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Creation and Caution

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Abstract

The new scope that emerge since the technological implementation, have produced an evolution in the paradigm of the creative act beginning in the second half of the 20th century. We aim here to understand this evolution through the presentation of inquiries on how to evaluate the repercussions of reproduction and copying in new communication media, or the cultural component of simulacrum that accompanies consumerist society. What traits might define contemporary creativity? From the exploration of the possibilities of experience to the components of retraction and listening, several artistic positions are signaling what might be considered a new paradigm for what comprises creativity in today's world. We present some of these positions, like that of architect Enric Miralles, as expression of values that could characterize this new attitude toward creativity, and assess the ecological dimensions of this potential paradigm for cautious creation.

Keywords: Creation; copy; simulation; technology.

Old Myths for New Times?

Reflecting on present criteria for creation, words we have heard and read many times¹ over the course of our educational preparation to become professionals and researchers resonate in our ears. Disciplines such as architecture, the visual arts, design, and literary activity seem to

¹ As exemplified by certain reviews of western culture: "Uninterruptedly, from the age of Saint Augustine to our time, through the crisis of the Renaissance and of Romanticism, through revolutions both triumphant and unavailing, the European man has glorified himself through the act of creation. [Creation represents] uniformity and continuity, perhaps the only instance thereof, in the exceedingly complex European life. It is tradition, the great tradition which reunites all and through all change, survives" (Zambrano, 2000, p.48).

operate on the basic supposition of creativity as a tool – a tool that permits the incorporation of technological innovations and methodologies from the current age. In this article, I will attempt to demonstrate why contemporary reflection must no longer avoid accepting the reformulation of the creative paradigm, which is unveiling itself in a multitude of disciplines and artistic processes, opposite the preservation of the prejudices that have legitimized creative activity during a large part of the 20th century.

It may be appropriate to begin by making said prejudices explicit by delimiting the definition of creativity as formulated with clarity by formalist criticism² at the beginning of the 20th century. Hanslick and Fiedler (apud Morpurgo-Tagliabue, 1977, pp.59-76) recognize the role of art as the producer of reality, as opposed to other conceptions of art, such as art as mimesis and art as expression, which were reflected in the development of artistic practices during the 18th and 19th centuries. Both paradigms share a common the definition of the role of art as secondary, with respect to a hierarchically superior reality, which artists would attempt to reproduce. However, to conceive of art as creation inverts that relationship in order to propose the idea of a unique scope of the artistic, independent of the real – something that indubitably marks the evolution and development of artistic vanguards since postimpressionism. In the words of Arnold Hauser:

‘Postimpressionist art can no longer be called, in any way, a reproduction of nature; its relation to nature is one of violation. We can speak, at the most, of a type of magical naturalism, of the production of objects that exist alongside reality, but that are not meant to replace it. When we consider the works of Braque, Chagall, Rouault, Picasso, Henri Rousseau, Paul Klee, we inevitably perceive that among their many differences we find ourselves face to face with a second world, a *superworld* that, for as many characteristics of common reality as it may exhibit, represents a form of existence that transcends and is incompatible with this reality’ (Hauser, 1988, pp.269-270).

However, theoretical reflection would have to wait some years³ before the emergence of an adjusted description of how this attitude’s impact reflected an era, a vital concept Jean Paul Sartre concretely described:

² What is probably the best reading of formalist proposals can be found in Morpurgo-Tagliabue, 1977, although it is appropriate to compare them with Steiner (2001).

³ We can also review some pages by John Berger (1990, pp.155-156) on cubism, where the same extension of the artistic attitude to the cultural and social is realized: “What was the nature of that transformation? I have indicated elsewhere (in *The Rise and Fall of Picasso*) the relationship between Cubism and the economic, technological and scientific evolutions of the era. It doesn’t make much sense to repeat it here; instead, I would like to try to polish a bit more the definition of the philosophical meaning of those evolutions and of their coincidence.....The gears of the world imperialist system; opposite this, international socialism; the foundations of physics, modern physiology and sociology; the increase of the use of electricity, the invention of the radio and movies; the beginning of mass production; the publication of mass circulation periodicals; the new structural possibilities offered by iron and aluminum; the rapid development of the chemical and synthetic materials production industries; the appearance of the automobile and airplane: what does all of this mean? There exist moments of convergence, when numerous evolutions enter a period of similar, qualitative change, before diverging into a multiplicity of new terminologies. Only some of those who live in a given moment can understand the entire significance of the qualitative change taking place; but all are aware that the times are changing: the future, instead of offering continuity, seems to advance toward them.....It is important to understand the profound philosophical reach of the consequences of this change as well as the reasons for which it can be defined as qualitative. It is not simply a matter of a faster speed in the transportation or transmission of messages, of a more complex scientific vocabulary, of a larger accumulation of

