumscribed by immanent completenesses, is that which language directly, grammatically, is. and to speak meanings, in their literality, is to maintain a meaning, in its interaction, in the topos of the incomplete. say these words and watch what happens. if language can transform, it is because, in its entanglement with its own describability, it becomes open to the unfinishedness of reality. to the extent that, from the ocean, we proceed from our meanings, which describe reality without circumscribing it. without completing it, where completeness itself is a living meaning that consists in the world without, as no meaning does, completing it. all meaning is unique. it strikes.

THE LOCOMOTIVE HAS ARRIVED

München
7:04 PM

basically, the possibility of description does not involve circumscription. description is immanently possible.

16/8/21
9:55 AM

if language is both the transformation and the meaning as transformation, we return to our point about the silence of grammar. we can see, however, that the grammar never arrives. language is meaningful in view of what it transforms into, yet these transformations come into places and effectively do the work of the transformation. the difficulty is also that language somehow slips into the things it discusses, so that at the same at it describes with them, it is not fully removable from them.

8:31 PM

this is nothing, but that we also come upon the meanings of the world. — accidentally; and within the same zone wherein language finds itself coming accidentally upon them.

17/8/21
2:38 PM

meanings. — somehow the meanings get through. if, being beyond circumscription, meanings exist, and what we call description consists in that possibility of being complete, of describing, much in the same way that w. admits to us the possibility of reading without knowing in what the reading consists, then meanings intersect with description at the same time as those descriptions themselves succeed in describing a world that is describable.

19/8/21
On the train from Tegernsee
7:44 PM

I don't really want to stop the show. if it is describable, it is describable almost in something. the externalizations of given externalizations. there is no limit to a given thing, but that limit is a description of something immanent. the completeness of the limit does not circumscribe the world. it admits itself into the world without circumscribing the grammar of that world, such that its grammar somehow exists in the world freely, without determining it. what we call determination involves two completeness which do submit one to the other but that either admits the other in its completeness. it might just be that the interaction of two completenesses might be what we call the texture of the external. hegel certainly thought so. in this sense, the external exists without circumscribing insofar as nothing regulates the interaction of two completenesses. they are somehow free, and this is the external itself as externalizations. it is also the topos of something like pure transformation. a transformation whose rules are not set beforehand.

what is the immanent possibility of two completenesses interacting?

21/8/21
München
1:13 PM

last day in munich. two completenesses? perhaps. my gums are raw. in the topos of the finite, how can we imagine it extending outwards? without end. or the slide into. the rules change when you reach the infinite. the space where you were finite gets torn up.

isn't that also the rune? the tearing up. how is it possible that the rules of the very structure of the thing are that which we change such that what changes is the rule itself. what is possible itself at the level of possibility is changed. how can that not extend infinitely. to the end of time. everything changes.

the determination of the determination is the falling into the absolute. the subversion of the universal planck itself.

excerpt from badiou iii

Nous reviendrons de façon détaillée sur ces analyses quand il sera question, dans les sections finales de ce livre, des infinis différents créés par des procédures de vérité différentes. Mais notons un point qui fait symptôme, une fois de plus, de ce que les mathématiques, se concentrant sur l'être en tant qu'être de tout ce qui est, et laissant de côté les particularités du monde qui est celui de notre animalité vivante, y voient clair sur les problèmes les plus complexes bien avant les autres disciplines de la pensée. Dans la théorie des ensembles, en effet, l'instrument majeur concernant la question de l'infini, ce sont clairement les ultrafiltres non principaux, les filtres et ultrafiltres principaux ne jouant que le rôle de comparses de seconde zone. On pourrait dire, métaphoriquement, que, dans son domaine, le mathématicien est déjà parvenu à une sorte de communisme mental. C'est pourquoi, dans la suite de ce livre, je suivrai l'exemple de mes maîtres mathématiciens sur la question, qu'il s'agisse de Kunen, de Jech ou de Kanamori, et, sauf indication contraire, « ultrafiltre » voudra en général dire « ultrafiltre non principal »

-

Ce point s'accorde avec ce qui est un leitmotiv de tout ce livre : l'infini est le nom générique de ce qui institue, en un point d'une situation – en fait, un point post-événementiel – une puissance simultanément égalitaire et à la hauteur de la situation tout entière. Ce qui s'oppose à la finitude, laquelle objecte que toute puissance maximale est tyrannique, ou, à l'inverse, que n'est égalitaire qu'une impuissance partagée. Il est fondamental de penser le lien nécessaire entre l'égalité – maxime générale, dans tous les domaines, des créations de la pensée à valeur universelle – et l'infini, singulièrement l'infini compatible avec un ultrafiltrage non principal de ses parties. Nous avons là le revers dialectique de la thèse oppressive la plus importante, qui se dit ainsi : puisque nous sommes naturellement finis, nous sommes inégaux par nature. Penser l'infini est la condition ontologique inéluctable d'une pensée de l'égalité. Et nous sommes au point où l'opérateur majeur de cette pensée est celle d'un ultrafiltre non principal, non asservi à l'Un, qui filtre de très grandes parties de façon telle que le nombre de ces parties soit lui-même infini.

-

Théorème égalitaire : étant donné un ultrafiltre κ-complet sur κ, toutes les parties de κ qui sont dans l'ultrafiltre sont de cardinalité maximale, soit κ

[note, the symbol for appartenance could not be transfered, so it is represented here as boxes, where x □ A, means x is an element of ensemble A.]

Bien entendu, on ne s'étonnera pas qu'une partie de κ puisse avoir la cardinalité κ. C'est une caractéristique de tout ensemble infini que d'avoir des parties strictes aussi grandes que lui. C'est même la définition que Dedekind donne d'un ensemble infini. En effet, comme nous l'avons déjà dit, la cardinalité d'une partie stricte d'un ensemble fini est toujours inférieure à celle de l'ensemble dont il est une partie, alors que déjà le plus petit infini, soit ω, a des parties de cardinalité ω. L'exemple traditionnel est qu'il y a « autant » de nombres pairs que de nombres tout court : il suffit d'associer à tout nombre son double pour avoir une correspondance biunivoque entre les nombres pairs et tous les nombres. Nul paradoxe donc à ce que les parties d'un ultrafiltre sur κ soient de cardinalité κ :

Dem. Nous procéderons lentement, en six temps, pour bien « déplier » ce dont il s'agit. La démonstration est par l'absurde, comme si souvent : Hourrah, pour l'axiome du choix et pour sa compagne, la logique classique !

1. Supposons donc qu'un élément A de ULT soit de cardinalité λ, avec λ < κ. A étant de cardinalité λ a λ éléments, et donc compte au nombre de ses parties λ singletons. L'union de ces λ singletons, {x} pour chaque x □ A, est composée par tous leurs éléments, soit tous les x tels que x □ A. Mais tous les x □ A, c'est A lui-même. Et puisque A appartient à ULT, nous pouvons écrire Uλ({x}) □ ULT, ce qui veut dire que l'union des λ singletons de A, étant égale à A, appartient à ULT.

2. Comme ULT est un ultrafiltre non principal, il ne contient, lui, aucun singleton. Mais si ULT ne contient aucun singleton, il contient, étant un ultrafiltre, tous les complémentaires de tous ces singletons, notamment tous les complémentaires des singletons de la partie A, soit tous les ensembles de la forme Cκ({x}) où x est un élément de A.

3. Mais ULT est un ultrafiltre κ-complet. Donc, l'intersection de moins de κ éléments de ULT est encore dans ULT. En particulier, l'intersection des λ complémentaires des λ singletons de A est encore dans ULT, puisque λ < κ. Soit : ∩λC({x}) □ ULT.

4. En vertu de la dualité, l'intersection des complémentaires est en fait le complémentaire de l'union. Donc la formule de ci-dessus peut s'écrire : C(Uλ({x})) □ ULT.

5. Si l'on compare la conclusion de 1 et celle de 4, on voit que ULT devrait avoir pour éléments à la fois Uλ({x}), qui n'est autre que A, et C(Uλ({x}), soit un ensemble et son complémentaire. C'est tout à fait impossible, car alors ULT devrait avoir comme élément l'intersection de ces deux ensembles, laquelle est Ø, qui n'appartient à aucun

ultrafiltre.
6. Il faut donc rejeter l'hypothèse initiale : il ne peut exister un élément de ULT, si celui-ci est non principal et κ-complet, qui soit de cardinalité inférieure à κ. CQFD.

Ainsi, les éléments d'un ultrafiltre non principal κ-complet réalisent « ontologiquement » le rêve du XIXe siècle, celui de la « communauté des égaux » : ils ont tous la même puissance, et en outre cette puissance les égale à celle de la situation tout entière.

-

— Le sceptique finitiste : Je suis dégoûté. Ils fourmillent, et vous ne pouvez même pas m'en montrer un. C'est toujours ça, avec l'axiome du choix. Ça existe, ça grouille, mais on ne peut pas en montrer un seul !
— Moi : Cela prouve seulement qu'entre ce qui est et ce qu'on peut montrer, il y a une sérieuse différence. Montrer l'infini ? Difficile. Le penser ? Le pratiquer ? Le subjectiver ? Le créer ? Oui, cent fois oui. À bas la finitude de la monstration ! Cessons de penser que penser égale montrer, qu'être c'est être montrable, et nous nous porterons tous bien mieux.

what is ultimately necessary is to think infinity

a communism of thought. but, what is communism if not thought? it is the thought, the idea itself, which touches what we must otherwise construct. if it not an idea, if it does not remain a thinking, an infinization, a

cardinalization of cardinalization

then it is nothing, it organises nothing. we imagine that this communism will be like an object, like a thing, but it is a thought, because as a thought it is something we can think, can touch. in the choice between what is constructible and what is non-constructible, we must nevertheless imagine that the constructible still organises communism. the thinking still needs to be organised. the non-constructible, or the generic, more closely defines what we actually call material. it is that which is not thought.

to imagine, as such, communism as thought, is to apprehend how to approach what the organization of humanity must look like. it was never going to be simply material, because it would always be necessary to exceed some part of the construction of this organization in favour of the touching. why do we say that an opera by wagner touches more closely a truth, an impossible, that is only ever failingly apprehended in living, material processes? for one, in those cases, as with the nazis, material processes are not let to remain material processes. they are fantasised over, neglecting that materiality is the original fantasmatic object already. the pure fantasy coordinates of reality.

more importantly, the opera does the thinking, the thinking which is only ever that projection, only ever that thinking the thinking, infinitizing itself as infinity. it is never that we merely think something as such, but that we infinitize it, so that thinking itself is the cardinalization, the counting up, of this process itself. it is always the case that thinking is, not just the infinization of something, but the thinking of infinity, such that all thinking is not just indexed, in its finitude, qua transcendentals, to infinity, but is infinity. the thinking of infinity is as such the moment when infinity, approaching itself, opens itself to genericity, and to its real structure, which is now no longer indexed to any constructible as such, but to thought itself. it is in view of this in which b proceeds to provide the real structure of thought and infinity. it is not a constructible any longer, but

un point d'une situation – en fait, un point post-événementiel – une puissance simultanément égalitaire et à la hauteur de la situation tout entière.

a bending of reality, which, at last, reapproaches materiality, where, as at the end of der wissenschaft der logik, thought and material remain strictly irreducible one to another, proposing a non-relation. it is such that what thinking is is the counting-forward itself of infinity, not just infinity. thinking infinity is doing the impossible of counting infinity, where different levels of reality or cardinality have to be proposed in order to account for an infinity that is no longer just infinite, which remains uncountable and unthinkable. thinking it is, not only expressing it, but capturing infinity itself in a cardinalization that opens infinities, larger and smaller, towards a radical open-endedness in reality made up of countable, cardinalized infinites.

the equation of communism, or the théorème égalitaire, gives forward what is simply in the spaces of infinity, where a party of a given set can be as large as, have the same cardinality, as the set of which it is a part. certain points, or, indeed, in the case of

les éléments d'un ultrafiltre non principal κ-complet

every element is equal to the cardinality of the whole. what is ultimately necessary is to think infinity, to practice and create it, as b says, but it is also to expose how the thinking of infinity is the real of infinity, whereby it proposes to bend the reality of which it is meant merely to be a count.

is it therefore that communism is not only somehow infinite, but it is the organization of the thinking of infinity. its preoccupation with equality, with count, appartenance, and participation might be owed to in what way it offers to count reality. specifically, count, not merely constructible sets, but the thinking forward proposed in non-constructible, large cardinals, where it is only thinking, as counting, which sustains the deeper program of humanity's organization.

it is, therefore, not only that it counts, but that it expresses and attributises a model of the counting of infinities such that the real of humanity's political organization is nothing but the thinking of infinities. it provides a projection of an infinity we don't count as such, but count as count. it is communism which provides the real of infinity, giving it space in which the cardinalization, and thinking, of that infinity can occur. without communism, infinities lose the counting which allows us to think through the cardinalization of reality, leaving it open to that which is not reducible even to the count of infinities.

it is the question, in the first place, of thinking infinity, which allows communism the finite means by which to imagine it can do anything like propose to organise humanity as a generic set. it is, at the same time, like in wagner's opera, this stage, this model, which provides the deeper structure of infinities themselves. to argue, in short, that radical equality is possible, that it is equivalent to our théorème égalitaire, such that it is thought in the thinking of communism, in the thinking merely of

the Idea of communism

is to think what is possible in all reality. the count of infinities, embodied in its specific egalitarian iteration in communism, is the model, unmistakably, needfully, paradoxically finite, or capturable in finitudes-indexed-to-infinities, of what is possible in reality.

if we reapproach the question of the bending of realities, of materiality, then we can see in what way this bending emerges in a model that is a part of the reality it alters. it is material which gains in the strange fixation of infinity on thought, because material is let loose to become a new index whereby the structure of infinities is more directly mapped. we may imagine a grothendieck universe, where whatever we proceed to call the material of reality, the non-relation of thought, somehow approaches a kind of bending, a fantasmatic coordination capable only of being mapped onto objects and projected on stages. it is on stage, after all, where unlike the pale reality of the nazis, we can touch reality, and not merely count and measure it. it is thought, too, which seems to hover non-relationally around objects, fantasising over their own inner fantasmatic measurements, and it is the stage in which, in communicating with reality, we gain that first sense of how it bends.

it is not immaterial to suggest that politics ought to be more like a play. it is a modelling. where specific procedures, measure specific indexes, reveal specific unthinkables, it is obvious that the nazis' msitake lay in play acting without acknowledging the distinct, finite limit of the stage. they were like a band of actors who walked off the stage, presuming audience members to be part or non-part of their ruse, creating oblivion and massacre in a theatre hall all while refusing to admit that any of their wandering violence ever exceeded the performance of their stageplay. they had a poor grasp of infinity.
it does not mean less that when, as a model, an organised politics seeks to model, somehow, this cardinalization, and organise, even, these indexes, even as specific political struggles have specific indexes themselves. the idea of communism is, as b argues, the only really existing kind of politics. it remains as a stage in which thought passes through and the structure, or the idea, of reality is contemplated. it is a politics, insofar as it seeks to organise itself as a thought. as a distinct kind of infinity. it must be a model, which doesn't seek to do anything, but presents the manner in which doing itself is to be conceived. if, to do this doing, we must think in cardinally-equivalent infinities, then the Idea of communism is that reality itself resides, infinities themselves reside, in and with respect to deeper forms of radical equality.

this is how a stage, an opera of infinity, allows us to contemplate the form of reality itself and present an idea, impossibly specific, of what this form is. it is the non-relation.

