

A Louvre Alliance study for the Forum d'Avignon

CULTURE TERRITORIES & POWER

the spirit of Atlas

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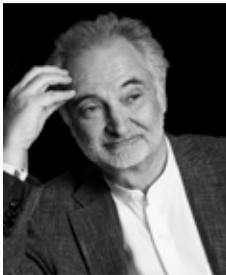
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Any new project for life or society rallies forces of the *spirit*.

by Jacques Attali

Chairman of the Supervisory Board at Louvre Alliance



The three powers that guide human affairs – religion, the military and trade – have always had a close relationship with culture, science and art, the sanctity of each being subject to rightful praise. Trade, however, follows a process that channels desires towards their fiduciary embodiment; we neither need to regret that fact nor believe in a better world that would work differently. Furthermore, we know that trade is not aspiring to create a post-industrial society based on ideal services, but

instead to advance the industrialisation of earlier ones. That is the reason for this rise in industries involved with culture, which take services previously considered uncommon and confidential and then convert them into easily distributed products. There is no point in lamenting for a drop in expectations.

It is better to look forward to fresh ways in which the world will soon reinvent culture, namely by creating original projects for life or society. Two certain options arise involving these inventions.

Firstly, they will take place in cities. These have always been at the *heart* of trade, where the creative classes mingle and share ideas. In the 21st century, they will remain at the core of all creative endeavours and will even add to their own appeal, not only in terms of demographics, but also and mostly of intellect. This study by Louvre Alliance states that cities were, are and always will be the key link in this creative chain.

Secondly, any new project for life or society pertains to and rallies forces of the spirit. This study also stresses this point: the spirit is what refers to intelligence and knowledge; it cannot be limited to a cultural epicureanism, but to a certain nobility that Rob Riemen discusses in his book *Nobility of Spirit*. This nobility is as necessary today as it was in the past to consider any human project, for although it is not a religious, military or financial nobility or even a one of the heart, it does appertain to a certain elite; one that puts itself in the service of the Other and progresses with a calm elegance.

This is what Louvre Alliance invites us to witness through literature and geography: the calmness of a nobility of spirit at the heart of the creative bustle of the cities.

INTRODUCTION

The 2013 edition of the Forum d'Avignon seeks to question the links between *power* and *culture*, which cannot be discussed without first contemplating political philosophy. For instance, how can we forget that 2014 will be the year of the European elections where political powers from member nations face their cultural responsibilities? We have however decided to add a third term to “power” and “culture”, the concept of “territories”, as this involves both *restriction* and *mediation*. In order to spare a brief study from covering several centuries' worth of a philosophy on cultural politics and dedicating hundreds of well deserved pages to the subject, it is a *restriction*. Introducing territories and their ties to culture and power could reduce the scope of this research a little. Also, it is a *mediation* as this is where culture and power meet on equal ground. It is therefore not a coincidence that the figure of Atlas is summoned as the sub-heading of our study. After carrying the weight of the world, this Greek Titan has become a heavy archive of maps and plates which gather in a medley that can both baffle and perturb. An atlas does not follow an order or ranking system, it juxtaposes information according to proximity or associations; it is not to be read, it is to be browsed. It organises – in which order? – the collection of images and drawings the only relevance of which is their simultaneity. As opposed to paintings the *composed beauty* of which seems eternally fixed, an atlas has the *broken beauty*¹ of a composition with a somewhat chaotic and faltering construction.

2014 will be the centennial of the First World War, its cataclysm having created something similar to two *emotional atlases* on each side of the Rhine: Aby Warburg's *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* and Paul Valéry's two letters from *Crisis of the Mind*. Iconological for the one and literary for the other,

these testimonies question society, and inspire this study of *power* and *culture* equally.

Therefore, is 2013 the beginning or the end of a crisis? On the one hand, we have the *winter of culture*², a drop in public funding, a decrease in reading... On the other, a rise in visits to museums, a significant increase in cultural spending in China and the Middle East... But which culture is this about? From which territory? And in which language can it be discussed? It would appear that in order to mention the *power of culture*, we need to go beyond languages into the *powerfulness of the spirit* (chapter 1) and *geography* is invited to join this loving literary trend, as an example, a possible illustration of a *new tender liturgy* (chapter 2). Linking back to the Forum d'Avignon's wish to offer measures to Europe, we shall then have the coherence to only broach the *spirit of measures* (chapter 3).

Finally, let us specify that this current study only has generous intentions, in a sense of *pacification*. A pacification between intellectuals and industrialists who currently share one single word, “culture”, even though their languages might be different. Many difficulties stem from this. Where the politician and the industrialist deal with techniques, regulations and economics, the artist and the scientist deal with the spirit. Although they might meet when their *work* is transformed into and distributed as *goods*, their ways of thinking are different. Our study thus offers a differentiation of these ways of thinking with an intent of calmness that is appropriate to any *nobility of spirit*.

1. Cf. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas ou le gai savoir inquiet*, Les Editions de Minuit, 2011

2. Jean Clair, *L'hiver de la culture*, Flammarion, 2011





Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige,
Cercle de confusion, 1997

3 000 fragments photographiques
contrecollés sur un miroir, 300 x 400 cm
Courtesy les artistes & Galerie In Situ /
Fabienne Leclerc, Paris



Aby Warburg,
Bilderatlas Mnemosyne, 1927-1929

FROM CULTURE TO SPIRIT

“There is one aspect of war, I continued, which I think he was beginning to comprehend: war is human, it is something that is lived like a love or a hatred and could be told like the story of a novel, and consequently, if anyone goes about repeating that strategy is a science, it won’t help him in the least to understand war, since war is not a matter of strategy³.”

War is not strategic but loving, that is, precisely, *literary*. A single word is therefore enough. The violence of language is such, and so great is its power, that it can subdue and enslave as easily as it can release and liberate.

Power and culture: the defects of the subject

“*Cultivate yourself!*”: the violent command of this century undoubtedly rivals “*Democratise yourself!*” the latter being prevalent since the fall of the Berlin wall. The imperative and the injunction to culture are present everywhere under the more or less sly disguises of invitation, advice and suggestion. This encompasses adverts for exhibitions, game shows, summer reads, festivals and nightly events and even tour guides that use the intimidating “*Don’t miss out*” phrase to promote a museum, a palace or a church. Whoever does not subscribe to this is considered ignorant. Both citizens and tourists know this fact: they must cultivate themselves. Obeying to cultural consumption under the influence of an illusion allows us to believe that we are free to choose. In the same way as the keys on a remote hide the command to click, culture on demand (like *video on demand*)

conceals an order. The cultural consumer is a *being who is obeying through the very gesture by which he is ordering*⁴. Furthermore, through the use of a pronoun, “to cultivate oneself” eagerly replaces “to educate oneself” and no longer requires an object. To cultivate one’s garden or one’s Latin still holds meaning whereas “to cultivate oneself” holds none besides the empty order that resides within. We are now at that stage old grammarians referred to as the *defective verbs of the subject*: culture is *defective*. Let us explore what is lacking here.