'For us, the *to do* is indicative of the *to be*, each addition draws new figures upon the earth and each technique and each tool is a sense open to the world: things have as many facets as ways to be used. We are no longer among those who must possess the world, but among those who want to change it, and it is to the very plan of changing it that the world reveals the secrets of its being' (Sartre, 1950, p.201).

Ever since its occurrence, this call to action has been what makes the creation of the actual world our responsibility. It is, therefore, very important for our culture, because it supports through creative action its very definition as a world. The artist has seen, in merely three centuries, how his practice has evolved from work performed to order for patrons to the role of innovator and social interpreter, charged with visualizing new worlds and putting them within reach of society – from reproduction to revolution, with technology at his service. However, has it truly been so?⁴

Walter Benjamin detected a lack of this ostensible alliance of technique, creativity, art, and progress in his well-known essay "Art in the Age of Technical Reproducibility" (Benjamin, 2008)⁵, although it would prove to be a reoccurring theme in much of his work, such as his writing on Karl Krauss:

'For a long time now, too long, the emphasis has been placed on the creative. However, only he who avoids orders and control will be so creative. Work by assignment, controlled, of which the models are political and technical works, only produce filth and waste, completely destroy the material, erode the creation, criticizing its own conditions, and thereby comes to be opposite of work done by the dilettante, who enjoys creation. His work is instead inoffensive and pure; it consumes and purifies that which is masterly' (Benjamin, 2009a, pp.375-376).

From this perspective, the interaction between modernization of work and art does not result in creation, but rather in its destruction. For Benjamin, despite the legitimacy which every era

capital, of an amplification of markets, of the appearance of international organizations, etc. The process of the secularization of the world had finally been completed. The arguments against the existence of God had achieved very little. However, man then found himself to have the capacity to extend himself indefinitely beyond the immediate: he seized the spatial and temporal territory in which, until then, God was thought to exist.....The second consequence implied the relationship of the being with that secularized world. There had ceased to be an essential discontinuity between the individual and the general. The invisible and the multiple had ceased to mediate between each individual and the world. Each man formed part of the world and was inseparable from it. In an eternally original meaning, which continues to be the basis of all modern conscience, each man *was* the world he had inherited".

⁴ I defended this hypothesis in my doctoral research (Guerra de Hoyos, 2008, pp.131-138) as part of a more profound discussion of man's relationship to his surroundings in the cycle of modern culture. Although it may still prove dangerous, in the face of the panorama of aesthetic thought, to speak of a new general paradigm of the creative, there seem to exist indubitable convergences between contemporary artistic attitudes in very diverse practices, and those that accompany theoretical propositions generated in philosophy, sociology, or geography. More steps of this research can be found in Guerra de Hoyos (2010) as a communication to whose congress general thematic was the revision of the crisis of the artistic system. It is a case of a hypothesis in transformation, the advances of which I elaborate in the present article. The collective or participatory dimension of the artistic experience, we take up the analyses of the reception of works in phenomenology-art and hermeneutics in nature, to which I allude a bit later in the text, however, collective creation, as a specific principle, has not yet been defined by my research, although it is a possible candidate for inclusion in future investigation.

⁵ The references to Walter Benjamin are taken from the last reissue of his works by Abada press. With this base, *Círculo de Bellas Artes* of Madrid organized the creation of a digital atlas (VVAA, 2010a) that provides for a thematic understanding of his works and changes the relationship between the reader and Benjamin's text. We will reflect on this question along the course of this text.

enjoys, to find the forms of expression appropriate for the available technical resources⁶, artistic creativity must establish the opportunity for aesthetic experience, for the appearance of the aura, which is not produced in the commodified, banalized relationship with artistic objects or with their reproductions.