BERLIN

r iv, berlin

berlin is pure abstraction. we miss ye by a hair, who visits the kw gallery the day after we leave. I believe everything I see. we stay, at last, with h's parents. in a flat, near the spree, overlooking the passing trains that go left and right across the river from the hauptbahnhof. v meets us, fresh from leipzig, with a, at the jewish museum. are the jews merely another ethnicity, to be factored side by side anthropological analyses and recovered soil? only a room, single, a tower, with only a single hatchhole to let the light in at its very top. a corner, like a prayer room made from angular black, which you enter in total night. as dark recedes and your eyes adjust, it reveals you and your companions, stark, white figures against the prisonletter, the graving of the walls. I think this is breath, this is a celan poem. figurations, breathing, in design, the tight fixture of the wall, an angle, souls like words in the brightening dark, the wending light draining the nightroom of its mist, its sad remembrance.

there is also a garden of exile. you are meant to move, as awkwardly, as uncertainly, as when offering prayers to a black corner as it turns your vision up towards the light, the street, to laughter. in the garden, you are outside. berlin's grey skies meet you instead. these black rooms defy the rest of the museum, which succeeds at nothing, neither in saying nothing and suffering to house that nothingwound like an earthworm in the centre of berlin. give us no information. give us no explanation. suffer, like in those rooms. turn bodies, turn their life and living eyes into mistakes, for breathing slightly, seeing slightly, mistakes against history. wound us, in rooms, black as night. give us forgiveness in a penant box, a hand left over, in how we start to imagine really what it felt like and, in feeling it, exchange ourselves. willingly, our flesh, willingly, to painful memory, to the light imaginary of how they dreamed outside it all, thought to memory themselves, to their childhood, and bound in a braid, a branch of yggdrasil, the tempered joy of their softdying recollection with the pain of theirs we retrieve and recall. remake a present in wounded past to future yearning. the wunde, the coil, sewn and drawn through the hole of one eternal, darklight remembrance.

there is a single, strange, untangled mess of film. a pure paradox of aryan-israeli return. a signifier for that dark truce. in place, a blonde jewish artist rides a donkey through the brandenburg tor. a cowering berlin. an apartment raided in slow motion, books falling from a highwindow to the rough ground. this fantasy of perfect return, elegant and fearful and unconscious. pure dreamery. for nothing else explains its consummation, the longlost gaze of its heroine, but that to imagine yourself in the mind of a renewed nazification is to equivocate the violence of a jewish return. ouroboros. the worm is everywhere, passing its truceless voidkreis around all unwitting sleepers, a neverending linkline, asking again and again to return return return.

h and I visit zheng bo's exhibition at gropius bao. this sensitive, treelicking soul, inclining towards

    the political life of plants.

the ausstellung is right across from the former site of the gestapo headquarters. when h and I first enter into the gropius bao, we hear the sound of human voices. recorded, chanting. it is an accident, a test. lines of black speakers, coveting the centre of a wide space. the arches, the doorways, the marble floor, echo it. we stand in line, waiting, breathheld, accidental, too.

I look at his blackwhite drawings of plants. they are arranged on yellowwood tables, low to the floor, with glass counters. it reminds me of badiou's index, for these plants, blackwhite to us, bluegreen to him, caught in treeshade and summer, hold something like an idea. he succeeds at giving us an idea, which, he, caught up in greening life, cannot see himself. the cut, held, almost, at the artist's expense, where cut's traversion modulates an idea into its topos. we see an artist, who has an idea, but no space, no image, and the space that emerges comes when forgetfulness and reality's plying part, stem by stem, goethean, in grey abstraction, releases the plant into the real. we see nightshade,

    a plant, glowing in the dark,

and this index, this glowingplant, is the closest we get to the absolute. this warped grothendieckean motive.

at the end of the room, there is a dark space with a projected film. bo and a fungi specialist discuss the forestfungi community. watching, I realize the meaning of proximity. we are only ever proximate to the absolute, which means that what we call thinking, what we call the churning, unfurling of possibility in the fungal stem and the tree root, the tree behind me I cannot see, humming along with water and carbon and, naively, process – process itself subject to reality's distortion, an unwitting, furlingforward of its puttingtogether – that this, to which we are proximate, and which thinks for us. it thinks without content, only in that proximity, so that to be near it, almost to hear it, sense in the lowest, most secretive, most dumbdeaf parts of the body, but altogether not to, is to gain in the league of that

proximity the thought that is never had as a thought.

v, a, h, and I meet at a bar late one night in neuköln. I have my copy of l'immanence, and a asks h and I frankly whether we are communists, and if we are, what this signifies. the division between h and I is at its most restful, tentatively at watch. v says he cannot imagine how it does not lead to tyranny. we wallow drink. I put the question as one of radical equality. where is this place, near and far, possible and impossible, begging the question of our systems, so close to the sun,

icarus, icarus

but, altogether, needful of construction, organization, planning, and intelligence? the pauline injunction to sleep, perchance to sink, unbewusst, to feel the other, lovelike, the flower of my hand. the little index, odin's eye, to leninlike find an equation of that difference between the paris commune and the russian situation. find these organizational signs, plan around them. a says he tries, calls names, joins groups, probes marxists, rustles the nothing of their blueprints, sticks his sword into the crevice of their armorcasts, their tongueties, cuts their knots, and nothing happens. whatever will happen has no more happened yet, and the whiteblue form of its formation is flame, abstraction, loving in the dark, lifting coal, living out the blackthing of its disturbance, of all unfinished parts of the real. the room spins and blurs.

we return home quietly and sink to sleep, rising late. we meet v and a at a converted kirche, now an art space. we eat lentil soup, and I bask in memory towards a graveyard we pass, with h's face in light, a brighteve meadow, reading, passing the tangled reeds at wall's edge held in soft sunlight. a and I talk about writing, about knausgaard. I tell him that it may be useful to use the second, or even the third, person, to take seriously k's realization that when we start to talk about reality through fiction everything becomes that much more real, to write personally and utterly about one's own life. a recommends to me cellini's biography. it is obvious that k has found a method, a method for moving deeper into reality.

we find a bar, and sit outside, in kreuzberg. a and v had met in the line to berghain. a moment of slippage had unadmitted them, for, coming alone, but meeting in line, they each told the latelie at door that they had come alone, though fate had, in fact, in that few minutes, tied them together. a tells us about parma, where he's been living, doing his studies in ancient greek at stanford over the computer, consulting his rural neighbours on alternative modes of living. he wants to make these modes universal. v tells us that his memoir is a study of martin ocadhain's road to brightcity, written in gaelic. we talk of heidegger, and I say his mistake lies in idolizing peasants, that endless return. first as peasants, then as particles. the trick is to go deeper, beneath the rumdirt, earthenhonest, to the partparticulate, the soft quantum, where reality only mumbles its directions and the softloam dirt floats alongside everything else in space becoming space. this drum rhineland, still untouched, unquantified, unsliced, unfinished, unredemed, unmeasured, in rhine swimming

black eel, pikeperch, blind carp, death trout

eat away green foundations, winterfroze, asleep, battledrum, wherewhen snow sat in little foxholes and rained on the parade of warbathers, drinking schwarzeflocken, an image of reality in its making.

in the mornings, when we wake, there is rooibus tea steeping. a little left for us, though I prefer black tea. h and I share bread, oats, muesli, watching trains pass slowly over the spree. we plan the day. its littleness, its slow decay. I visit the beuys exhibit and realize he is a wittgensteinian. completely. these wordbeams, drifting into logical space, sublunary. later on, I see a film in which pigs are slaughtered artfully, in a red ampitheatre. st.agatha's breasts, served in little cookies. fat renders, oils throats and streets. bloodfest. eventually, the pigs are burned, flayed, eaten, and then bonebgebrannt to fine powdered ash. in the gemäldegalerie I see a book, perfect in composition, in silent, greying, almost ashen colours, a small, resplendent scene on prayergrass. a book of hours. I visit

hegel's gravesite

near us, unbewusst, in the darkgrass. bloodgalerie.

we have dinner with a jesuit. blackcoat. romefresh. politicking. the ravioli I make are undercooked, and I see his face sour with every bite. he turns to h to ask her about der lichtung, a divine agency, for him, in the world speaking to us, choosing to present itself to us. h's mother asks whether heidegger's nazism discredits him, and I speak on how the lightning guides everything. strikes it. they speak german. he tells a story, eating gelatinized cream, I do not understand, and everyone laughs. family resemblances. it strikes me that I am nothing, and this nothingness comforts me. his visit is successful, and he departs.

one morning, I am alone. listening to beethoven's cavatina, I walk towards the streetcar. I think it is almost fall, autumn air and light live

softly here. it is colder. I imagine staying here well into the fall, not leaving, but writing, steeping. turning into a sad, autumn leaf. meeting ruda, in prenzlauer berg, he tells me of the difficulties of being a professor in the uk. he is trying to buy back his freedom with a grant he jointly proposes with the great slovenian philosopher zupancic. rift. I mention, speaking about capital, how it is not always intersectional with its corporate muzzling in, which attempts, failingly to regulate its destructive, freefloating power. he corrects me, saying that these fantasies of corporate power merely project the cut already in capital. they project what is already impossible about capital, what we have only ever seen and can only ever see through a glass darkly. you cannot detect the impossible.

v tells us to see berl berl. a rotund, subsublunary, pastwarped, visualization of the berlin wetlands ten thousand years ago. in the halle am berghain, in high factory walls, you lie down and watch massive screens project a hypercoloured, drifting, textured and retextured, amphibianized wetland. it looks more real than reality, unencumbered by empirical livingness, just the pure informationality of its design. abstract things that turn, breathe, dissolve, in blinddark visualization. in rapport with rootweeds, bluegreen trees, fatflora, everything transforms into everything else. point by point this morereal cosmology places its abstract causality in darkwetdeep pool, the turnstir ocean, in the nothingseen of its extraction, only ever the recovery of each ideathing, invisible, one by one, threaded into the tapestry of colorized night. it's like a king krule song.

h's friend, t, stays with us and her parents for a few days. we visit the haus am waldsee. floral creatures here, made of softsmall architecture, pinpricks of leaflimbs and dried blowflower pappi, dried reedwinds, bent in simple curves, sites of miniscule construction and renewable utopia. small enough to hold in your hand. we meet a again, this time at a bar in prenzlauer berg. we drink leffe, and he starts to answer the same question he had put to us.

what is this c of which you speak?

he tells us about the strange, ruleless berghain. enchanted by speer and fascist forms. this violence holds open, selectively, a classless coming together. narrowed, plucked, slaughtered, the poorest of the poor, the lookpoor, the pretendtosuffer, altogether random, arbitrary, jaded, like picked riverstones, night resurrections, glowfish. he describes an upper room and lower floor, one for drinking, one for dancing. bathrooms, dirtdrugged, open. a lowest floor, bellybeast, humhive, heart of the heart. you pass, stay, sleep for two days. meetings collobrate in endless night to stage a fiction of freedom and attraction actually free. riven, hegel, proposes that the real comes apart at the touch, sunblind, into all the presence of how it pieces its own vision together, in black elephants, and the minute lie, the exaggeration, the mystification of identity in its own identification, and the turn into another, sincerely, latently, with the plaguemask, the sickness of reality on your lips, reality confined, coerced, sustained in the tensiontrick of this shadowplay. to love, impossible, without the guess, the prediction, the prophecy, of where blindreality will end up. wherewhen touch,

palm to palm…holy palmers' kiss

it cuts through, despite the strangess, the unpreparation. the voiceless, knowinglessness. this kisstouch, coveted signmove, is love, where love is the avowed, destroyed, forgotten, lethe'd, masked, drawnthrough nightcloak, moralled in bedsheets, slumbered, dreamed, awoken, frailed at broken recognition, lossed of image, lossed of world, periloused rapport, firsted sight. love, the actual of actual, force of all reality. kisstouch.