In *What is a Commandment?*, Giorgio Agamben denounced the contamination of defective verbs as the mark of contemporary societies. The verb “*to be able to*” in particular currently seems to be increasingly lacking in purpose. We must “*be able to*”. What a strange switch then, that, as Agamben stresses, we went from the ethics of Kant and “wanting to be able to” which underlines the power of desire, to a “yes we can” attitude that sounds like “being able to want”. *Power*, as well as *culture*, is devoid of purpose in language: this is the first connection between these two words. As defective imperatives, “to have power” and “to cultivate oneself” meet in the symptomatic phrase of a “cultural spending power”.



At first glance, there is no need to look any further: the power of culture stands in the violent and arrogant command of “*cultivate yourself!*”, including its resounding axiological success. It could also be called an abuse of power. How else could we explain the phenomenal increase in visits to museums? By a sudden and formidable growth in individual wishes to *live* paintings? By a generalised craving for the *poetics of life*? True in some cases, but it is however unlikely that these *high* reasons are the only explanation for the current science of queueing. *Cultural society* has won the bet of its injunction, it has achieved its coup by infusing its guilty conscience in the hearts of gouches and by pretending its consumption is a new way to canalise instinct. Freud’s *Civilisation and its Discontents* has taken a dramatic turn as the cultural spending power has unfortunately replaced sublimation and renunciation of instinct. There is also a death instinct renewing itself in the destruction or degradation of works of art. Iconoclasts know that only that which holds a religious, political or moral power is open to destruction or vandalism⁵. The cultural object’s presumptuousness power is such that it leads some to destruction. Another reversal of instinct stands in the difference between *consuming* and *squandering*. Renouncing instinct sides with the flow of desires, of *wanting something*, whereas the cultural power sides with the instinct of purchase, or consuming and squandering, in other words, of the defective power of the subject.

Culture is this century’s colony

We would however be wrong in blaming *someone* as opposed to *something*. The undeniable success of these cultural industries is to be praised rather than denounced. The increase in shares of GDP and direct employment from this industry, as well as its geographical reach around the world can only be revered. On the one hand, this development emerges from a productive and healthy trading goal that could only be criticised

in terms of ideology and without a link to a cultural element. On the other hand, this very development definitely contributes to a rise in the distribution of artistic pieces, the remuneration of artists and access to creations. Cultural industrialists do their job within their own economical demands. If they do hold power, far from being devoid of purpose, it is a consequence – and not a cause, of the defection of the political powers towards culture. The cause can be found on the side of language.

*Language is fascist*⁶: Roland Barthes’ warning shot in 1977 mentioned the relationship between language and code; what every language forces us to say, and therefore, to think. *Speech, and more importantly, discourse, is not communication, as is too often repeated. It is subjugation: all language is a generalised reaction*⁷. Maybe even worse than the industrialisation of cultural goods which professionalise and remunerate human activities, is the *invasion* of a cultural speech by a technical and economical terminology. From crushing down the diversity of cultures to a relativism of a cultural be all, the effects of the star system to the thrall of brands, advertisement to the entertainment of hucksters. None of these are caused by economics (a science), the economy (an industry), but indeed by *economicism*⁸ (a language). The word “culture” is depleted. Having suffered so much arrogant and hysterical probing, so much employment and technical support, having suffered so much defective usage, it has lost all meaning. Culture has been colonised by a technical and economical language: budget, financing, defence, investments, market, VAT, copyrights, access, technology, digital, support, grants... it has become impossible to find a speech on culture without hearing these words. Cultural language has been *coded*, it suffers from a semantic cancer.

In this colonisation, the political power followed, more by a gregariousness of repetition than the authority of an assertion (which it doesn’t after all fully believe), it now echoes it. *It picks up what language has left behind*⁹.



“In the beginning of the 21st century [...] has risen a capitalism sometimes referred to as cultural or cognitive, although it is above all else the destructive organisation of an industrial populism [that turned] consciousness, in other words, the seat of the spirit, into a simple reflex organ.”