The discourse of Benjamin is established as a fundamental statute of our prejudices toward that which the creative process seeks and provides: the significance of the discursiveness unique to the technique and thanks to the artistic practice. With that declaration of principles one is being incardinated into an inherited system of criticism and aesthetic acknowledgement, rooted in idealism, which maintains its position withstanding the fierce onslaught of the vanguards of the early 20th century, such as surrealism, Dadaism or constructivism, but that, from the time of the Second World War, cannot contain the new values and aesthetic categories of mass consumption society, where artistic reproduction and technique produce a new stage for action: communication medium.

In these medium, the debate over the direct artistic experience is dismantled, as it is precisely the mediation of experience that characterizes a portion of artistic activity in the media. What influence do these transformations in artistic creation exert? Firstly, they introduce an acceleration and dilation of the creative horizon, with the generation from a new sphere of media culture. But perhaps the cause for the definitive scrutinization of formalist premises for creation is the appearance of the statute of simulation⁷. Baudrillard was one of the first to reflect on the appearance of this new vector, but the reflection we incorporate is by José Manuel Cuesta Abad in a rereading of texts by Pierre Klossowsky:

'[...] the simulacrum has the appearance of the real because the real has the perfect appearance of the simulacrum. Art can cause us to forget that it is art and at same time remind us that it is as real as reality itself....with the true world we have also suppressed the apparent...nothingness of appearance, as there is no essence or reality to oppose it. Only dissimulation of the simulacrum, the appearance of the unapparent, the art that lies hidden behind its artistry [...]' (Cuesta Abad, 2008, pp.82-83).

Therefore, one of the principle characteristics of artistic production, in global culture is that reality and reproduction have become indiscernible. The creative attitude does not refer to the field of fiction, as it once tended to, but rather that our surroundings are within the reach of creative simulation and transformation. In these conditions, technology is the basic support for artistic or pseudoartistic operation. Without it, art is converted into recreation, but

⁶ "The concrete study of mass art leads necessarily to the question of technical reproduction of the artistic work. To each era correspond reproduction techniques that are completely determined," says Fuchs. "These represent their potential for technical development and by consequence... ..the result of the necessities of the era. For the same reason, it is not surprising that all profound historical transformations that have by consequence the domination of other classes that until then... .. also implies a change in graphic techniques, of reproduction techniques" (Benjamin, 2009b, p.107).

⁷ The impact of mass communication means on culture can be observed from several fronts in theoretical reflection, we have cited the concept, exceedingly well known, of simulation contributed by Jean Baudrillard (2005) but we also find it in Theodor Adorno, as reflected in the excellent analysis by José Luis Pinillos Díaz (1997).

recreation in its former conditions⁸, by which technological support is disguised or diluted, but at the cost of accentuating the simulacrum component.

Under these conditions, creativity faces the generation of difference in order to be able to be recognizable, but how to generate a difference with sufficient validity for the recognition of its capacity for creative innovation? According to Boris Groys (2005), the generation of the new would come conditioned by its insertion in the global system of the aesthetic, operating through distinctness from the rest of production, and not through importance or actual references.

Creative action seems to wish to escape tradition connection to the artistic field, reaching the production of tools of daily life, in what has come to be called the aestheticization of day to day life. However, this aestheticization does not lose its relationship with simulation and representation of the fictitious, generating an ever-increasing interest in some spatial disciplines like architecture or sculpture, for experimentation with the environmental or atmospheric capacity of space.

Creativity and Experience

If we observe, with a certain critical view, the artistic production of recent decades, we can appreciate a growing tendency for exploration of a territory, which we could designate as intermediate, between reality and fiction. The growth of performances, and of their range of action, developing in scenes increasingly quotidian, seems to speak to us of the continuous incorporation of the theme of blurring between reality and fiction, which we have detected since the appearance of the vector of simulacrum.

Nonetheless, in these experiments, an actor is introduced that in the a priori of the creative act always remained outside, in a secondary plane of reception of the work and its effects, the spectator. The spectator resigns himself as a necessary condition in these artistic actions; he is judge and part, at times consciously and at others as a participant in a distracted experience in his urban course⁹. The blurring between fiction and reality is produced as a result of the assimilation of the artistic work, in the ephemeral experience, unique, unpredictable, with the spectator as a variable and active agent, but always technically produced a posteriori.