I am looking at my copy of l'immanence. it seems to me that badiou proposes a way to organize this. that we may imagine some souls, in their wordliness, in their singularity, more perspectivized, more pointed than others. we may say that communism no less proposes to arrange its own equality. it is h who tells me that hegel writes how abstract equality involves some distinction which allows us to notionalize the sameness, but that when this is overcome, failing to express anything but this abstraction, and singularity rearises, only an equality that resolves to the

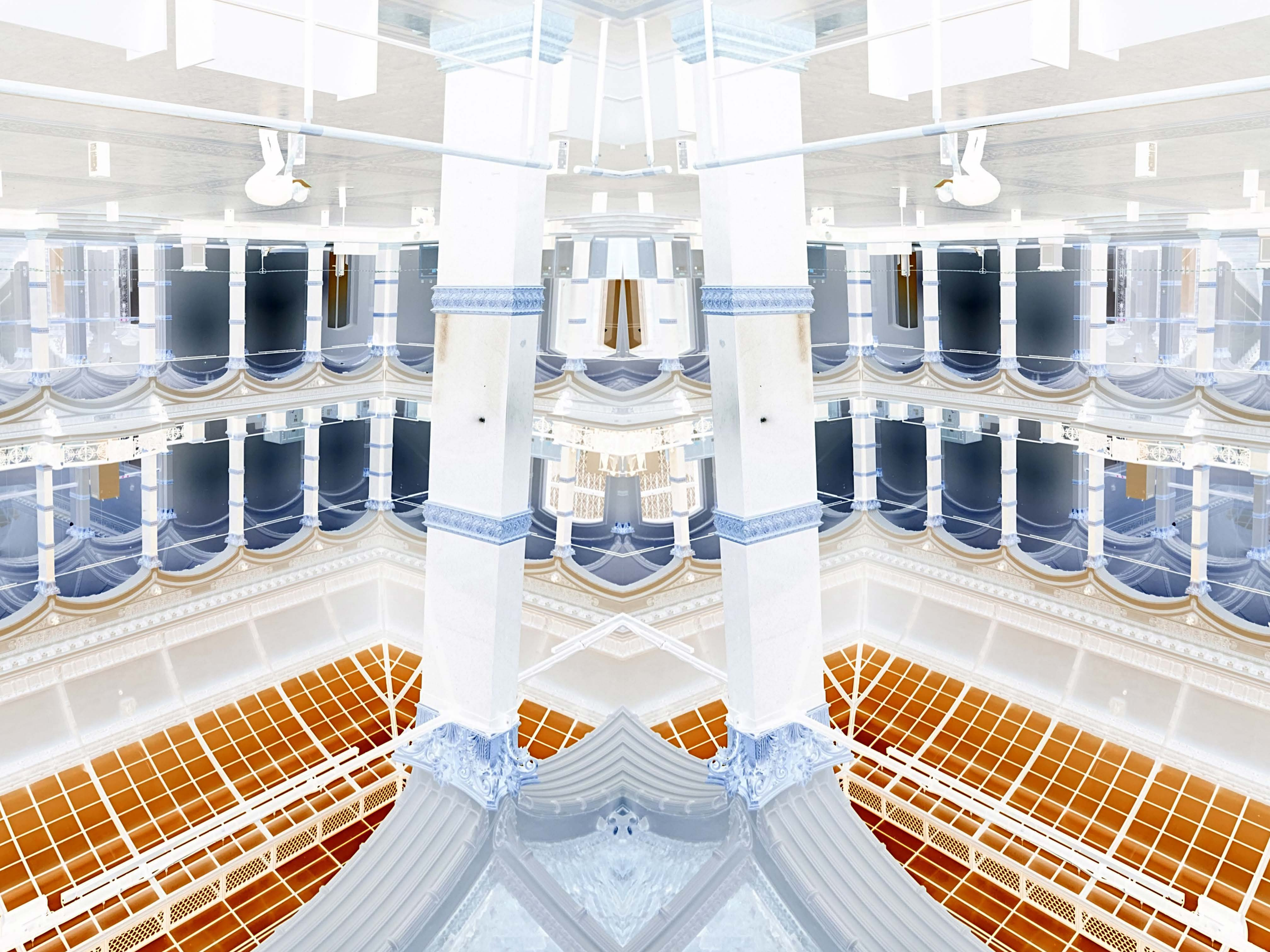
singularity of everything

can propose, in that utter differentiation, to see difference and anoint a new equality in the housing of all singularity. parallax. what we cannot see, we gain in perspective.

we see druk with t the next night. mikkelsen's despair, lowresonant, kierkegardan, selfquieted. in his dance, he frees us. he leaps into the water, the image stills, we extend our handheads into the cold danish sea after him and feel in abstraction our own realizations. in morning's rise, we prepare for our final day. v has left, sadly, and we exchange our last little conversation late one night at a bus stop. we meet a for the last time in a cafe near oranienplatz. it is raining, but we sit outside, beneath a cover. I have finished l'immanence, and hold it, warmly, nearly, proximately. we begin to discuss the nature of limits and I improvise what I will come to call antonio's proof. I piss

between the two parts of the proof.

h and I take a long bus home, caught in rain. upstart crow. we stay up until midnight to catch our last locomotive out of berlin. h's family stays up with us and sees us off. I recall how, in the shower a few days earlier, I had had the thought that the immanence of thought is how god listens. if we take the immanence of thought, reaching high, forward, then where it achieves, not only what thought is, but what is possible, then to think is to be precisely where god is. to think is to think as god thinks. to think is to think the thought god himself is thinking. to think is to think as god. the open nothingwound he himself is subject to. our night train takes six hours. sleeping, deepdiving, darktunnelling. nightlocomotive. near the absolute. nothing remains but to begin.



Munchen
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possibly the possibility of description does not involve circumscription. — accidentally; and within the same zone wherein language finds itself coming accidentally upon them.

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meanings. — somehow the meanings get through. If being beyond circumscription, meanings exist, and what we call description consists in that possibility of being complete, of describing. much in the same way that w. permits to us the possibility of reading without knowing it. what the reading consists; then meanings intersect with description at the same time as these descriptions themselves succeed in describing a world that is describable.

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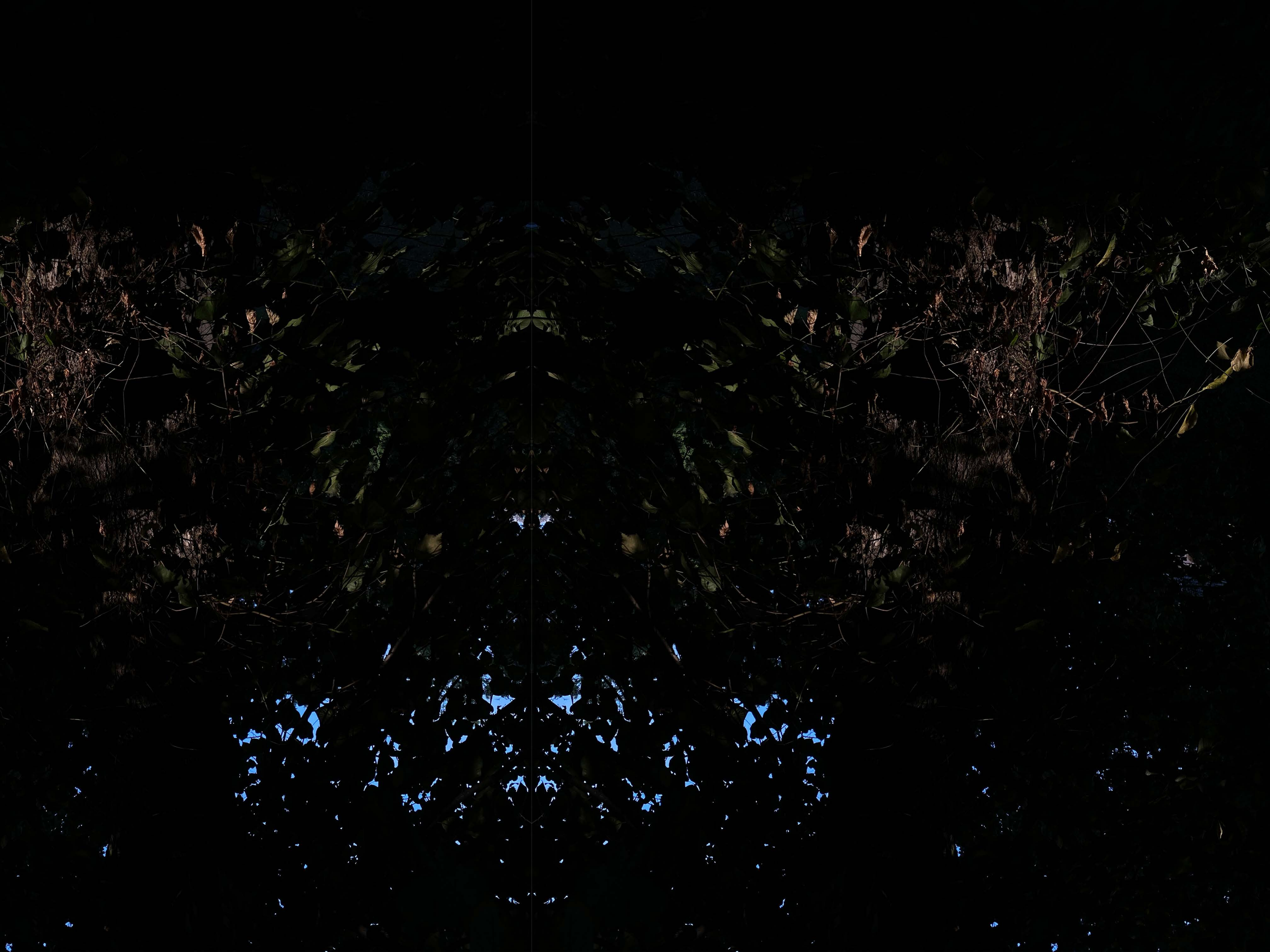