Bernard Stiegler¹⁰

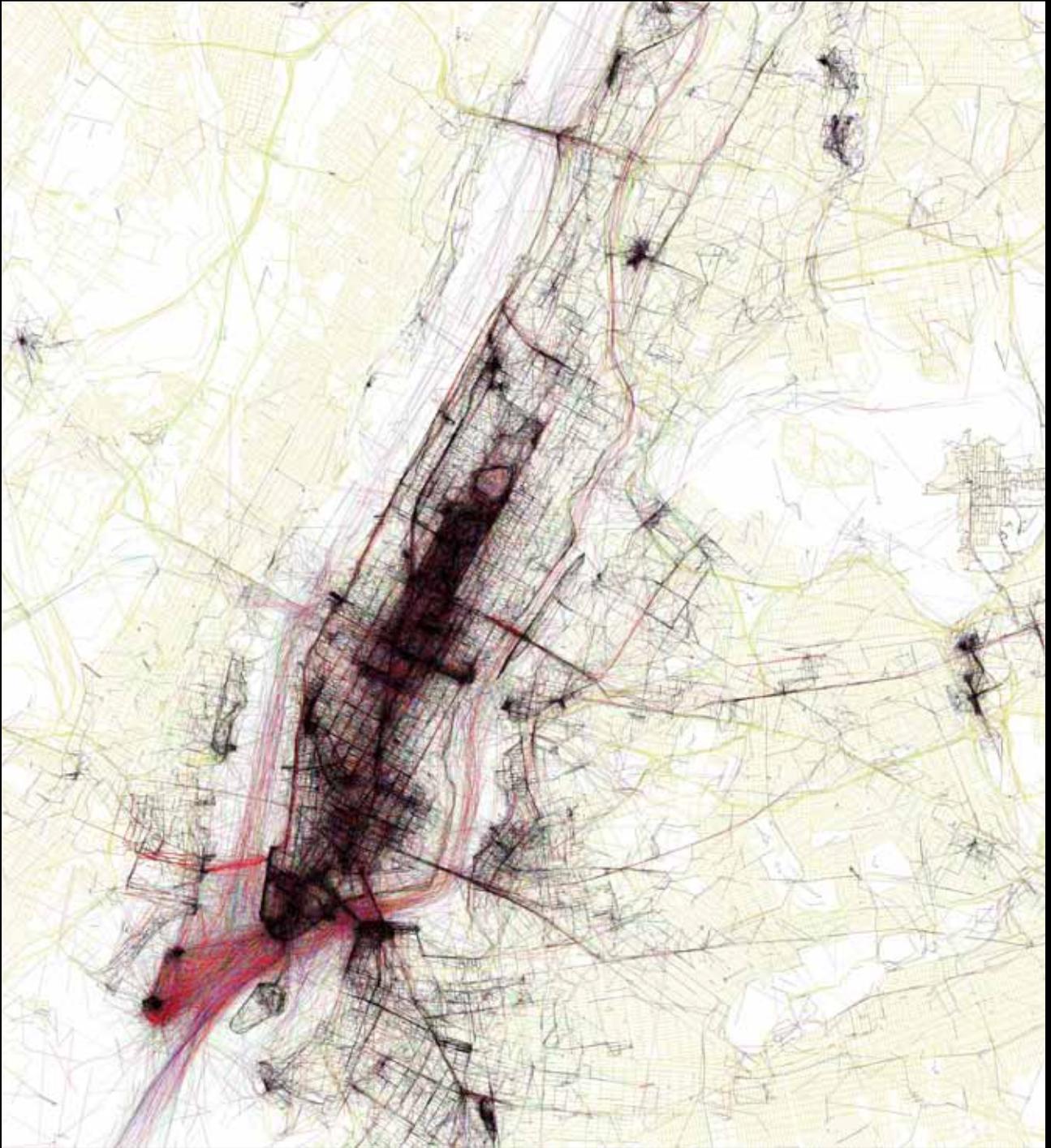
And what language has left behind has been for a few years nothing but a defensive, corporate and technical vocabulary of finance. Despite the fact that the speeches retain idioms that founded the old cultural terminology, with words like humanism, beauty, dignity or knowledge, the political powers have stolen certain terms here and there, and by giving them back to their original speaker has committed the crime of the stolen word: *“When a stolen word is brought back, it is not exactly the same one as the one that was stolen: it is never put back in its proper place¹¹”*.

The word “culture” is therefore drained. After being colonised, it is nothing but a sector-specific indication between supply and demand, it is being segmented and categorised by marketing, it is being used by feigned politics to evoke the rise of an individual fantasy of never-ending entertainment. This word is *dying*, and will never rise again.

The liturgical support

Colonisation, albeit a linguistic one, still hold dangers for both the colonised, and the coloniser.





Eric fischer,
The Geotaggers' World Atlas (New York), 2010

Cultural industry, as well as public authority, seems to be paying the price as its fragility shows in current debates on economy and politics. With questions around cultural exception or diversity, the defence of public agreements and specific sectors, the difficult claims of separate groups, the cultural power has to face many signs of vulnerability. By taking a stand on economics, and because of *forces* and GDP points, culture has landed on the shore of international trading, with the cost of raw material and sea traffic. As a result, and owing to showing strength, it finds itself facing better prepared divisions. In fighting with figures, it has revealed its weapons to its opponents and opened itself up to them showing theirs. Therefore, defending culture by using its economical weight and the jobs it creates as an argument is an invitation to retaliation. It is well known in *rhetoric*: one must be sure of oneself to use the other's speech against them. In the category of language, it is highly dangerous to fill in the gap between culture and economics. Such an address, whether offensive or defensive, is however necessary and it is one which the Forum d'Avignon has been brave enough to tackle since 2005. The fatal danger is indeed that this discourse now stands alone. The mistake comes from the impossibility of talking about *culture* without also discussing *economics*.

The conquest and sharing of the world, Pierre Legendre's *dominum mundi*, were achieved thanks to a liturgy, whether from 2nd century Roman law or the Catholic church from the Middle Ages to the 17th century. Far from being a religious or ecclesiastical reference, liturgy is an *ars bene dicendi* that operates like a *performative* language and creates a relationship between an individual and an institution whatever the latter one is. As Régis Debray stresses, a liturgy is *a correct use of distances, (...) or how to make a state of separation a dynamic mediation*¹². This distance between the industrial and the political on the one hand, or the artist and the scientist on the other is

shrinking through the colonisation of language. Without liturgy, culture dies. It gives in to an (increasing) economical power and a (decreasing) political one. It is changing into a *generalised entertainment*, into a *transaction* between supply and demand. It plays on a deficiency, an instinct, a celebrity and an ownership, all the while omitting desire.

The spirit, a loving speech

Something else is needed on the side.

Proposing another word than "*culture*" is not a lexicologist's attempt, but it is instead establishing a new category. As soon as 1919, Paul Valéry suggested the word "*spirit*".

This is a strong word. No metaphysics are present here, no reference to the spiritual, but rather what Valéry described in 1932: *a power of transformation*¹³, a process that *engages man in an adventure* whether artistic, scientific, literary or philosophical, takes him ever further from his initial conditions of life and makes him *renounce the monotony of the living* and instinct. The spirit is indeed on the side of desire and wanting, of *powerfulness* as *opposed* to power. It does not presuppose an object, it looks for it. When it has nothing to feed on, it creates it. Erudition and technique are useful in the asserted uselessness of its process. Its demands are those that culture has left behind, the demand of reading and quoting, of a *cultivated culture*¹⁴. One should not read in this phrase a conservative reference but instead a reference to a spread out *intertextuality*, a refusal of short-cuts, a *Monsieur Teste* or an *Igitur*. The spirit is a *shapeless* category, a process that, by separating the human being and the works of the mind, launches and opens the triangle between an individual, society and cultural goods. It is a liturgy as it needs rules, practice and instructions; it is a language as the presence of a structure allows for every derivatives.



“Will Europe become what it is in reality – that is, a little promontory on the continent of Asia?

Or will it remain what it seems – that is, the elect portion of the terrestrial globe, the pearl of the sphere, the brain of a vast body?”



Paul Valéry¹⁵

And it is in this very place, of language, that the spirit can. The language of the spirit is the exact opposite to a cultural language, a *doxa*, that Roland Barthes described for us as a congealed and repetitive language, a *gelatinous mass that sticks to the back of the retina, and that, like Medusa, petrifies the sight of whoever watches*¹⁶. It is a powerful endoxal language that generalises the emptiness of “*cultivate yourself!*”. On the other hand, the spirit is away from power – *a-cratic* to use Barthes’ neologism – it does not care to change the world as it is precisely the force of change. As opposed to a *sad reform*, the spirit offers the liturgy of a *gay science*. What stands

between *spirit* and *culture* is the antagonism of powerfulness and power, where the first is only at its dawn and the second has entirely reached its end. The language of the spirit is indeed a liturgy in the sense that it *performs* a relationship between *the ego* and *the world*. While it says nothing of society, identity or social relationships, it is lived *like a desire*.