The creative increase that produces the reception of the artistic work is a recurring theme in the aesthetic theories of hermeneutic nature, given that the reception is not a mere repetition but generates an understanding, an appropriate interpretation which creatively amplifies the

⁸ An appropriate example is that of the *unplugged* concerts, as a form of returning to the originating conditions of musical production which, nonetheless, involves a supporting technology as sophisticated as normal productions. It is not a case of spontaneous music, but of simulation of that spontaneity.

⁹ We take as an example the experience of Paul Auster and Sophie Calle in "Gothan Handbook. New York: usage instructions" (VVAA, 2010b).

work of art's very essence¹⁰. But this emphasis on the uniqueness of the artistic experience, its component of randomness, its ephemeral character, is a question that conditions the reception of the work. They do it with a goal of improving the experience itself, of reclaiming the attention to the incidental – the distinctiveness that strikes us; that is to say, the intention of these practices is to generate an experiential purport of the artistic experience.

Experience, *erlebnis*¹¹, is the type of aural experience, a fabric woven of space and time that, according to Benjamin, produces or should produce artistic works, and therefore, behind this apparent renovation of artistic practices we find ourselves returning to the same recurring prejudices regarding art that remain underlying even today. Is not this variety of "special" experience that which urban art seeks to provide? To surprise us in such a manner that the space is never again the same, although the exhibit or performance is concluded.

Doubtlessly, we achieve that art, supported by media reproductions, immortalizes the work after the work itself ceases to exist. Not even in the more permanent actions of LandArt does reality manage to erase the memory of the reproduction of the initial act. The entire world possesses the mental image of the Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty in its initial state, despite the deterioration that the passage of time and water currents has produced. The emphasis on direct experience results in the production of an eternal mediation of the work in its media reproduction, a paradox that the aesthetic critic has long since accepted when he compares the disappearance of the artistic object with a crisis in the artistic system¹².

It may prove to be an overly conservative diagnostic, the fruit of a necessity for aesthetic categorization that proves non-operational in contemporary cultural conditions. It would be fitting to rethink the parameters that could be considered particularly descriptive of the current creative process in order to see if the dismantling of the artistic object necessarily encompasses the entire crisis of the artistic system, or if it is only a questioning of traditional creativity.

Reading the Creative Process from Right to Left

To read from right to left is an unusual process for western culture, although in other cultures it is the norm. What this process provides is a distinct way of understanding the standard modes of thought and history of the ideas on creation, given that we are now in a cultural

¹⁰ For Gadamer, "repetition does not mean that something is duplicated in a strict sense, that is, that it leads to a certain original form. To the contrary, each repetition is as original as the piece itself" (Gadamer, 1993, p.168).

¹¹ The concept of experience, *erlebnis*, has its origins in German Romanticism, and resurfaces in different artistic tendencies in a punctual manner over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries (Morpurgo-Tabliabue, 1977), but it is not until the revision of Aesthetic Phenomenology, realized by Merleau-Ponty and Dufrenoy (1982), and especially by Hans Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutics (1993), that it reaches its maximum level of involvement with the artistic and receptive tasks of the artistic work.

¹² An excellent reference is the First European Aesthetic Congress celebrated in Madrid in November, 2010. See <http://web.uam.es/otros/estetica/concepto_del_congreso.htm>.

context in which the very bases for the thought of the modern cycle are being reformulated¹³. This is a necessary displacement when, as we have already seen, it is easy to fall back into previous prejudices without even realizing. At this juncture, to seek another way of reviewing what has been thought leads us to reconsider the way of understanding or looking, to examine events in another order, with different rules, from right to left or from bottom to top, in a way go deeper into an apparently well understood past in order to find convincing explanations for our present.

But moreover, we wish to introduce here a memory of Enric Miralles, and his personal proposition on space and artistic activity. Miralles achieved the level of doctor of architecture with his thesis titled "Things seen to the left and right (without glasses)" in 1987, a document which displayed a high level of innovation and creativity in the investigative process, which was not always well-received¹⁴. Accepting the challenge and orientation of Miralles, it seems necessary to introduce another twist in the understanding we propose with the inversion of the reading direction.