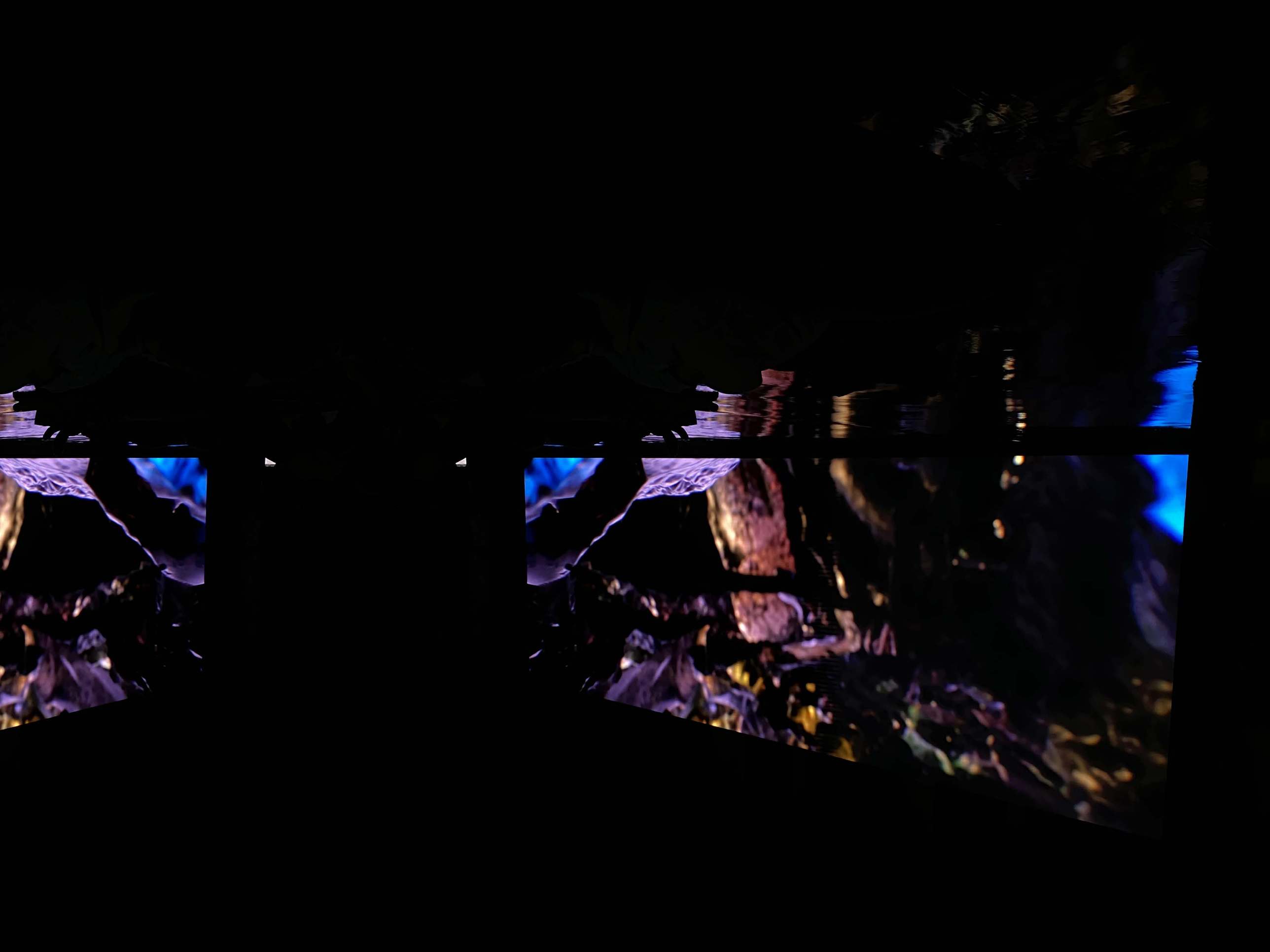

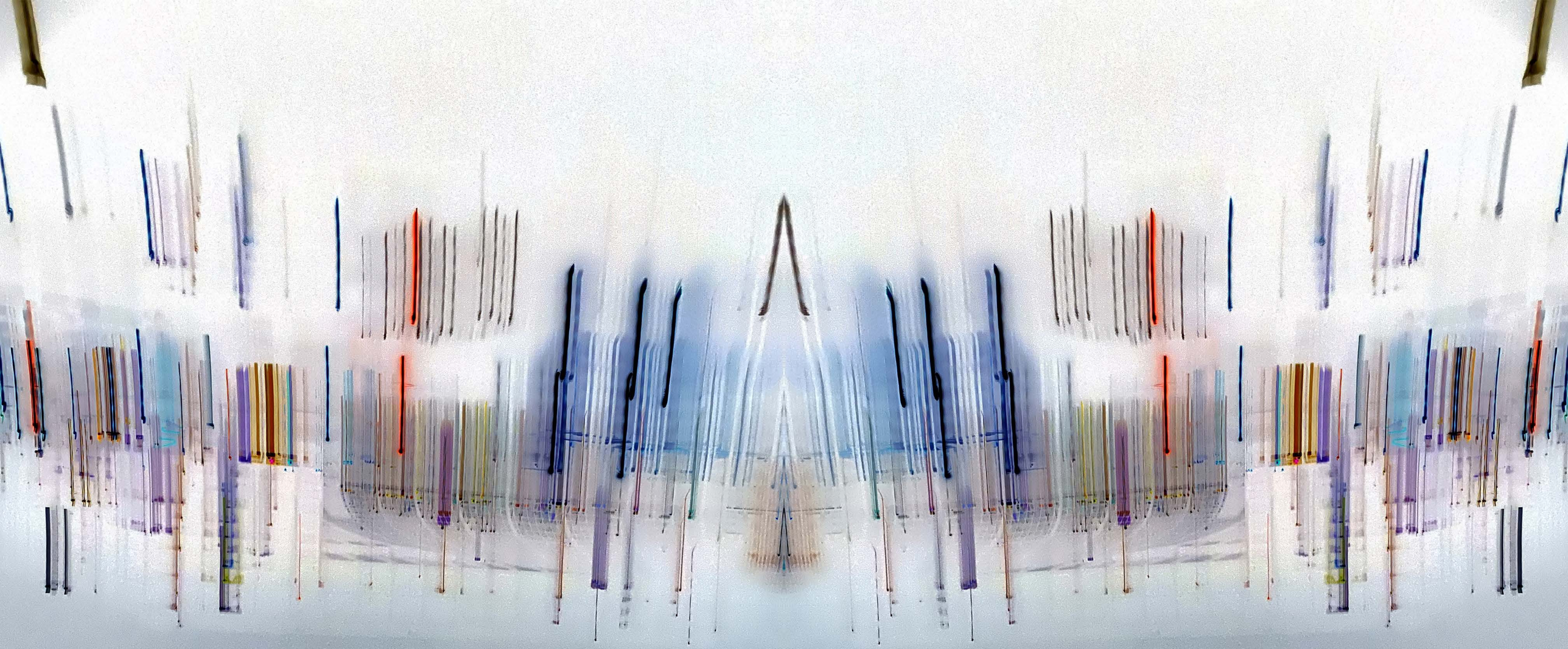

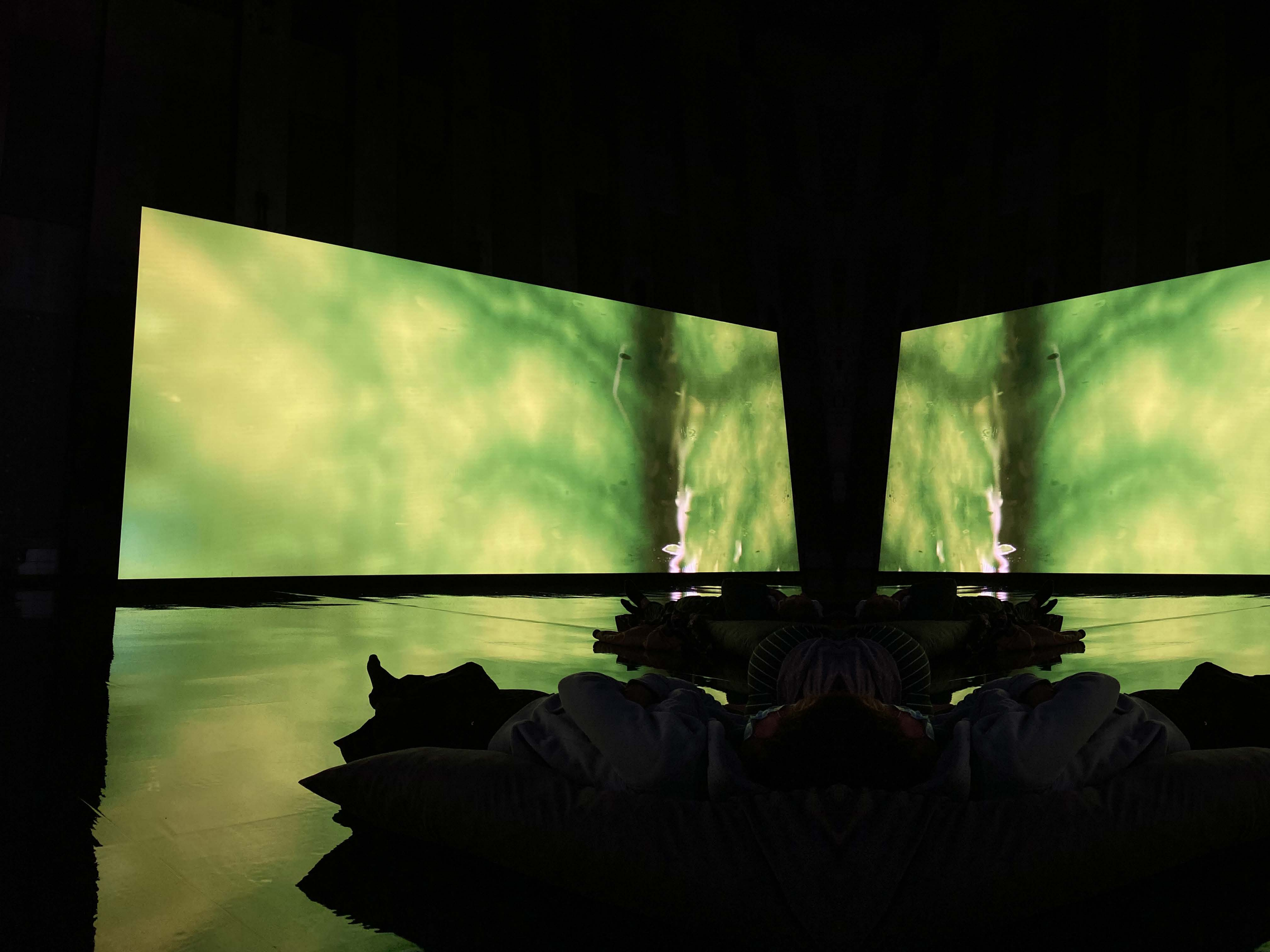

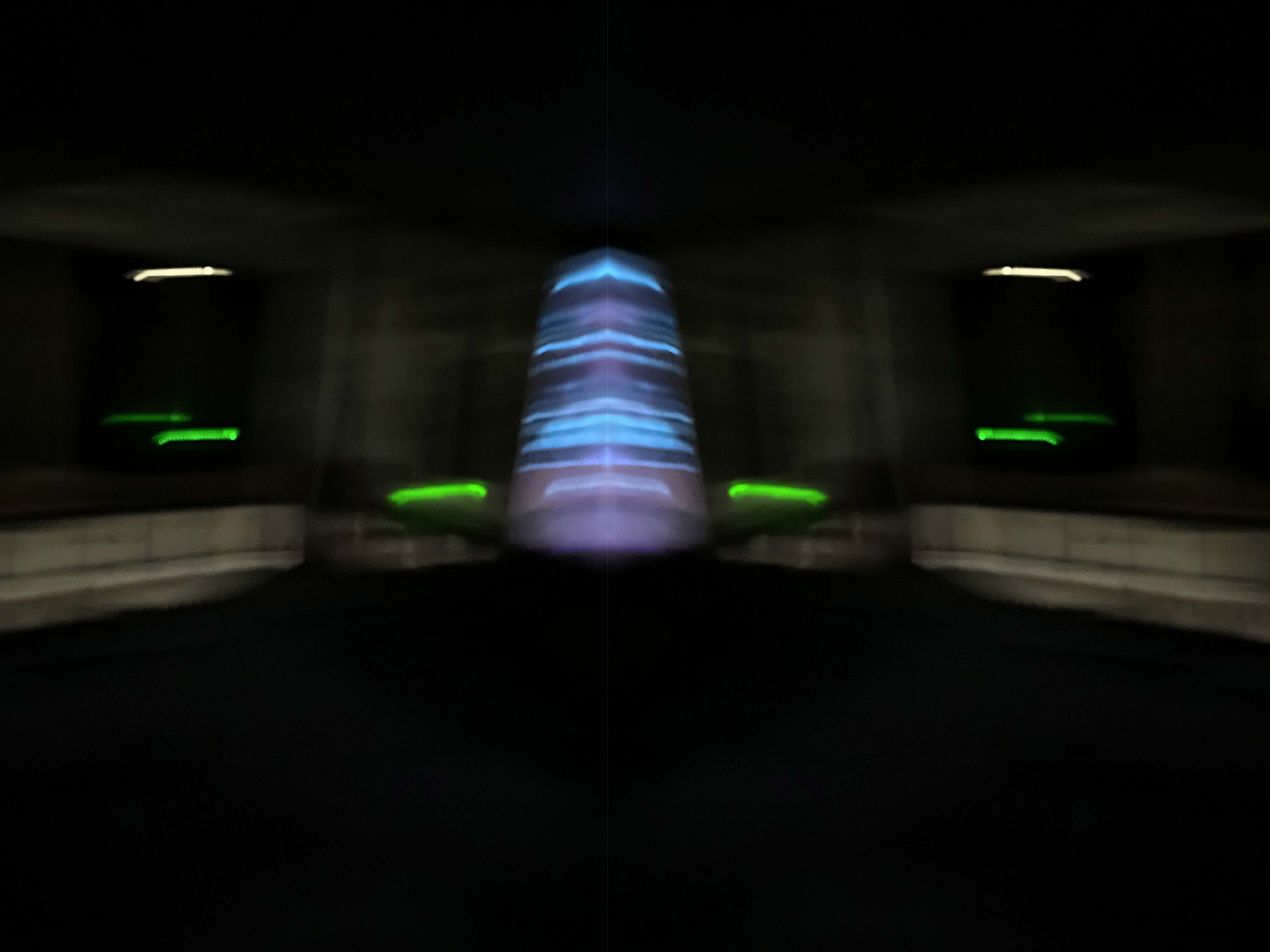

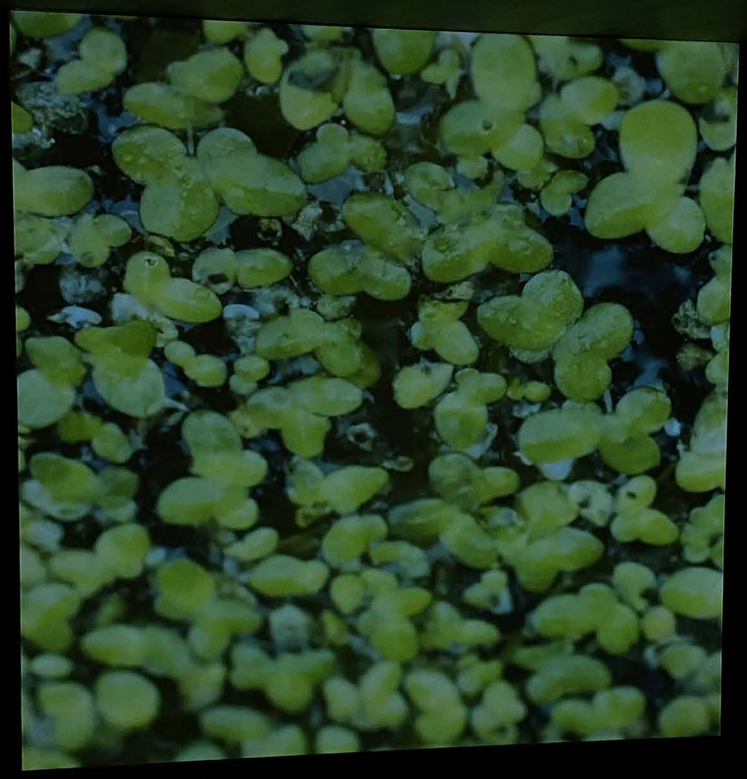
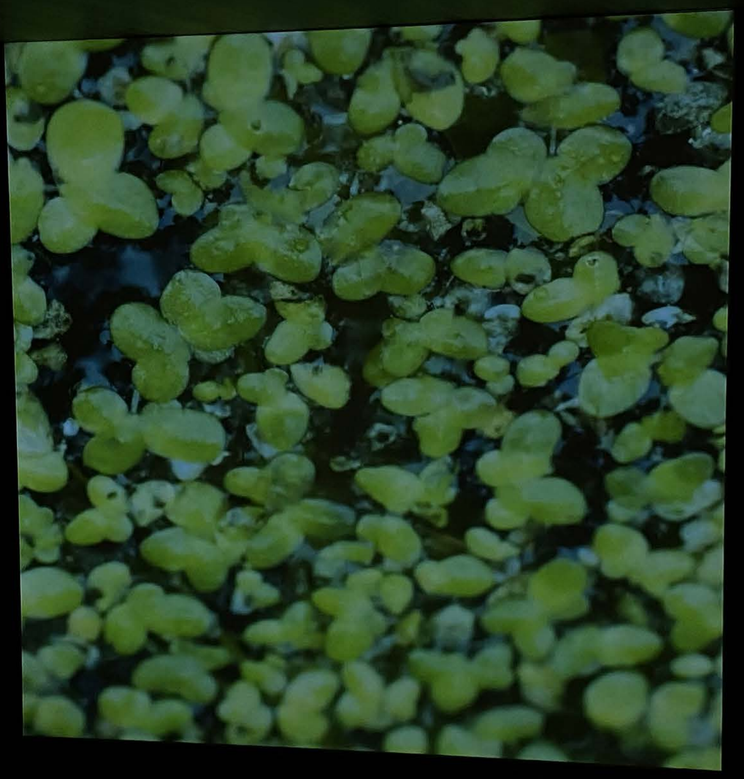