A loving language, the language of the spirit has the powerfulness of a *spiral* discourse that has no objective nor end. In the end, what would this language of the spirit be linked to? This is what Roland Barthes tells us: “If what we call



freedom is not only the ability to evade power, but also and mostly to not subdue anybody, then there can only be freedom outside of language. Unfortunately, the human language is inwards: it stands behind closed doors. It can only be escaped with the price of impossibility: by a mystical singularity [...] or even Nietzsche's *amen* [...]. But we, who are neither knights of the faith or supermen, can only, if I may, cheat with language, cheat language itself. This salutary deception, this evasion, this magnificent decoy that allows us to hear language away from power, within the splendour of a constant revolution of language, I personally call it: *literature*¹⁷.”

This is it; a liturgy, *in other words*, a literature.

Against the grain of the marketing categories of books, outside of aesthetic or academic considerations, literature is precisely what makes language a problem but without ever exhausting it. This loving language, this literature only, will have this *powerfulness without power*, in the service of creative endeavours and artists as well as politics. This is an unlimited usefulness for every cultural industry in the world as, by an ultimate loving shift, the spirit will favour the economy of culture more effectively than any fiscal measures ever could.

Putting the word “*spirit*” beside “*culture*” is the surest way to reach a fecundation as the spirit and its literary language spiral in their powerfulness. It is in this sense that any *politics of the spirit* are a literature to be regarded as a birth, a jubilation, an enthusiasm, a life project: “Who knows if, in these dark times we are living in, this apparent minimalism of a *pleasure in thinking* isn't the only enlightened visibility (the very antithesis of spectacular hallucinations), and the most serene enjoyment (as opposed to loud transgressions) that we have left to share?¹⁸”.

We shall, henceforth, prepare ourselves to separate *culture* and *spirit* as one is an empty instinct and the latter is a pleasure, an intellectual

eroticism¹⁹. According to Proust, strategy is not belligerent, it is voluptuous. Whether an economical conquest or a political speech, both would do well to peruse this *Map of Tendre*.

A geography of *tenderness*, as it were. Geography can become a set way to view the spirit, a possible – and here retained – example of a new liturgy.

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3. Marcel Proust, *Le Temps retrouvé*, Gallimard, 1990 (free translation)
 4. Giorgio Agamben, *Qu'est-ce que le commandement?*, Éditions Payot & Rivages, 2013 (free translation)
 5. Cf. Dario Gamboni, *The Destruction of Art. Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution*, Reaktion Books, 1997
 6. Roland Barthes, *Leçon*, Seuil, 1989
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. Cf. Karl Polanyi
 9. Roland Barthes, *Op. Cit.*
 10. Bernard Stiegler, *Réenchâtrer le monde : La valeur esprit contre le populisme industriel*, Flammarion, 2008 (free translation)
 11. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, Seuil, 2013 (free translation)
 12. Régis Debray, *La querelle du spectacle*, in *Les cahiers de médiologie 1*, 1996 (free translation)
 13. Paul Valéry, *La politique de l'esprit*, in *Essais quasi politiques*, Gallimard, La Pléiade, p.1022, 1965
 14. Antoine Compagnon, phrase used by Elie Barnavi
 15. Paul Valéry, *La critique de l'esprit*, 1919 (free translation)
 16. Roland Barthes, *Op. Cit.*
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. Julia Kristeva, *R/B*, *Catalogue de l'exposition du Centre Georges Pompidou*, 1978 (free translation)
 19. Cf. Marquis de Sade





Gerardus Mercator,
Septentrionalium Terrarum description, North Pole, 1595

THE GEOGRAPHICAL LITURGY

Without a doubt, it was an obviousness in the 19th and even 20th century that time is a pattern in which all contradictions evaporate. History provides meaning and time fills up, cancels impossibilities and solves enigmas. Everything, even the inexplicable, even crises, even economical crises, is explained *a posteriori*. Some grew weary of this mould – a true *temporalisation of our oppositions*. Firstly, Foucault who, with his concept of *heterotopia*, takes a stand against a messianic utopia. Then Deleuze with the *fold* evokes topology.

Since then, our age has been characterised by the multiplication of spatial references for, at the end of the day, we cannot think without spatialising. Mentioning geography here is therefore not giving in to a trend, the trend of *territory* (the use of the word is being generalised almost as quickly as its polysemy grows), but quite the opposite as it is demonstrating that geography with its derivatives and attributes, constitute one of the most powerful allies of the *spirit*.

The geographical language

Firstly, let us specify that geography as it is mentioned here is not the subject as it is studied in school, far from it; it is neither physical, human nor regional. No. Complicit geography is the one that questions the place of a *poetic imprecision* in its practice, it is Elisée Reclus' monumental geography which, by freeing itself from *scientificity* without abandoning science itself, shows landscapes as only artists allow themselves to. We see and read Monet and Flaubert in *The History of a Mountain*²⁰, a piece encompassing geography, romanticism, artistry and literature, and mostly – mostly –

endowed with an exuberant lichenical sensuality: *the sway of a scree, the caress of erosion, the intimate struggle of mountains...* This is the geography we are discussing here, one that is eminently poetic even in its *enunciation*. It gives us (and gives itself) plenty to read and think about, to be practised with an ice pick in hand, if not in mind.

Ever a poetic practice, as *choronymy* – the child of geography – names a place, a spatialisation, a conceptualisation for the first time in the same way as Lacan names psychoanalytic abstractions under the seal of topology: *Klein's bottle or Moebius' strip*. It is this very expanded geography, the dialectic of a combination of objects, places and other symbols at the splicing of what is real or imagined, that constitutes the best possible companion for the spirit.

However, if a geographical language is, without a doubt, an aesthetic, rhetorical or liturgical force, the extremities of the ligature are not outdone: geography allows for the composition of true works of art and the spirit never tires of writing about and describing space. An evidence, as it were, of the intimacy of both parties.



“Culture cannot exist in a flow
but instead in swirls, where forces
cancel each other out.”



Paul Andreu ²¹

The infinity of the cartographic field

Cartography – *the visual ramification* of geography – constitutes an obvious example of a contiguity between *art*, *geography* and a *clarity of spirit*.