Miralles's reflection regards the interaction between the reproductions of different images placed in a peculiar order. The collection of illustrations that accompanied the doctoral text responded to it in the form of a dialog rather than a validation or an argumental alibi. We find a reference to this procedural mode in Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1924-1929) (Warburg, 2010). The restored interest in this collection of works is relocated in the artistic production of the 20th century as a precedent of the contemporary. Warburg's differential is the paradoxical absence of interest in finding a unique meaning for what he attempts to count or define. A concept, or at times an obsession, materializes in a multiplicity of images, from different cultural origins and eras that, in their spatial coexistence, in and of themselves reflects something beyond any representation, or more precisely, something that exists simultaneously in all and none of these representations.

There is no hierarchy in the manner of counting other than an approximation based on proximity, attempts, affinities, similitude. Walter Benjamin does something similar at around the same time in his *Passages* (Benjamin, 2005), a compilation of multiple texts in which he sets out an order as conventional as the alphabet. *Passages* is difficult to assign to any textual category, despite having been contemplated exhaustively, but if we place it in contact, in a dialog, with the work of Warburg, a new understanding of both begins to emerge.

¹³ Although one could cite a good number of thinkers, we make explicit reference to the approaches of Peter Sloterdijk (2003, 2004, 2006, 2010) but also to the hypothesis on the composition of modernity of Bruno Latour (1993).

¹⁴ It brings a correction process of the first draft of 1987, rejected by the board. Moneo (2009) recalls and revises the process in his text "Things seen from right to left (without glasses): a commentary on Enric Miralles Moya's doctoral thesis, 1987" (We have no bibliographical reference for Miralles's thesis, although we do for texts that adopt some of his formulations. Moneo's text is available as an electronic resource, and we've included a reference in the bibliography.)

In its own way each of them delineates, and in so doing anticipates the cultural production conditions of the beginning of the 21st century, how to work with a wide culture, where the sedimentation of product, objects and ideas has generated an extensive accumulation of differing interpretations and readings – something that seems to disassociate itself from the new production as a primary objective, and therefore does not respond to the paradigm of creativity that these same authors recognize as valid for their era¹⁵.

Enric Miralles subscribes to this line of reasoning and proposes interaction, dialog, between a text – as a compilation of commentaries, suggestions – and a compilation of illustrations of varying style, including drawings of his own works and designs. To us, the proposal seems interesting in terms of appreciating how the production of novelty seeks protection in the understanding or in the rereading of the what has come before without any intention of producing a story or narration, not even an attempt at finding a genealogical direction, but rather the generation of a collection of like fragments in which to be inserted, like a layer in a pastry crust.

To work with fragments is a contemporary cultural condition that we find reflected in numerous discourses. Let's start with the following example from the artist Perejaume:

'We have converted the world into a duplicated postcard, the only one with light on the surface of obscurity, and now we need –existence unsure- fragments that reveal fragments, rear-view mirrors that differentiate and affirm each moment of this vast postcard, the front of which we live and the back of which we write' (apud Raquejo, 1998, p.94).

The world that Perejaume want to tell is certainly our world. An age in which the incertitude over what awaits us is only comparable to the intangibility of the past we think we know. We no longer have certainties from the past that enable us to construct our own meanings or predictions about what is yet to come. What is left is nothing more than remains – decomposed fragments with which to find a meaning for our era. Miralles knew it very well when he intervened in constructed realities; one need only recall his proposal for the Council of Utrecht to encounter an example of this work with the fragmentary. A condition that was reflected in his photographic montages, which united the vision of the particular and ephemeral with that of the panoramic.

Nonetheless, this sensitivity we encounter in a collection of authors and artists of the 20th century begins to have a theoretical reference in the present time:

'Interpretation arouses, however, a critical question of broader range, as everything indicates that it tends to be incompatible with the chronological-causal facts that generally prevails in the historiographical exhibition. Interpretation is, by nature, extemporaneous. Which means that, far from conforming itself – cuando se 'deja llevar' por lo posible por la dinámica de los textos- to a temporal, prefabricated pattern or to

¹⁵ Two convergent readings involving this approach can be found in Zalamea (2008) and Didi-Huberman (2010).

an etiological scheme imposed from outside, the act of interpretation produces its own temporal trajectories and propitiates something resembling a coalescence of the synchronous, the diachronic and the anachronistic. This untimely tendency does not cease to issue a denial of the idol that is critical progressivism, and soon or later clashes with the fact – which to many may seem foolish or alarming – that the work of, let's say, Joyce, Proust, Musil or Beckett can find in Schlegel, Solger, Jean Paul or Carlyle a more penetrating and clarifying critical understanding than in many of the philological exegeses or the most refined and formalized methods of literary analysis of their time' (Cuesta Abad, 2010, p.9).