Train to Berlin
5:40 PM

could we say the changing of the given rules itself constitutes a kind of absolute. it is not that the rules change, but that the changeability of a rule, and the rule itself, are somehow a structure unto themselves. that they change signifies only that, at some level, they are. the change only now begins to happen at a new level. at the level of a rule.

what all of this misses, however, is that the transformation is what is not measured. the absolute is not structured, because it is the very subversion of the space of the absolute that admits a kind of free-floating transformation. the underlying conditions of possibility for which being that they slip behind each other — they escape the figuration of the absolute, but only by internalizing it. the possibility of this internalization is through a change in reality. reality changes, because its underlying conditions were never set. these conditions themselves are complete, but only insofar as they do not circumscribe. as such, reality's immanent changeability is somehow already happening and our measure of it, in the runic conditions of language, happen after the fact as we move from place to place. the slide in is a falling into the possible-impossible, which is a change in the meaning of the world. a change, at the level of meanings, doesn't escape language, but is possibly the only time a rune can be placed.

7:13 PM

the whole point was to try and escape something like a planck. if a rune existed, it exceeded a planck because it was the entanglement of a sign with the world. it was the entanglement of the very description which supposedly grounds a sign with a world equally subject to the free fall of the immanentization of description.

the description was become the moving forest. and language itself was also moved. it was a kind of moving itself. the rune. the underlying conditions of this description are moving. there was a need to place a sign — a mark — at the same time as we entered into that world in which what we have called the incisement of description had originally taken place. it is as though description itself is made and that is that to which we return when we use language. we come upon that very turnkey and cut of a description itself into a world. a true entanglement. we turn to that wound — housed in a word itself. the meaning of the word being that calling up of the woundedness taken place. a kind of impossible kreis between the placing of description itself and the picking up. the return.

the falling through in the place is the falling-through of a meaning itself placed that you take up in the falling through of a meaning. a meaning. speaking. that which you speak is the locomotivization itself of meaning. what you fall through is a worldwordwound. it is something you come upon in the world which responds to language and is somehow a runic placing and the caught-upness of a thing in its own describability. we ourselves get caught up in this immanent passing through. and when we speak, if we speak, without grammar, we come upon this, almost accidentally, and we cannot fail but to react in the place. the kreis, in turn, is that that which is the wound is also that which is read.

to the extent that the absence of language is somehow its beginning. the nothing to say begins the elementary subjective movement of the kreis(is)

Berlin
11:37 PM

the elementary stroke is a rune. if we are thrust back into the world from a position of having been in it and our language dredges that up, language somehow receives itself through this.

a shout. on a different scale.

22/8/21
4:02 PM

the shout consists in something like a word. we think that a word does something. it does something over and above anything that it can say. this is why, for w., language has to get entangled with this doing, because it is precisely, paradoxically, what is trying to be said. w. imagined that this is where language would always effectively end up, and whatever we felt we were saying would be drawn into something it was doing. the shout, after a certain point, would be the doing, which had been caught up in the effective paradox that we couldn't not speak at the same time as something happened which both escaped the speaking and grounded it.

it would not follow that what language did would fall back into language, but that language itself would be nothing but the falling into something. it would no more suffice either to say that language would never say this doing, because that would be all it would be saying. this was w.'s point. you would speak effectively only if at the same time what you said succeeded somehow without you knowing why. something about knowing in what you had said consisted would exceed the something which has made language itself, the speaking, possible in the first place. if language is a shout, it is because it has no grammar. it shouts through itself and the world.

a word, in turn, is precisely that impossible rune which shouts. it shouts because it arises to its conditions of saying accidentally. by surprise, and loudly. if this saying consists in anything, it is the very happening which language itself both is and is involved in. the accident of language is that it cannot help but respond — to the extent that this renders language indecipherable. it entangles its indecipherability with its meaning, its expression. this is a condition of the world itself, where to partake already in the meaning allows language and voids the possibility itself of language if this partaking is somehow compromised. language rises and measures to the underlying transformations which it expresses and, as such, succeeds in expressing at the expense of any understanding. to speak, then, is to shout.

it is a shout insofar as it can only come accidentally and that to speak at all is to speak accidents. only, these accidents are not somehow accidents of meaning. they are nothing but the basic runic quality of language, the returning, which allows any meaning to sustain itself. further, they are directly the fact that I can only express myself in some impossible interaction with the world. this interaction is not said, but is directly the conditions of any saying. and these conditions are not somehow underneath language. they are that which language, as this floating, grammarless, lightning strike, directly is. what I say then has nothing to do with what I think insofar as what I say as what is sayable is nothing but these conditions. we know the reflexive turn w. proposes for meaning, in turn, but we must also see how our expression becomes conditional upon an access to language that exists and which we gain access to without preparation. and this lack of preparation means that we can speak meaningfully without knowing what we mean. we can create language, and can only later discover what we mean. it is not available us to simply understand, because that which we speak is understanding. as before, it is the reading itself.

the things that are read are effectively things that happen without our preparation. if the rune is what is able to be said, then is it the transformation in and around the rune that constitutes the sayable. only, this sayable is not just what somehow escapes material, but an immanent part of the deployment of materiality itself. the clearing here is something like that which allows us to go further into meanings without returning back to anything we as yet either know or understand.

5:08 PM

we basically have to expect that that change is part of language. it is, impossibly, the thing transforming.

11:50 PM

bei uns. proximity is the merle. an idea. what we have are words that speak through thought. what is behind what they think? the proximity of the word to the transformation it is already taking up. how can we wait for language to be possible? this cannot be signalled in grammar, unless we say that the sayable is precisely what grammar is trying to arrive at. language has no other choice. there is no other meaning except that expectation. I have nothing to say, but I say that.

this is w.'s point. you become what you say, and what you say is not another meaning, but the meaning itself which arises when language is nothing expecting to. the proximity. but, this proximity changes what has been meant. if we speak at all, we speak meanings we, almost by definition, do not understand. the expression of meaning has nothing to do with understanding.

follow the line of transformation. how we cannot understand how we are interacting with the world already.

23/8/21
12:02 PM

badiou wants us to see in mathematics the effective statement of possibilities. demonstrated. only these demonstrations are signs of possibility. but, they are unearthed, degrammatized, as much by language as anything. the language in them.

24/8/21
2:53 AM

berlin. beyond measure. lots talking about how to draw an infinity into our lives. or how to remain in a place you don't know if you can remain in. that that thinking is what happens when we are proximate. to what? to what we are near.

25/8/22
2:08 AM

for God to listen is for us to think. in the listening is thought, which as thought, is already what God would think. that is listening. the thought itself is all that could ever be heard.

10:04 AM

in the immanence of thought, god is listening.

11:44 AM

is that grammar? that silent projection as language. it is there and so it says nothing.

12:23 PM

we have to imagine that as we give definitions in our language, they change. language takes on that change as we use it.

10:18 PM

if not know, then when.

27/8/21
3:50 PM

thinking somewhere means taking on the place. the thinking that is done there is thinking itself, and so as the rules change, you change. but, you do not change from something. it is the thinking itself that happens there that is the place. there is no move into this, because thought already arises there. it is not how do I think the place, but how does a place itself think. I do not, in turn, think it, but that it is already thinking.

to think at all is, in its immanence, to partake in the building of reality. the place which is being built in thought is the structure of the place. to think then is to partake in a place, yes, but more to partake in its building. it is enough to think and to in doing so build reality itself. the place, then, is thinking. or, being proximate to thought, is accessible to thought as the immanent development of what it is. the closer the place is to thought, the closer it is to itself.

but, the place is not beside thought. hegel would say that thought is also beside itself. it is more that the place already is thought, which we must, in thinking — in thinking through — come to realize. this is true proximity.

what is built in thought is also built elsewhere. the building, which is for w. logical space, has to happen right before our eyes. even if something in it cannot be thought directly, because it is thinking itself. it is not something we follow through, but the underlying building which is thought. where to think is to build at the most immanent level of reality. the building, however, cannot in any way see it coming. if to think at all is to create reality, then reality already is a thought. it is that already in thought which allows building to occur. in the dark. thinking, as such, does not stop. the thought, however, is not the place, because thought is already immanent to it. if I think at all, it is somehow in going through something. thought is absolutely silent. it cannot be picked up directly again.

a thought, if it happens, is therefore somehow what is already there, but not as thought. thought is already the horizon such that it doesn't recognize itself even when it is happening. it is too immanent. to think at all is somehow to tear at this proximity. what I do not recognize is that of reality being made. and what is made is not

thought, because thought arises only in the proximity to this change. it is a change that is thought, because it is the proximity of this change to itself. what changes is thought insofar as this change puts something into itself.

but, thinking is something that happens to something. it is not that thought is reality, but that reality is open directly to thought. only, in thought, this happens immediately. the immanence of thought itself is the silent grammar. it is the fact that thought also has to follow itself. the openness of reality exists in thought too. but, no part of any of this is disclosed to any part. what is immanent to thought is the failure of this disclosure. as such, when in the night we think, we alter the ground of that thinking itself. which is itself thought. more thought. what h. cannot think is that thought itself is what is changed. not merely thought as place, or vice versa, but what h. cannot think is that thought itself thinks.

as such what fails to be thought is taken up in thought. but, not in thought, which doesn't exist. or, the immanence of thinking in the night is that thought itself is at the edge of something it cannot detect. but, it somehow can only think this is its proximity to it, so that it is being thought must go undetected.

4:40 PM

it is the point that thought is the proximity to something, because it cannot see how exactly it is already thought. that already is proximity. reality is a thought.

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9:09 AM

this proximity is then the taking up of a grammar. but, we had meant that the immanence of my thinking someone brings me somewhere. when we imagine that we think, how can we not already be in that somewhere, when thought is proximity. here, the proximate is impossibly both the being near and the bringing near. if to think immanently is to be heard, this is because to think is to give aloud what are the thinking through of things. what is crucial is that no matter how I think I come upon the thing. and this openness extends into things themselves insofar as they are open to thought at all. what is immanent is proximity, where no matter what I think, I think with what is around me. in a kind of silence. thought never eclipses this proximity, because being near things is somehow already thinking.

the immanence is then that there is no grammar. there is nothing to sustain what is effectively the thinking through itself. how to think that thought is some kind of destruction.

1:09 PM

if thinking is proximity is it simply a question of being near things? and you have an idea. this is somehow grey. it also sits beside things. and you start to reach the breaking down of things. but, I could pick up these dandelions like a brain. the interior and the exterior breakdown. is this a thought?

and at one point she has her thought entangled as a physical thing with another physical thing. a multiplicity. but, it is one thing to think in the presence of the thing and another to, in thinking, speak directly to which would be thought. I think with material, and that material has its silence which I can only think when I am beside it. but, I cannot say the thinking is already there; that that is a thought.

you almost get thought as a blueprint. as another material thing. this dissolves the boundary between exterior and interior by removing it. thought penetrates as a multiplicity that cannot itself be circumscribed and yet enters freely into others.

29/8/21
9:10 AM

how do thoughts extend reality? that thinking is still to come.

30/8/21
Train out of Berlin
12:06 AM

this is where it all begins.

excerpts from badiou iv

Comme nous l'avons déjà souligné, l'absolu V, n'étant rien d'autre que le lieu supposé où toutes les formes d'être attestées par la théorie ZFC trouvent leur site, on peut aussi bien dire qu'il est le lieu total d'exercice de l'unique relation constitutive de la théorie du multiple pur, nommément l'appartenance, formalisée par le signe ☐. V nomme l'espace de pensée où se déploie entièrement la puissance de ce signe, telle qu'elle est précodée (pour nous, pour notre intellect) par la langue logique et les axiomes de ZFC.

Il en résulte que si l'on suppose qu'une autre relation que ☐ structure une classe de V, cette classe ne pourra « exprimer » V – en être un attribut – que si la relation en question « ressemble » fortement à ☐.

Pour Spinoza, les attributs expriment tous la *même* Substance infinie parce que leur loi interne, les relations qu'il y a entre les « choses » qui se manifestent dans chaque attribut, sont identiques. Par exemple, les relations de causalité entre les choses matérielles immanentes à l'attribut étendue sont identiques – isomorphes – aux relations de causalité entre les choses idéelles immanentes à l'attribut pensée. Rappelons-nous : « Ordo et connexio rerum idem est ac ordo et connexio idearum. » On voit bien qu'ici la *structure* des attributs est ce qui atteste, par isomorphie, l'identité invariable et suprême de la Substance.