Map making is indeed not, and never was, a neutral or objective endeavour. Both *objects* and *tools*, Mercator’s maps, as exemplary and precise as they were at the time, remained a representation, an interpretation and a manipulation. Proof of this is in the presence of nymphs and other sea monsters that populate their frames and edges. Similarly nowadays, as the *object-world* is growing more complex, maps are distorted. Anamorphosis however, being *the art of a secret perspective* as Dürer discusses, being reminiscent in a way of Mercator’s fauna, is but an illumination. Considering that reading an anamorphic map is conditioned by one’s ability to evaluate *deformations* (in relation to the original map), they only serve, after all, an aesthetic purpose, for without a key to explain, they remain unreadable yet admirable. On the other hand, artists searching for new disciplinary fields have seized the science of cartography which examines the relationship between man and territory and manipulate it into a provocation. This is because it allows them to move away from *the lyricism of style and the smell of turpentine*²², and also because it questions the shape of a cloud and plays on making every possible reality assume the shape of a map (from Marcel Duchamp to Claudio

Parmiggiani who discerns the profile of continents in the spots of a cow’s hide).

The city, the place and the semionaut

If *maps precede the territories*²³, what can then be said about cities as they undoubtedly constitute a spatial concept which testifies best to the intimacy between *geographical liturgy* and spirit? Everybody has experienced the fact that, whether it is inhabited or deserted, beautiful or hideous, impressive or depressing in its fragility in the words of Baudelaire, a city is a place of power – administrative, economical and situational, true –, but it is also a place of *seduction* and furthermore, of *transformation*.

Benjamin has demonstrated that the *ambler* was born at the beginning of the 19th century, in a time when cities were vast and complex enough to take their inhabitants by surprise. *A city is the veritably sacred ground of ambling*²⁴; Paris presents the guise of a *rainforest*, and its explorers *botanise the tarmac*²⁵. In the spirit of Aragon’s writings, the Dadaists attempted to emulate this in town, and were followed by the Situationists with Guy Debord’s *psychogeography*. *Strolling*, according to de Certeau after Balzac and Nietzsche, inspires curious thought, and walking across a landscape encourages free association. More and more, artists represent, stride across and colonise cities. They try to influence them even as



“An event always takes place in an interstice. Affecting a location means paralysing it.”



Didier Fusillier ²⁶

cities might, sometimes without their knowledge, be influencing the artists themselves. From an ideal city with its *Urbinate perspectives* or the strictly topographical representation of the View of Delft (Veermer) to the reinvention of the modern city by Kandinsky and Ed Ruscha, cities are a mingling ground, a place for a transformation not only of the spirit but also of minds.

Cities are also a tense environment, full of open promises, which encourage us to live intensely, and invent new ways of living (cf. insert *Fabrication Laboratories*). This lifestyle might be on the edge or in the interstices of society, in the geographical gaps which resist the influence of regulations and global homogenisation, or in these types of spaces (Marc Augé's *Non-Places*) which represent an ultimate reserve of *geographical availabilities* for a *creative possibilism*.

A mix and a process

It is the same for the creation of works of the mind as it is for geography which would never consider an island as limited by water and surrounded by it (*a landsman's point of view*): an artist is a *geographical actor* who weaves links (on a canvas, a page or a partition), and in doing so invents a *scale model* of a possible geography. His work is progressively developed through trials and mistakes in the same way as a territory is organised. Both for the artist and the *developer geographer*, the confrontation to a *topic* is ever delicate: if the *idea* prevails, there is the risk

of an anecdote, but if the hand is predominant, then everything is decoration. It is all a matter of mixing and harmonising. Editing is to the artist what the atlas is to the geographer, more precisely, the shape of an atlas is a *tender montage* that juxtaposes without imposing.

A slow and tender movement of a pendulum swaying between spirit and geography where each speaks of the other without any fascism or violence, doctrine or didacticism and where, *in fine*, the keys and commands of reading are those that we only force on ourselves. The walker cares nothing for the death of the developer. Far from Yves Lacoste who wrote in 1977 that *geography is first used to wage war*, and just as far from a localising adversary of a capital – terribly abstract and tremendously unsettled – geography disposes both of Atlas' generosity and powerfulness.

Geography is this loving language, this liturgy of spirit that responds to, completes and supplants the trading dogma of a “cultural everything”. It is the regime of the spirit's visibility.

20. Elisée Reclus, *Histoire d'une montagne*, Actes Sud, 2006

21. Interview with Paul Andreu, architect (free translation)

22. CIRHAC, *Atlas et les territoires du regard: le géographique de l'histoire de l'art, XIX^e-XX^e siècles: actes du colloque*, Université Paris I, 2004 (free translation)

23. Cf. Jean Baudrillard

24. Walter Benjamin, *Paris, Capitale du XIX^e siècle. Le livre des passages*, Éditions du Cerf, 2009 (free translation)

25. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire, un poète lyrique à l'apogée du capitalisme*, Éditions Payot & Rivages, 2002 (free translation)

26. Interview with Didier Fusillier, director of Lille3000 (free translation)



Fabrication Laboratories

*In the past, there were artists workshops.
An attempt at manning spaces created by cities,
freed up spaces to invent a new way of being together
on the outskirts of power, protected interstices,
as still unknown, to be avant-garde.*

*Today, and through their innovation, FabLabs open
new territories which are invested by a “will to do”
and the ability to free themselves from traditional
powers. Their emergence signals the return of
working on equal ground and of a horizontality
when, almost everywhere, there has been a near
hegemonic temptation of a vertical order.*

*Reminiscent of Prometheus, FabLabs have
in their own way returned an ability for individuals
to create the objects they require and to directly realise
the projects they have conceived. Isn't this precisely
what culture is?*

The thirds-spaces of production

by Emmanuelle Roux and Laurent Ricard

Directors of Sc21, teachers and creators of FacLab,
the FabLab of Cergy-Pontoise University²⁷

FabLabs erase many frontiers. In a single location, they gather entrepreneurs, pensioners, researchers, engineers, artists... all driven by the common desire to do, to learn, to innovate. They come through sheer curiosity to reroute, repair and develop a new activity or a project into a prototype. With a range of artistic practice, scientific experimentation, teaching, personal attempts or industrial prototyping, nothing predisposes the relationships between *Homo Faber*.

The *FabLabs* FabLabs are third-spaces of digital production and are situated in the interstices of disciplines and audiences.

They decompartmentalise, make accessible means of production hitherto reserved to industries and give innovation its own space. *stricte et offrent un espace pour l'innovation.*

There, ideas spread freely. Projects are documented and published as an invitation for reproduction, for improvement. Each version is adapted to an individual need, a local issue or specific resources. There is no copying but an infinite process of improvement and reconversion of objects and shapes. Each iteration of a project adds to a collective corpus.