In other words, it is revealed that the true capacity of the reading, interpretation, and understanding of texts, works, and experiences is to find their ground of elective commonalities in an extemporaneous manner. Creation would not be, therefore, the product of this consumer culture that proposes the generation of a difference in the system of aesthetic-museum¹⁶ symbols, but would have, rather, more to do with the maneuvering of existing relationships than with the creation of a separate world.

We can find different ways of citing this attitude: to create is to cultivate, says Hugo Mujica (2002), to take in, to give space and time, but this attitude is also described in the work of other poets such as José Ángel Valente¹⁷ or Paul Celan¹⁸ and, implicitly, in the work of architects such as Mockbee, Siza or Navarro Baldeweg. Retraction and listening are activities that accompany this type of creation, to pay attention to the reality which speaks, to those who are willing to listen. A capacity with more ample possibilities than those that appear at first glance, as Jean-Luc Nancy discovers:

'To listen is to enter the specialization that, at the same time, enters me: because it opens within me as well as around me, and from me as well as toward me: it opens me as well as what lies outside me, and in virtue of this double, quadruple or sextuple opening, a "oneself" can take place. To listen is to be simultaneously without and within, to be open from without and from within, and by consequence from one to the other and from one into the other. Listening in this way composes the clear uniqueness that the sensitive or sensory condition expresses in the most ostensible way as such: the partition between inside and outside, division and participation, disconnection and contagion' (Nancy, 2007, pp.33-34).

Thus does it seem that turnaround proposed with this change in creation, from action to collection, does not produce an annulment of the I, but rather the opposite, its expansion in belonging with the outside world – a cultural counterweight for a global civilization that produces an estrangement from reality and its constant simulations. This type of attitude is not

¹⁶ As we highlighted with Groys (2005).

¹⁷ "Perhaps the supreme, the only radical artistic exercise is an exercise of retraction. To create is not an act of power (power and creation negate each other); it is an act of acceptance or of recognition. To create carries the sign of femininity. It is not an act of penetration of the subject, but passion for being penetrated by it. To create is to generate a state of availability, in which the first thing created is the void, an empty space" (Valente, 1999, pp.99.41).

¹⁸ Especially in texts such as "The Discourse of Bremen" or "The Meridian", referenced in Celan (1999, pp. 497-510).

an episodic change, but an epochal one, as it is in the changes to the categories of sensitivity that profound cultural changes are most noticeable¹⁹, and we understand that this type of change relates substantially with the ways of relating to the media proposed from ecology.

Two of the creative act's unprecedented possibilities, which have come to resolve grave deficiencies in contemporary cultures, since the necessity of sustainability and ecological precaution are so extensively recognized, the crisis of the individual and of the subject is no less referenced, from sociology to literature to philosophy²⁰. However, they are referenced in that they permit the incorporation of the technique vector as one of the conditions of mediation – not as something that impedes true experience, but as a relational agent.

It is in this way that we understand the proposal that meta-texts like Walter Benjamin's Atlas²¹ disseminate in the digital media. A game of multiplication of the possibilities of interpretation that does not impede the traditional reception of writings or the possibility of writing essays on one's works, but that generates distinct fields of play and interpretation, placing into question what it means to read an author like Benjamin. We once again encounter the condition of fragmentation and of relation between texts and images, which we mentioned previously with regard to Miralles, as tools that generate mutual resonances and unique relationships.

The incorporation of technology and its transfer from the instrumental to the relational field seems to us an essential condition for the era that appears to be beginning, a necessary recognition, and a responsibility that cannot be avoided in technical disciplines, emancipated from cultural values in the cycle of modernity, responding to the hypotheses of Latour (1993).

A Cautious Creation?