De la même façon, nous devons nous demander quelles sont les exigences structurelles qui font qu'une relation entre éléments de V, voire entre éléments dérivés de ceux de V, définissant finalement une classe interne à V, peut prétendre être un attribut de V, c'est-à-dire « exprimer » V.

-

Nous aurions donc, tournant autour du même problème – celui du lieu où penser la relation absolue entre le mode « mondain » de l'existence objective et la pensée des formes pures du multiple qui font l'être propre des objets d'un monde – plusieurs désignations conceptuelles : miniatures intérieures du lieu absolu au régime de l'imitation ; attributs de la Substance au régime de l'expression ; particularisations de l'Idée au régime de la participation.

Dans tous les cas ces opérateurs de relation désignent pour moi le problème du biais par lequel les vérités – dont nous savons qu'elles sont simultanément particulières (constituées des matériaux d'un monde défini) et universelles (leur forme d'être est la multiplicité générique, capable donc d'être trans-mondaine) – ne peuvent en définitive avoir ces deux propriétés, en apparence opposées, que si elles sont également absolues. Ce qui veut dire, inscrites dans une approximation licite de V.

Sur ce point, toutes les grandes doctrines philosophiques – qu'il s'agisse de la participation platonicienne, de l'attribut spinoziste, de l'absolu hégélien, ou encore de l'ontologie formelle de Husserl comme de l'harmonie préétablie de Leibniz – doivent penser l'écart entre l'absolu et ce qui l'imite, l'exprime, en participe, ou s'inscrit à un moment de son devenir, sans que cet écart puisse s'avérer une pure et complète différence négative, sans que, finalement, on en revienne à la dualité de l'absolu, qui est l'être, et de l'existant matériel, qui est néant. Il faut maintenir que ce qui n'est pas l'absolu n'est cependant pas non plus sa négation. Ce qui exprime, imite, participe de, ou se meut avec l'absolu, lui emprunte une irréductible part d'être. Et certes, ce n'est pas l'absoluité elle-même, mais ce doit être *presque* l'absolu, et se distinguer par là radicalement de ce qui n'est qu'un avatar empirique du rien.

C'est en ce point que, au rebours de ce qui domine le monde marchand des flux d'échanges à valeur variable, une vérité se sépare des opinions.

Disons que *toute grande philosophie est pensée du « presqu'être » absolu des vérités*. Dans ma propre pensée, j'appelle en effet « vérité » la modalité exceptionnelle du presqu'être absolu dont certaines multiplicités – les procédures génériques, œuvres d'art, théories scientifiques, politiques d'émancipation et figures de l'amour – sont porteuses.

…

Et je suis en train d'établir, laborieusement, que le travail d'une vérité se structure subjectivement dans la tension entre le jeu dans l'être d'infinités distinctes, et le résultat, qui est certes une œuvre finie, mais dont l'absoluité tient à ce que cette finitude, au lieu d'être, comme communément, le simple déchet des infinis, conquiert le statut d'une œuvre, c'est-à-dire d'*un résultat « fini » qui est à la hauteur de sa causalité infinie, parce qu'il vient s'inscrire dans un attribut de l'absolu.*

C'est une des significations du presqu'être des vérités. La Commune de Paris ou la Grande Révolution Culturelle Prolétarienne, la théorie des groupes finis ou la cosmologie de Newton, Roméo et Juliette ou Natacha et le prince André, la Fantaisie pour piano de Schumann ou Suzanne et les vieillards du Tintoret : autant de configurations finies liant en elles l'enchevêtrement causal des infinis, de telle sorte que l'être en personne, pour le Sujet qui crée comme pour celui qui contemple, monte absolument à la surface de l'apparaître. Ou presque…

D'un point de vue ontologique, nous pouvons donc dire que la difficulté majeure d'une formalisation, destinée à ouvrir un accès aux infinis dont V est prodigue, est de disposer d'un appareil à penser le « presque ». Il s'agit en définitive de *construire le con-*

cept d'une approximation de l'absolu. Autrement dit, pour adopter le style platonicien, il s'agit de pouvoir contrôler l'écart entre l'Idée et la chose qui participe de l'Idée, sans tomber dans un dualisme ontologique insurmontable.

Nous allons voir que c'est exactement ce que les grands mathématiciens engagés dans la théorie des ensembles ont fait avec obstination et génie, sans avoir – c'est leur force – à le savoir. C'est la raison pour laquelle ils nous guident en direction d'un savoir – presque vrai – de ce que peut bien être, saisi dans sa propre venue, le presqu'être absolu des vérités.

-

Si, dans la ligne de l'avertissement ci-dessus, nous repassons à la classe transitive M, qui est une sous-classe transitive de V isomorphe à l'ultrapuissance, on a la situation suivante : un énoncé (fermé dans la langue de la théorie ZFC est vrai dans M si, et seulement si, il est vrai dans V. On dira alors que M est *élémentairement équivalent* à V. Et cette fois, cette équivalence concerne à la fois l'intériorité d'une classe (puisque M □ V) et l'identité de la relation (puisque c'est □ et non plus □u).

Cette équivalence élémentaire est derechef un autre nom technique de la fonction de M comme attribut immanent de la Substance absolue, au double sens suivant : d'abord, M exprime V, puisque tout ce qui est vrai de V, tout ce qui donc est *absolument* vrai, le demeure une fois « relativisé » à M. Ensuite, M est structuré par la même relation que V (ou que tout autre attribut), « l'ordre et la connexion » étant réglés, pour Spinoza, tant pour la Substance que pour ses attributs, par la relation de causalité, et, dans le cas présent, tant pour V que pour M, par l'appartenance □. On pourra aussi bien dire que M est une réalisation particulière, un lieu immanent à l'absolu V, dont la composition locale ne fait pas obstacle à ce qu'elle participe de l'Idée absolue.

Traduisons. *Une classe élémentairement équivalente à V est un lieu d'absolutisation (par participation, expression, similitude…) d'une vérité générique. C'est là que cette vérité, interne à la classe considérée, « touche » l'absolu.*

2. Relation explicite entre l'absolu et une vérité comme attribut immanent de l'absolu : présentation informelle

L'équivalence élémentaire est pour le moment une considération globale. Nous savons qu'un énoncé fermé est vrai dans V si, et seulement si, il est vrai dans M. Mais nous n'avons pas de relation définie qui en quelque sorte « atteste », au niveau ontologique des multiplicités, cette équivalence par quoi l'absolu se prodigue dans un de ses attributs, ou l'Idée dans une vérité qui en déploie les conséquences. Nous avons présenté de façon générale cette exigence dans C11. Une relation de cette sorte doit rapporter chaque élément de V à un élément de M de façon telle que si l'élément de V possède une propriété, il soit assuré que l'élément de M qui lui correspond par la relation ait aussi cette propriété.

Notons j une relation de cette espèce : à tout ensemble E qui appartient au lieu absolu V, elle fait correspondre un élément j(E) de M. Autrement dit, la relation j *localise l'équivalence élémentaire au niveau d'une correspondance entre les multiples purs qui composent le lieu absolu et ceux qui composent son attribut.* On peut dire : s'il est vrai dans V que E possède – absolument – la propriété écrite par la formule φ, alors il est vrai dans M que j(E) possède aussi, dans M, et donc relativisée à M, cette propriété : φ(E) ↔ φM (j(E)).

L'importance de ce point est considérable. En effet, dans les procédures de vérité effectives, compositions artistiques, théories scientifiques, vies amoureuses ou processus politiques d'émancipation, ce n'est jamais globalement, d'un seul coup, que l'absoluité immanente des vérités advient au Sujet. Il s'agit toujours de devenirs complexes, où sont testées et reliées les conséquences d'un événement dans des situations successives disparates. Comme le dit Mallarmé pour le poème, le hasard est « vaincu mot par mot ». Le hasard, c'est l'origine événementielle de toute vérité. La victoire sur ce hasard, c'est l'universalité du processus de construction d'une vérité à partir des conséquences de l'événement. Ce qui se fait alors jour est qu'il existe une relation locale, que l'on peut expérimenter, discuter, rectifier, entre les termes absolus, mis en jeu dans la pensée productrice d'une vérité singulière, et les termes particuliers dans lesquels cette mise en jeu opère. On ne fonctionne jamais directement sur les premiers, mais sur les projections mouvantes dans les seconds.

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Le fait que cette correspondance soit créatrice, au sens où elle n'est pas l'identité, joue ici un rôle philosophique déterminant. Ce qui est en jeu n'est rien de moins que le point suivant : s'il y a *des* vérités, et non *la* Vérité, c'est que l'absoluité d'une vérité ne signifie pas qu'une vérité *est* l'absolu. Car si elle l'était, nous devrions en conclure que seul l'absolu est vrai, en quoi nous reconnaîtrions sans difficulté le schème théologique. La fidélité laborieuse en quoi consiste le devenir des vérités se situe entre les multiplicités existantes, dont elles font partie, et l'absolu, auquel elles ne touchent que du biais de ces attributs. D'où que l'existence d'au moins un multiple pour lequel il est vrai que E (élément de V) et j(E) (élément correspondant de M) sont différents est un enjeu philosophique essen-

tiel. Il y va non seulement de la différence entre vérité et référent absolu, mais de la différence entre vérités absolues, laquelle compose littéralement le sens de notre existence, à nous, animaux humains, dans les mondes qui sont les nôtres.

L'absolu, dans la guise du procès d'absolutisation des vérités, s'avère n'avoir de puissance qu'autant que l'Un-qu'il-est est aussi bien le système total de ses différences internes, notamment des différences entre les classes qui l'expriment ou en participent.

Les mathématiciens ont démontré alors le théorème tout à fait im pressionnant, que voici sous sa forme philosophique encore approximative. *L'existence d'une relation explicite de l'absolu à un de ses attributs a pour témoin existentiel un ensemble, à savoir un très grand infini.*

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Le théorème central du chapitre C17 représentait une contrainte d'existence (s'il existe un plongement élémentaire non trivial, alors il existe, témoin de cette première existence, un cardinal complet). Le théorème de Scott est une contrainte de différence (s'il existe un cardinal complet, l'univers qui rassemble toutes les formes possibles du multiple (V) ne peut être identique à l'univers qui rassemble toutes les formes constructibles, donc finies, du multiple (L). Le théorème de Jensen, enfin, établira une contrainte de mesure de la différence : s'il existe un « grand » ensemble spécialement défini, et noté 0#, alors il existe des ensembles non dénombrables qui ne peuvent être recouverts par des ensembles constructibles, et donc des ensembles dont la différence au constructible est en quelque sorte totale, puisqu'ils ne peuvent être recouverts par des ensembles constructibles.

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Disons tout de suite que le « lemme de recouvrement » de Jensen résout ainsi notre problème : *Il existe un ensemble, nommé 0#, zéro dièse, tel que, s'il n'existe pas, le recouvrement est toujours possible, et que, s'il existe, le recouvrement de certaines grandes multiplicités est impossible.*

Par ailleurs, il est impossible de démontrer que 0# existe, tout comme de démontrer qu'il n'existe pas. En ce sens, 0# se comporte comme un ensemble infini : dès qu'on a affaire aux ensembles inaccessibles, leur existence n'est pas démontrable dans ZFC, elle relève d'une décision, celle de proclamer leur existence, au risque même – on ne peut pas non plus démontrer que ce risque n'existe pas – que toute l'architecture de l'ontologie formelle s'effondre. C'est à ce risque que s'expose tout choix dans la direction de la création, de l'émancipation, dont l'axiome supplémentaire – qu'il s'agit d'affirmer sous la forme qu'exige telle ou telle situation concrète – se dit abstraitement : 0# existe.

Le théorème de Jensen a ceci de remarquable qu'il définit avec rigueur un seuil entre le possible et l'impossible, quant à la procédure de recouvrement. Il est en un sens le fondement ontologique de la question anthropologique cruciale : *Quelles sont les conditions pour qu'une action créatrice puisse se dégager des contraintes de la situation, et singulièrement des recouvrements par la finitude ?*

On peut alors dire, métaphoriquement, que « l'analyse concrète d'une situation concrète », dans laquelle Lénine voit le centre de gravité de la pensée révolutionnaire, revient toujours à l'impératif : « Cherche le zéro dièse de cette situation, soit le point qui décide, s'il existe, qu'on peut passer outre le recouvrement. Et tant que ce point n'est pas déterminé, exerce-toi à la patience qu'exige toute fidélité. Persiste à le chercher, afin, quand tu l'auras découvert, d'en décider, toi, l'existence. »

Le 0# est ce que la pensée détermine comme le point d'application de la pensée-pratique, celle qui concentre ses forces pour que soit créée l'existence de ce que la pensée a découvert, en ce qui concerne le recouvrement par la finitude conservatrice, comme lisière mouvante entre le possible et l'impossible. Un exemple. Lénine, en octobre 1917, pense qu'une insurrection victorieuse est possible, contrairement à presque tous ses collègues de la direction bolchevique, qui pensent qu'elle est impossible. Cette conviction est le résultat d'une analyse de la situation, explicitée dans le texte « La crise est mûre ». Le centre de gravité de cette analyse est que la possibilité d'une saisie victorieuse du pouvoir réside dans le fait que le paysannat ne bougera pas, il ne défendra pas le vieux régime encore en place dans la province russe. C'est ce qui fait pour Lénine la différence avec la situation de la Commune de Paris, isolée dans quelques bastions prolétariens. On peut donc dire que le 0# de Lénine se dit ainsi : la création d'un nouveau pouvoir, représentant l'infini du communisme, est désormais possible par ceci que son recouvrement par la réaction provinciale et paysanne, obscurantiste et fanatiquement attachée à la constructibilité réactive, s'avérera inopérant. C'est ce que la majorité de la direction bolchevique ne croit pas, ce qui revient à dire qu'elle pense que 0# n'existe pas, et que le recouvrement demeure inévitable. Pour vaincre cette résistance accrochée à la finitude Lénine devra mettre sa démission dans la balance.