Let us mention Adrian Bowyer, a relatively unknown British researcher, and the *RepRap* project he started which saw the birth of the first *open source* personal 3D printer. Should we see here the beginning of a third industrial revolution? Beyond an already mastered technological skill, the richness and impact of this invention are shown in the genesis of this project which invite us to define new ways to innovate, conceive, produce and commercialise.

Sharing ideas, needs and wishes allow for the better combination of new resources and new skills and to make expectations meet. From the first implementations, local and even individual needs arise at the root of a veritable genealogical tree of evolutions and innovations most of which are then donated by a bubbling and moving community that contributes, in quick successive strokes, to the development and improvement of a common property.

In this capacity, it is not rare to see the production of an object mobilising its consumers, in the same way the *Foldarap*, a French foldaway 3D printer stemming from a *RepRap*²⁸ design, was financed by two consecutive campaigns of *crowdfunding*²⁹.



Each marketed kit is comprised of parts which need to be printed according to the principle of *self-replication*. Its inventor made the conscious decision not to centralise the production capacity necessary to absorb its growth. Instead, he developed a system of peer-to-peer production which allows his customers to be the producers of the parts essential to the next commercialised machine. Customers become actors in development.

The emergence of *FabLabs* is to be looked at like a *symptom*. This is only the product of a certain amount of mutations among which we can recognise the evolution of the link to intellectual property, the opening of research and development models, or the diversity of financing grants. Within the *FabLabs* network, the first appearance of each new knot (sometimes called *local shared microfactories*) allows the noosphere³⁰ to become real, to take flesh and to anchor itself in the physical world to affect it better and feed off it.

The movement of *FabLabs*, although still only taking its first steps, therefore heralds a real paradigmatic change. It leads us to question not only our relationship to objects, but also their creation, their *repairability* or even their replicability. Often the fruit of spontaneous initiatives by a few local actors who wish to explore the potential of personal digital production or fast prototyping, the *FabLabs* become famous through virality. They attract the unsuspected skills of a territory, spurred on by the lagging dissatisfaction with unmet needs.

Beyond a need to create, repair or innovate, the immediate wish is to benefit from a location to try, experiment, sometimes make mistakes, learn by doing, not alone but with someone else, whatever their age or origin, social status or level of expertise. The invitation to share, participate and document therefore makes one an actor of this limitless space, thanks as much to the practices taking place there as, geographically, the ever possible interactions with the whole network of the

third-spaces of digital production. The machines attract talents by allowing them to answer needs that are not covered by traditional circuits.

However, the real innovation of the *FabLabs* resides in the *empowerment* they generate. It is through the incitement of individuals to seize their environment to understand it better and adapt it to their own needs, that they encourage progress, not through the input of an exterior knowledge, but instead by setting the initial conditions for the development of an expertise on common ground. It would appear that the quality of communication, the benevolence and the welcoming atmosphere make the human factor a decisive element.

Although technology is present in the *FabLabs*, the innovations being developed daily are essentially social, economical and educational. There, under the influence of creativity, we can witness the birth of new jobs and sectors of activity. They outline the shape of another paradigm, and probably, a new industrial revolution.

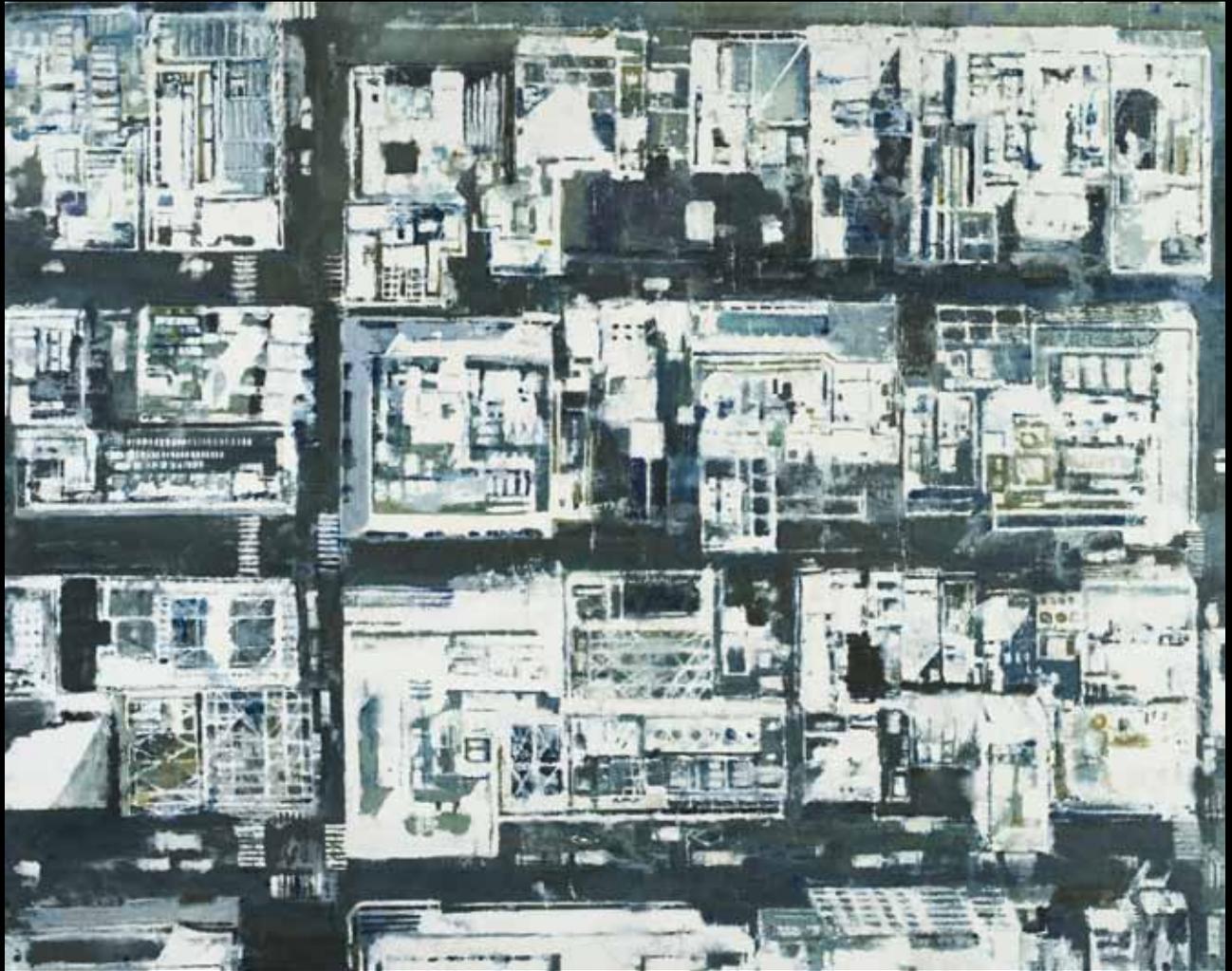
27. www.faclab.org

28. *RepRap* (short for *Replication Rapid Prototyper*) is an open source project the aim of which is to allow for the creation of a self-replicating machine. (www.reprap.org).