Latour also reviews the relationship between the transformation of the environment in recent years and the concept of design, noticing its evolution, from a highly aggressive attitude with

¹⁹ As Chantal Maillard describes: "The ways in which categories of sensitivity are manifested are indubitably cultural and when a culture degenerates, the symptoms can be observed in them. It is appropriate, then, to recuperate the forms of sensitivity by purifying its terminals: the senses themselves. Vision, for example, always anticipated by judgment, or hearing....fleeing as much from internal noise (the incessant chatter of the mind) as from external noise, the incessant gargling of vain words...to relearn the world through the ear.....the gesture also has its importance, it is appropriate, then, to make scant the gesture and adjust it to the cadence of the body, to its flow, after purifying the intentions. Awareness is surely close thereby. I am not referring moral awareness, but to the capacity to observe and to observe ourselves, to feel ourselves and to know ourselves. To know ourselves when alone and when in company. To know ourselves in others. Because in the controversy between the other and the self, we often forget that we resemble one another" (Maillard, 2009, p. 38).

²⁰ Giddens (2000), Lipovetsky (1986), Levinas (1993). To recognize it, a fragment is sufficient: "The paradox supports itself, then, it this: to do it all – to (re)present it or (re)produce it all, in the strongest sense – it is necessary to not be anything in itself, not to have anything specific to it, other than an equal aptitude for all manner of things, of roles, of types of functions, of characters, etc. The paradox formulates a law of impropriety that is the same law as mimesis: only the "man without attributes", the being with neither propriety nor specificity, the subject without subject (absent in itself, distracted from itself, deprived of itself) is capable of presenting or producing in general" (Cuesta Abad, 2006, p.107).

²¹ The Atlas is an electronic resource, available in the reference cited in the bibliography. As an interactive tool it requires a specific license, although it remits to the various, more recent and cared for editions of Benjamin's work in Spanish.

the environment to the development of new relational and interactive capacities with the medium. This may come to indicate that design is substantially different from the paradigm of creation, which is the one that endorsed the former attitude, and links this change to a distinct mode of understanding space:

'The concept that is key for reconciling those two sets of passions and for inventing this strange role of a precautionary Prometheus, is that of *explicitation*. Explicitation is a consequence of the concept of envelopes. The envelope is a term that will surely draw the attention of architects and designers: we are enveloped, entangled, surrounded; we are never outside without having recreated another more artificial, more fragile, more engineered envelope. We move from envelopes to envelopes, from folds to folds, never from one private sphere to the Great Outside' (Latour, 2008, p.8).

He makes explicit reference in his work to the approaches of Peter Sloterdijk (2006), in his development of a spatially-based metaphysics, anchoring the explication of our being in the world to the development of spheres of spatial immunity. The similarity of Latour's approach to the paradigm of the creative of which we spoke before is more than evident. The terminological change, at least in the Spanish language, is not particularly fortunate, given the resonances that the design concept has in this language, but the description of its possibilities and of its field of action are entirely correct. Therefore, we agree with his approach, although what is described with respect to the action of design responds, from the perspective we have proposed, to the most evident transformations of the paradigm of creation in recent decades.

Latour detects an amplification of the concept of design related to the change in the relationship with objects and with the meaning of action in general. Firstly we have an increase in meanings (planning, defining, designing, encoding, providing) and an augmentation in extension (more fields of production). Design could be considered a new theory of post-Promethean action: if Prometheus is the symbol of moving forward and breaking with the past, of construction, design affects action on that which has been constructed, that which is preexistent, but also attention to detail and that which occurs afterward; it would be something akin to a cautious Prometheus.

Moreover, it would allow one to give meaning as soon artifacts become complete collections of contradictory themes, with a new definition of materiality that would tend to have to do with the encoding and digitalization of that which is virtual. Departing from the assumption that to design is always to redesign, it's a case of a remedial concept, and must incorporate an ethical dimension, of recognition of good design as opposed to bad design, restoring the coexistence between materiality and morality.

The very metaphor that he proposes, to think of a prudent or cautious Prometheus, in his action of bringing fire to the mortals, is especially suggestive, in particular in his final question which we accept as a necessary inquiry: Could Prometheus be, at some point, cautious enough

to effectively redesign the planet? Or, to put the question in create terms, could these new capacities of the create act solve the problems that sustainability, innovation and technology induce in contemporary culture?

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