C'est évidemment ensuite à la pratique insurrectionnelle que revient de valider le risque pris, de tirer toutes les conséquences de l'affirmation du 0#, et d'inscrire dans le réel la différence créatrice entre la situation russe de 1917 et la situation française de 1871.

On pourra dire alors que l'effet de pensée-pratique du 0# léniniste, qui justifie son nom ontologique, est le passage d'un soutien zéro des énormes masses rurales dans la France de 1871 à un circonstanciel soutien, ou en tout cas à une neutralité, des non moins énormes masses rurales russes en 1871. Le mot d'ordre « la terre aux paysans » aura fonctionné comme le dièse sur quoi s'ancre le processus révolutionnaire.

Qu'il ne s'agisse que d'un dièse – soit d'un demi-ton – et non d'un ton entier, la suite du « problème agraire » dans la Russie révolutionnée le montrera amplement. Mais toute action créatrice connaît le moment où le nouveau possible n'est qu'une courte incise dans le vieil impossible, et où il est crucial de dire : mieux vaut saisir l'instant d'existence créée du 0# que de s'en tenir, par crainte du risque, à 0.

C'est pourquoi le nom « zéro dièse » est parfaitement justifié, car *l'existence de ce qu'il désigne est en fait la toute première différence d'avec rien*, à savoir, la possibilité d'au moins une initiative, un élan, une trouvaille, soustraite au recouvrement. Le dièse nous dit : notre création n'est pas nulle. Elle n'est peut-être pas loin de zéro, juste un petit demi-ton, mais cela suffit pour nous convaincre que nous sommes sur les traces d'une infinité neuve que rien ne pourra recouvrir, que rien ne pourra dissimuler.

Le théorème de Jensen est ainsi ce qui est ontologiquement en jeu dès qu'il s'agit, au cours d'un processus orienté vers une infinité neuve, de *décider du possible en situation*.

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J'ai proposé de traduire l'énigmatique concept grec ουσια (*ousia*), dont la traduction conventionnelle est « essence », par : « ce qui, de l'être, s'expose à la pensée ». On pourrait dire ici que l'absolu est ce qui rend possible que, des multiplicités-qui-sont, on puisse penser, dans des vérités singulières, la façon dont elles participent *absolument* à l'*ousia* de leur propre être. Par exemple, une classe (toute vérité ontologique se rapporte à une classe, formulation, interne à l'absolu, d'une forme possible des étants-multiples) telle qu'il existe un plongement élémentaire de V en elle verra sa position confirmée, *absolument* confirmée, de ce qu'un cardinal infini complet (ou supercompact, ou énorme…) témoigne de ce que là se tient l'*ousia* de quelques multiplicités, et notamment de quelques vérités génériques.

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Ce théorème affirme qu'aux plus hauts niveaux de la hiérarchie cumulative, aux abords immédiats de l'absolu, il pourrait encore bien y avoir, attesté par un type d'infini proprement gigantesque, une sourde mobilité immanente sur quoi vient béer la rigidité de l'absolu. Nous lui laissons le soin de conclure : de l'autorité de l'infini, il nous dit qu'on peut inscrire ainsi le parcours qu'à partir de sa Section III, ce livre a proposé :

Inaccessible → Compact → Ramsey → Complet →
Supercompact → n-énorme → Ultime 1 → Ultime 2…
[théorème de Kunen]… Absoluité rigide de l'être qui n'existe pas

Sommes-nous alors

en l'éternelle allée
De nos espoirs, pour voir les diamants élus
D'une étoile mourante, et qui ne brille plus ?

En réalité, c'est seulement du fini, soit résidu passif des infinis qui l'engendrent, soit affirmation créée des infinis qu'il concentre, qu'est implicitement venue – Sections I, II et V – la réponse à cette question : les espoirs mis en l'infini se soutiennent des vérités, qui sont des œuvres. Mais une œuvre ne peut se distinguer d'un déchet que par ce qu'elle fait surgir, en tant qu'infini, comme témoin de son appartenance à quelque attribut de l'absolu. Et, comme le démontre le théorème de Scott dans la Section V, qu'elle le puisse dépend de ce que ce témoin ait la puissance d'un cardinal complet, au moins. Alors, de ce témoignage en forme d'existence infinie, une vérité est la preuve vivante : non pas « l'étoile mourante et qui ne brille plus », mais « à l'horizon, peut-être, une constellation ».

C'est du constellé du vrai, pour autant qu'il touche l'absolu, que vont nous entretenir les sections finales de ce livre.

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Une des difficultés qu'il y a à comprendre exactement ce qu'il veut dire tient à de nombreux changements de lexique quand on passe d'un dialogue à un autre. Car, comme le montre le dialogue *Cratyle*, consacré au langage, Platon ne pense nullement qu'il faille, ou qu'on puisse, justement, partir du langage. Ce qu'il appelle « dialectique » n'est aucunement une rhétorique ou un formalisme. C'est bien plutôt l'inscription dans le langage de ce que j'appelle une procédure de vérité, et qu'on a souvent désigné, un peu trompeusement, comme « l'ascension vers le Bien ».

On convient en général que le mot « Idée » désigne le point où la pensée s'empare vraiment de sa propre ressource, en rupture avec la perception du monde et les opinions dominantes, mais aussi, j'y insiste, *dans un mouvement qui prend naissance dans ce monde et dans ces opinions*.

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Mais ce dont nous sommes capables, c'est de *créer l'Idée absolue de ce que c'est que d'imiter le merle noir*. Exactement, après tout, comme Corneille ou Racine, qui croyaient – ou prétendaient – que leur devoir était d'imiter les Anciens, ont en réalité créé une forme de tragédie qui ne ressemble en rien aux tragédies grecques ou romaines, sinon que fait partie de leur originalité superbe, et lui est pour toujours incorporé, d'avoir pensé imiter les Anciens.

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L'importance exceptionnelle, soulignée depuis toujours par Mao, des interventions de type idéologique, de la propagation des principes et idées du communisme. Ainsi dans le point 1 de la Décision : « Pour renverser un régime, on doit nécessairement et en premier lieu préparer l'opinion et travailler dans le domaine idéologique. » Ce rappel est aujourd'hui, dans l'état de faiblesse où est tombée l'idée communiste, véritablement essentiel.

in thinking that which caused itself

there is deeper need to understand what b means when he says that a finite result can have the same causality as its given infinity. he wants us to imagine truths as infinities, but then truths are almost sites of possibility, thought through finite sets, causally entangled with their infinity. these infinities, in turn, which take place within the absolute, V, where one of V's properties is this possibility of being, not only projected, but somehow drawn out in equivalence, are caught up in the finite results that take place in V. what we have seen is that infinities are almost defined as being able to have member-parts as large as they are, in cardinality, so that b prepares us to imagine an effectively finitized, but really large cardinal infinity, model of V within V. a model of itself, which does not need to self-refer as such, but abides by the strange chemistry of infinities.

b mentions specifically how the creative purpose of truths is elementarily exposed here, where this elementary plongement of a relation between V and a model-attribute within it has it such that V is not itself true, but only the absolute, whereas truths themselves are absolute in conjunction, in plongement, with V. in their position in V, they gain what cannot be given to V itself directly, namely, the creative production of truths. where V is the absolute, the deeper significance is that, being the absolute, we cannot touch it directly, but that truths, caught up in finite results as large as their given causalizing infinities, are, in their position as absolute, still untouchable, but, as truths, are to be found everywhere. the productive force of a truth, in other words, is absolute, where what is true about it has nothing to do with the absolute, but still abides by the strange untouchability of the absolute. the finite as such is this entanglement, whereby a truth is an available, deeply causal part of reality that, nevertheless, is not directly touchable.

a crucial statement made at the beginning of the book describes how something finite is the product of two infinities touching. here, we have a model of this touching, whereby the awkward causality of a truth creates finite procedures in which, being untouchable, a truth causes these finite procedures to occur, plunging them into the absolute, while withdrawing in what respect the truth itself is strictly mappable. it happens, it sustains something, and the open genericity of multiplicities has it such that the missing image of the world allows causality to occur without it ever circumscribing what is causally possible. what thereby becomes possible is not only the infinitization of something, but the failure of an infinitization on the basis that something about the finite situation fails to allow itself to be caught up in the causality of a given truth.

b's uses the concept of the 0# to signify whether or not the appearance of an infinity, a given truth, will be recovered or not in a finite procedure. recovered, or recouvrement, is a sour term. it follows that insofar as we relate to what is causally possible in a truth we relate, paradoxically, to its capacity to sufficiently finitize itself. at the same time, we recognize in what respect a finite situation becomes true and caught up in an infinity. we may remark however that a finite situation is caused by a truth such that the distinct topos of a truth would seem to be a floating, open-ended infinity that may or may not causalize something. it is not, just as it is not in spinoza, as simple a point as an infinity causing something finite. instead, the causal procedure itself seems to be a map of the given possibility that has suddenly emerged. a truth, then, or what is true about infinity, is that it gives a kind of causal map of itself, not merely to some material, because it seems to, in causing it, create this material, but as an open-ended map of possibility itself.

it is crucial to mention that lenin felt that, in the russian situation, 0# existed, so that his particular, communistic, infinity was not recoverable. the map of itself an infinity gives is therefore a specific causal link it creates in the form of a finite process. if lenin could argue that an infinity would land, it would signify that another infinity might have been able to line up with the emerging, possibilizing infinity. only, lenin specifically mentions finite features of the space, specifically that rural landowners would not make an effort to oppose his revolution, so that we may conclude it is not the fintie process as such which the infinity gives, but just the map of itself. it is an expression, not only of possibility, but of a higher causality, which cuts through the finite, but is never strictly identifiable with it. if we say that the infinity nevertheless creates the material, what we mean is that the possibilizing, causalizing attribute of a given infinity is related to what it is true about, such that whether or not it succeeds in creating a plunging of the absolute into a finite world is determined by whether or not, at some level, the finite can handle how it is going to be altered.

the shortcircuit of a given finitude with a causalizing infinite relates that finitude to what is true about the infinite. in the infinite, it is not merely its equivalence, or drawing in, per se of the absolute that is true, but the way in which the causal link relates to what is possible within a finite world. what is true, therefore, measures how finite a given infinity can become in a given world. what is, therefore, absolute about a truth is that the infinite as it were happens, but the causal link is what is specific about a truth which may or may not measure out in possible terms in a given finitude. one may, as some do, labour in the dark, so that finitudes may be prepared for their

possibilizing in truths. after all, every truth applies to every finite world, but not every finite world is ready to handle in what way a given infinity causalizes itself.

if a given truth is then a possibilization of a given infinity in a finitude, and we argue that an infinity provides the material cause for a finitude, it follows that nothing is caused. it is the installation of a given possibility. what was in the russian situation that was not in others is something like the configuration of another infinity in the form of another finitude that regulates how much of a given infinity can be handled. we may argue that what regulates the piecing together of infinities is their order, so that they must be put together in a certain way to, as it were, work. after all, it is possible that every possibilization could occur at once. if we imagine that a given finitude is the interaction of two different infinities, then we may argue that any possibility may work with any other possibility, so that the finite situation is ready for as much as can be drawn to it.

it is after all finite effort that draws and creates truths. it is finite effort working in the dark. we may imagine that the idea of communism can be causalized in any finitude, but this causalization is itself the possible, so that it is not that we create a possibility as such, but that we circuit a given finite process through more possibilities. we apply truths. we apply as many truths as we can find. to create an absolute idea of something is to not only apply a cause to it, but to think that cause itself. the thinking of the cause, after all, is the thinking of the finite in its proper material context. it is not merely caused, but it somehow embodies a causality it cannot directly touch. what is absolute about a cause is the way in which the map of itself a given infinity provides is an idea. it is such that a cause is an idea. it is not a cause over there that, arriving here, changes the finite, but the idea is what is absolute about the infinitization of the finite. a finitude, as such, admits infinities in thinking them, in relating them to finite and countable procedures, and, in thinking them, relates to what is absolute in them.

the idea as cause is nothing but that the thinking finitude does is the thinking of the absolute as an idea. it is the thinking of everything as an idea. it is not merely that the infinity possibilizes itself, but that this possibilization is regulated by what succeeds in being measured and thought in what is finite. where the finite is already an effect, it follows that the thinking of infinity in finitude is the idea of infinity. it is what is in finitude that, thinking infinity, relates to that possibility which is not counted in the absolute, but thought in the absolute, where the absolute is not the finite count of itself, but the thinking of itself. the absolute is only ever, as such, *as an idea,* and, as such, only ever in the finite. what we may call the absolute idea is therefore a finite procedure which, thinking the absolute, succeeds in thinking that which caused itself and, having it as an idea, has the absolute in its hands.

antonio's proof

a philosophical improvisation had over coffee with *h* and *a*

c = r = t r = i ,
where completeness = reality = total reality = indiscernibility

indiscernibility of the total.
indiscernibility of the real.
it is infinitized.
it projects itself.
cardinality.

a given reality is measurable against the most total reality, where it either comes to pass that a reality is *tr* and as such is indiscernible or it submits to a reality larger than it, forfeiting its right to totality. *indiscernibility of the total*.

what we call failure is nothing but the limit of the space that is subject to the indiscernible. we do not discern failures, and as such live everything openly. nothing fails. we fall into the limits of the world, which do not work, or else already work. *indiscernbility of the real*.

piss.

projection is the expression of the fact that if you cannot find failure, and as such must accept that language can have its impossible term within it, indiscernibly, where having this term as a possible within it means that it can, within itself, imagine itself as capable of doing or expressing anything, then, at the level of thought, language is infinite. *it is infinitized*.

starting from language. trying to prove a pure projection or infinity (as a secret term), where the secret term is how *it projects itself*.

moving beyond everything. everything itself is not what is projected in the projection. the projection is larger than everything. it has a higher *cardinality*.

finally,

if you get sad, you have to extend that sadness to the place or thing about which you were happy and therefore lose your reason to be sad. either it has an idea of happiness, or it does not. sadness is not gained in proximity and distance. to be happy is to have an idea, and to be sad is also to have an idea

Die Angst des Verlegers beim Drucktag

from *h*'s memoir

6.8. 10:24
Es ist komisch wieder hier zu sein: bevor der Hunger alles auffrisst, schreibe ich lieber.
Die vielen Geschichten, die nie hier waren, sondern immer nur in meinem Kopf waren, wenn ich hier war, tauchen an der Grenze meines Bewusstseins auf. Ich sammle sie,

14.8. 16:52
Wenn es schon Englisch sein muss
„A change of environment is the traditional fallacy upon which doomed loves, and lungs, rely."