29. *Crowdfunding* is a phrase describing all the tools and methods of financial transactions and funding between individuals without (or not much) using the traditional actors as intermediary.

30. The noosphere, in philosopher Marc Halévy's noetics, describes the sphere of thought and knowledge that surrounds the biosphere. It stems from theories by Vladimir Vernadsky and Peire Teilhard de Chardin.





Philippe Cognée, *Vue du ciel*, Tokyo, 2011

Cire sur toile, 200 x 250 cm
Courtesy Galerie Templon, Paris

THE SPIRIT OF LAWS

Let us put this simply: no tangible proposition could be offered after what we have just discussed. It is no longer a set of measures, of reforms or of laws that we need, but instead the *spirit* of a proposition, the spirit of a reform and the *spirit of laws*. It would be counter productive to our study to offer any project that would borrow from a political, industrial or technical terminology. We do not suffer from a deficit in measures but a *deficit in spirit* and the point is not to formulate new measures that would only add to the clutter of pre-existing ones coming from all sides, but rather to choose them in light of the spirit.

However, a word that does not create its own institution is bound to disappear³¹. This is what Paul Valéry understood by embarking upon the adventure of the League of Nations, while being involved with the *Bourse of literary values* and presiding over the French PEN club. This might be what inspired Bernard Stiegler to create the *Ars Industrialis* association from Valéry's writings. *The word is an adventure (political) and not a program (biological)*. *It is a process and not a state*³². This is what makes setting the word "*spirit*" next to that of "*culture*" an eminently political act of foundation which could, through mediation, suggest, favour and reinvent.

Europe particularly needs to attempt this and say, by paraphrasing Saint-Just: "*The spirit is a new idea in Europe*". Reclaiming the word "spirit" and placing it at the forefront of an institution therefore constitutes an insightful suggestion, a *meta-proposition* offering a range of new ideas.

The European ministry of spirit

These days, no political project should choose between a *force of spirit* and *the power of culture* but instead add the first to the latter. It would therefore be up to the European Union to be the

first institution in the world to create a *ministry of spirit*, the first and only of its kind. In keeping with the instructions of the word "*spirit*" itself, this ministry – understood as a task that needs to be done – will have no authority other than the power of its message. This infinite a-cratie message will have a performative value, in other words, the simple act of utterance will be worth as much as any action. Composed of a peer committee chosen among the 28 countries of the European Union for their disciplinary qualities, their erudition and their expectations, the ministry would have three responsibilities: (i) a critical one, *Critical*, as the ministry would analyse and examine social trends and their rules, *mediological* as it would ponder the transformation of words into actions and *literary* as this is what any political discussion is when it strives to create a speech.

At the opposite end of a debate on European identity and loyal to *the spirit of spirit*, the ministry will consider the notion of *identity*. Instead of responding to it with simplistic and forceful assertions (Europe is *this or that*), it reminds us of its never-ending enquiries while stressing that *identity is not a cult, but a question*³³, which is exactly what literature does with language.



“It seems to me that European intellectuals do not rally for Europe enough.

We were able to do it for exterior stakes [...], but we are not involved enough in analysing and restructure European culture.

The creation of an ‘Academy of European culture’ could allow us to work on this issue in more depth.”



Julia Kristeva³⁴

In terms of *cultural politics* (which deal with cultural goods and their industry), the ministry of spirit will think about going beyond *spectacle-culture, cultural animation and diversities fairs*³⁵ to better tackle and examine the meeting point of the creations and the public.

In terms of *digital revolution*, the ministry of spirit will broaden the ways to favour horizontal relations on equal ground (*cf. insert Fabrication Laboratories*) by making sure that technique backs *hermeneutics* and knowledge instead of entropy. By doing this, the ministry of spirit will attempt to guide the spirit of laws, if not the laws themselves.

Without dogmatism or completeness, a possible historical heritage could be found in (i) Paul Valéry’s near political essays and his involvement in the ICIC³⁶, the IIIC³⁷ and the PEN Club³⁸, (ii) in the works of *Ars Industrialis* and the *Nexus* institute or even in (iii) Denis de Rougemont’s

European attempts between 1946 and 1952 in favour of the material and moral conditions of the spirit’s life in Europe. The European ministry of spirit leads studies (it is a school), promotes research (it calls for proposals) and speaks up (it works as a pulpit for discussion).

It is a loving and literary discourse, offered to the political world to find in it its speeches, seduction and legitimate might. It is a conversation that needs an audience; in this time when nothing is heard, it is a matter of letting a *European discussion* arise in which the member countries are invited to find satisfaction.

More precisely, but still asserting our notice that we refuse to offer concrete measures, the European ministry of spirit could broaden, promote and favour the three following topics (given here as examples) amongst many others.



1ST AMBITION

Giving wind to spirit: the Grand Tour

The ministry will be in charge of promoting one of the main essential conditions to the rousing of the spirit, in other words: *travelling*. It is meant in the strictly geographical sense of a voyage through Europe while still remaining faithful to the spirit and the expectations of the *Grand Tour*³⁹. While *drifters* have always aroused distrust in the established powers, the dramatic intensification of a geographic flow within Europe will retain this troubling strangeness while generating individual or collective experiences. With a young audience in mind, the *Grand Tour* has established itself as a figure of Atlas as it allows a reunion of geography and a collection of experiences, and a juxtaposition of languages with European civilisations. Travelling to learn, to understand, to question, to experiment. Striding across territories to find this *formula to turn the world upside down* described by Guy Debord which cannot be found in books but in travelling. As a decidedly rebellious stand and an open road onto the new, travelling is a stimulating figure in a changing world. Away from here, away from walls, away from the ground, away from a norm, travelling *invites us to be*, to inhabit, to exist, which is to say *standing outside of oneself, in a state of openness*⁴⁰.

The notion of travelling is thought of in conjunction with that of the learning process at the basis of the *Grand Tour* as it was practised until it became a central institution of Europe during the *Ancien Régime*. This is the distinction between these notions and the ideas of tourism and expeditions. Where Erasmus is an exchange programme between countries, the ministry will endeavour to promote nomadic and itinerant formations for schools and universities where the virtues of travel add to the shaping of spirits, where the concepts of flow and passage prevail over the concept of sojourn. This is not only a matter of building bilateral exchanges, but also of creating

alliances between several countries or regions to encourage children and youth to explore Europe.

With links to the prerogatives of school and university education, cultural industries as well as tourism and transport, the range of measures that could stem from this is staggering. By reaffirming and going beyond the plans of programmes such as *Comenius*, *Erasmus*, *Leonardo Da Vinci* and those of *Europass Mobility*, the *InterRail Global Pass* or the *European Passport*⁴¹, the ministry will ensure a renewal of the Grand Tour by any means possible.

2ND AMBITION

Promoting the notions of option value and space-time

The ministry will be able to promote the notion of *Total Economical Value* (TEV) and prompt the general use of its components: the *option value* and the *bequest value* among others. In keeping with the core of its mission, the ministry will delegate research to economical science and will ensure that these notions find their way into international regulations as they would prove invaluable to serve the processes and the works of the spirit.

The ministry will particularly endeavour to defend, within the issues of town planning, the *option value* (an increase in value attributed to options which do not diminish the future possibilities of choice), a currently common value in terms of natural spaces and biodiversity. Making the eulogy of vacuity, a vacuole and an interstice could therefore be a significant mission of the ministry. Linking back to the previous chapter on the liturgy of geography and as the heir to Foucault's heterotopia, Michel de Certeau's spaces or Marc Augé's places, the ministry will make sure that public communities (cities in particular) retain their untampered common land. The importance of leaving a free space in a town centre, a yard in front of a station, a deserted pavement or a fallow land is *an opportunity for a ripe fruit*⁴². It is a case of filling or desiring, occupying or giving pride of place to what can only unfold





“Tour Médicis” project, 2013

Clichy sous Bois/Montfermeil, France, 2013

in space and time. If the defence of these options needs to be left to economical science, the ministry will endeavour to have them applied within cities, at the core of the creative wealth.

3RD AMBITION

Promoting the notions of option value and space-time

The ministry will be able to inspire innovations involving geography, development and democracy alike. Territories cannot be conceived as a *right angle* by the developer alone who looks for panopticism at all cost. Resorting to the initiative of *subjective cartography* needs to be the way to guide the organisation of spaces according to *micro-perceptions, ambling* and the *lives of the spirit*. Here as well, the ministry could promote, encourage and generate any calls for measures that would go along with these initiatives.

The implications of such a transformation process of territories will be singularly propitious for the actors of the cultural industry, whether they are public or private. As the seat of the spirit no longer is a place developed from the top, it is instead the one that managed to organise its entropy *from the bottom*. The most useful research in geographical sciences to this subjective development could be the object of calls for measures from the ministry.

By way of overture

Lastly, there is one area the European ministry of spirit will have to focus on the reach of which is too vast for us to approach here. Namely, the link between knowledge, exercise and transmission between generations. The advent of what the Bologna declaration has called the “Europe of Knowledge” remains to be invented as long as it does not limit itself to being a “Europe of Skill” which would favour formations over education. Where learning and education – already in technical terms – are concerned, the ministry faces a Herculean task: making

the Europe of tomorrow the *College of the world*. Europe is capable of this.

It is the ministry’s responsibility to have this ambition, this utopia.

Even if it cannot finish it but keeps on questioning it and can say in its loving language with *Monsieur Teste*:

“My possible never abandons me.”

Otherwise,
who else will have this dream?

31. Régis Debray, *Le mot et son institution*, in *Ethnologie française*, PUF, 1999 (free translation)

32. *Ibid.*

33. Julia Kristeva, *Europe/Chine : les axes de l'échange*, Brussels speech, october 2010 (free translation)

34. Julia Kristeva, article published in *La Croix*, 17th may 2013 (free translation)

35. Julia Kristeva, *Op.Cit.*

36. International Committee Of Intellectual Cooperation

37. International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation

38. The international PEN Club is an international association of writers, with no political or governmental affiliations.

39. The *Grand Tour* was originally a long travel done by young people from the highest classes of European society from the 17th, and mostly 18th century. The point of this was for them to perfect their education. In the 18th and 19th century, it was the prerogative of art lovers, collectors and writers.

40. Chris Younès, *Henri Maldiney : philosophie, art et existence*, Éditions du Cerf, 2007 (free translation)

41. *Cf.* Suggestion by Jacques Attali, 2010

42. Paul Valéry, *Œuvres complètes*, Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1957



About Louvre Alliance

Created in January 2004, Louvre Alliance is the brainchild of two former Arthur Andersen partners, from where they inherited an economic culture of business and rigorous work ethics.

Louvre Alliance is a strategy and management consulting firm that operates, in France and abroad, for both the *economic world* (public or private) and the *cultural world*.

Having inherited the best practices and paying special attention to *writing* and *discourse excellences* as well as *progress made in the field of social sciences*, Louvre Alliance lays claim to tailor-made services.

From the very beginning, Louvre Alliance has worked closely with Attali & Associés, a consulting firm founded by Jacques Attali who invested his faith in Louvre Alliance by becoming its Supervisory Board Chairman. Since then, both firms have shared the same spirit of service and high expectations for excellence.

Louvre Alliance offers a range of actions that are closer to services and support than the presumptuous delivery of affirmations. Our approach stems from such a standpoint. We take complexity into account and know the requirements of business and economic rationalism even though we are aware that the main focus might be elsewhere. The management of an organization with its social aim, its characteristics may enjoy new flavors as human achievements are primarily based on *culture*, *serenity* and *measure*.

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About the Forum d'Avignon

Investing culture differently. The Forum d'Avignon which was created in 2008, aims at deepening and promoting the links between culture and economy in addition to its role of social cohesion and territorial attractiveness.

A think tank about culture. Relying on a worldwide network of artists, experts, international consulting firms and public and private partners, the Forum d'Avignon produces major editorial work around themes suggested by its advisory board. Its panel of international studies (free download from the website) in conjunction with its blog *Culture is future*, open three perspectives: the financing of culture and its economic models, the digital world and innovation, and territorial attractiveness.

The international meetings of culture, economy and media. Every year, the Forum organizes and supports international meetings in Avignon and Essen – with the Forum d'Avignon-Ruhr. The proposals stemming from these discussions between ambassadors of culture, creative industries, economy and media are relayed by the national and international bodies.

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