20:07 18.8.2021
Ich versuche, Menschen mehr Raum zu geben, damit sie offener werden. Damit sie überhaupt offen sind.
Was kann ich von mir selber sagen? (Was soll ich sagen.) Was kann ich geben? Gegenargumente, Überlegungen von einer anderen Seite, von meiner persönlichen Seite? Keine Anekdoten. Dafür bin ich nicht lustig genug.
Meiner Mutter mag ich es zu erzählen, aber auf eine ungesunde Art.

Meditation der Enttäuschungen.
Es ist keine Art, durchs Leben zu gehen mit Erwartungen an andere Leute und selber nicht das im Gespräch zu suchen, was man finden möchte.
Ihr Freund war zwei Mal aufgestanden, um auf die Toilette zu gehen, und hatte auch zwei Mal ein schon angelaufenes Gespräch unterbrochen, um darauf hinzuweisen, dass ihnen kalt war
Sie hatte kein Mal das Wort an A gewandt.

23.8. 17:38
Nun ist also alles geschafft, für die Uni, außer natürlich dem Entwurf meiner Arbeit, die mich die nächsten acht Monate beschäftigen soll.

Meine Erinnerungen an Besuche meiner Freundinnen in dem Bereich der Raumzeit, in dem ich mich während der Reise befand, waren wie folgt. Ich erzähle etwas, nervöses Lachen, gerunzelte Stirn, es wird nachgefragt, also meintest du das, nein, eher das, hm, ich weiß nicht.
Wenn ich ehrlich sein kann; du hast dich ganz schön verändert.

Ich bin nun offener für Zufälligkeit oder ein komisches Etwas am Beginn einer neu aufgegriffenen Interaktion.
Aber wie anfangen, was vorschlagen.
Kann man einfach sagen, Kunst ist jetzt die Mediation zwischen uns, da ist eine geeignete Vermittlerin. Dann wäre ja alles schon klar, das Problem ist gerade, einen guten Mittel-punkt zu finden.

Andere Leute kritisieren, was ich geschrieben habe, und finden es passt nicht zu der Zurückhaltung, die wir in diesem Medium, Interview mit Begleittext, praktizieren sollen. Das ist aber einfach ein Ausdruck ihrer eigenen latenten Sinnkrise.

14:19 25.8.

Der Antagonismus ist: wie über andere

15:07 27.8.

(9:19 28.8.)
Antonio hatte also geschrieben, nachdem wir uns am Dienstag getroffen hatten. Er sagte, er hatte über Viktor und über uns beide geschrieben. Schmunzelte, schlug die Augen nieder, wenn er oder Aidan etwas sagte.
Natürlich sagte ich auch manchmal was, Antonio nannte das, was ich sagte, interventions, und sagte, dass sie genauso wertvoll und inspirierend seien, wie
Aber die Energie, die Schaffensenergie, war mehr im Nachklang da. Da war viel Erinnern an die Abende vor zwei Tagen und an Viktor.
(12:28 28.8.)
Vielleicht war dort wirklich ein Funke übergesprungen. Antonios schweifende Handbewegungen, manchmal ausladend, wenn er von der großen Halle des Berghain sprach. Aidans wiederholende Stöße in die Luft mit dem Arm, der Hand, oder dem Finger. Antonio sprach, als würde er nachdenken, und er sprach, so wie ich mir vorstelle, dass ich wirke: wenn ich die Augen verdrehend an die Decke schaue, wenn ich immer wieder neu ansetze, um meinen Satz zu beginnen.
Was sollen wir machen, was sollen wir machen.
Und ich konnte so sehr verstehen, dass er es libidinal nicht komplett mitreißend zu finden schien, als Aidan sagte, dass er auf seinem Handy schreibe. Wo sind im Unterbrochenwerden, im Schreiben in den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln,
Wenn wir reden, entstehen die Dinge ja auch erst. Aber wir können das nur bedingt an uns selber merken.

(15:12 29.8.)
Wenn ich etwas denke, wird es kritisiert. Das ist gut, das gehört dazu.

(00:07 30.8.)

(12:21 30.8.)
A. hatte gesagt, dass Erwachsenwerden eine Frage der Gewöhnung an Enttäuschung ist. Ich hatte oft gedacht, dass Filme das für ihn überschreiten konnten, aber mittlerweile bezweifelte ich das. Als wir aus dem Kino gekommen waren, in dem wir Der Rausch geguckt hatten, war ich sehr bewegt. Ich war auch schon während des Films bewegt gewesen, an den Stellen an denen es irgendwie um Liebe und Beziehung ging. Eine Form von Fatalismus.

In Der Rausch, ist Martin (?) überzeugt davon, dass nicht (nur) der Alkoholkonsum sein Leben verändert: er sagt, da ist mehr.

-

a poem by *a*

beware
the undead city
the clean city;
there, on metallic seas
I slipped
to perfumed promises

I could never sit still
No, not for you
and turn and twist as if
another change can cover up
what there will be time enough
to rearrange

where
with gathering hands
with searching hands
you found
the stuck dirt
I did not think
would stick

excerpt from black book

this is a small, secretly placed, excerpt from an entry written in black book while travelling in switzerland.

11/8/21
wasserauen, schweiz

what we have so far called thinking one must also call language, but only if, at the same time, both lose their limits through the other. there is no limit to either; they only work without them. (what we have so far called infinities). their limitlessness means that we can no more engage with them than we engage at the same time with reality. it is not that one is reality, but that reality itself is extended in either. this is what it means to use (truly) either and for either to remain as it is. this means that language, in being language, changes what we call reality. our use of it might even be grounded on how it changes it. reality itself, insofar as it has what we call language, is open as reality to language. neither language, nor reality, nor reality, change, but that they one another (infinity).

if we admit that language can change reality, it is only because reality is already changeable in a way that reality can expect only because it is already open to language. the sense in which reality is already open is only insofar as language itself changes reality, because language itself can change reality as language. either our conception of language must change or our concept of reality must change. if language, it is to say that language as language is more real, or that reality itself is open to language because it is itself unable to refuse that language changes everything by altering what reality is through language itself. is it enough to say that all language is somehow already a change in reality, or that reality is so changeable that language itself only arises because of these immanent changes (which are, thereby, indescribable by language directly). in any case, we must think a language that not only changes reality, but is the changing of reality as language. only, if language changes reality it is because language already changes reality, because language's meanings are already entangled with changing it. the problem arises that describing this change in language becomes a question of still changing reality to describe it, or else admitting change itself – transformation – as immanent itself to our description and, obscurer still, the very possibility of it. that obscurer still is grammar, and grammar is still that which we are willing to call possibility, because we are willing to say that change is part of language. that is the basis of grammar.

endword

when the days have no numbers

bon iver

there is so much more to say. we try and account for it all, but we are already projecting something beyond everything. we disturb the fine account of the all the things in this world.

with respect to rhineland, that mess is only still unfolding. this issue is a small account of what goes on there. if we believe that anything is actually going on, then we should also believe in what way things are not happening.

we should believe that for an effect to be produced it must be caused, but that the order of those two things is not set in advance. we go into the world looking for those things we can say we caused, only to realize that the entire world is *our* effect.

we probe uncertain causes in issues like these. it is a question of trying to find where exactly the moment lay when we saw that the world responded to us, and, in responding to us, disturbed in what respect we could simpyl read it directly.

we look at the trees and the ponds and the mountains, but we either read this directly and lose ourselves in the becoming-tree and becoming-mountain, one remaining one, or else choose to sacrifice the direct reading in favour of a reading which resignifies all that we have ever called purposeful, objective, before-our-eyee, as, not an effect of some inner coherence, but the projection of some link between the world of cause and its effects.

this sailing ship is not on settled waters. these waters are, even in the eyes of god, not settled. not determined. where we imagine that all the world must slip into that indeterminacy, we gain the world back, no longer grounded in some principle from which it draws itself, but only in the effortless coherence by which all that is formed in this world exists despite the absence of this principle.

the world of causes and effects is the output of the absence of this principle. it is not merely absent, but, in some virtual way, we reimagine that all that is disturbed into motion in this world collapses into the absolute which we must *imagine* as somehow something.

hegel's point, after all, is not that we must imagine the world without a guiding principle, but that to *imagine at all* is to presuppose a principle which grounds, virtually, the impossible-real of beginning to imagine anything at all. a cause and an effect are nothing but the capture of this utter will to begin.

appendix

what follows is a list of the issue's photos, in order, with their respective descriptions. *exceprts from badiou* references the Fayard edition of badiou's book, for which there exists no english translation. there are many quotes from king krule, which are always indented, though some indented passages are not citations from anywhere as such. the cover for berlin is taken directly from a photo I took at the martin-gropius bau/zheng bo exhibition, *the political life of plants*. it has been heavily edited for the purposes of the issue, but it is meant entirely as a tribute to zheng bo's art and his influence on the berlin *teil* of the rhineland trip. a quotation from marie pappenheim's librettto for schoenberg's *Erwartung* opera is included in the *black trees, runes, and superstrings* teil of the badiou essays.

some citations are given directly in the text. isolde's final lines in wagner's opera *tristan und isolde* are included in *r iii*. juliet's line regarding holy palmers' kiss, from shakespeare's *romeo and juliet*, is included in *r iv*.

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kiefer's entangled roots
in Helen's flat in Heidelberg, *h*
view of the river Neckar
buildings as seen from Helen's flat
across the river, by the banks, near the altstadt i
in the neighbour near helen, *v* and *h*
across the river, by the banks, near the altstadt ii
kiefer's fern in Mannheim
k's Gabriel's ladder in Mannheim
k's Schwarze Flocken in M i
k's Schwarze Flocken in M ii
k's ruins in M
v with a Königstuhl beetle
clouds in the altstadt
the hills viewable from the altstadt
h in the altstadt at night
Heidelberg as seen from a balcony during a house party
blue duck
across the river, by the banks, near the altstadt iii with Paul Celan
red dash

christbild in reichenau,
forest lichtung in the Schwarzwald near todtnauberg
plants in the S near t i
water in S near t
the waterhole beneath Heidegger's well in t
water in the S near t
Bodensee in konstanz
ancient church mural in reichenau i
window in ancient church in r i
ancient church mural in r ii
window(s) in ancient church in r ii
candles in ancient church in r
konstanz's altstadt seen near the Bodensee
view from konstanz bedroom window
bedroom in konstanz
near the Bodensee in the altstadt
in die Schweiz (Switzerland) near Wasserauen I and ii
church on the high plateau in the Swiss alps
altstadt as seen from afar overlooking the narrowing Bodensee
lights on the Bodensee i and ii

figure from die Blaue Reiter
maximilianeum at night
river Isar at night
synagogue before the Jewish museum
münchen at night i
forest in tegernsee i
stones in t
forest in t ii
cows in t
forest in t iii
mushrooms in t
hill view in t
forest in t iv
plant in t
wood in t
hills in t
Christ planks in t
church in the münchen student quarter
a statue in Berlin (an error, yes)
another view of the synagogue outside the Jewish museum
ceiling of the nymphenberg schloss
Kandinsky painting in the Lenbachhaus
the eyes of münchen
munch painting in the kunsthaus zürich (another error, but a good one)
Jewish wood tablet in the Jewish museum
garden of the nymphenberg
creek in the nymphenberg garden

pond in the nymphenberg garden
h eating an apple in the nymphenberg garden
münchen at night ii
münchen at night iii

plant drawings from Zheng bo's exhibition at Gropius bau
tree of life in Berlin
h in her parents flat
view of the banhof train line over the spree i and ii
inner hall of the Martin-Gropius-bau
v
dandelions at the haus am waldsee in Christiane löhr's exhibition:
ordnung der wildnis
Braille wall
st.Agnes church, designed by Düttmann
h
blending prayer book in the gemäldegalerie
overgrowth in the friedhof Berlin
scenes from the berl berl at the berghain i
h in the friedhof Berlin
lineslights
scenes from the berl berl at the berghain ii
view of the banhof train line over the spree iii
a
scenes from the berl berl at the berghain iii
and iv
window at the berghain
Berlin at night
das Absolute

the end