

Was ich damals zu fassen bekam, etwas Furchtbares und Gefährliches, ein Problem mit Hörnern, nicht nothwendig gerade ein Stier, jedenfalls ein neues Problem: heute würde ich sagen, dass es das Problem der Wissenschaft selbst war - Wissenschaft zum ersten Male als problematisch, als fragwürdig gefasst. Aber das Buch, in dem mein jugendlicher Muth und Argwohn sich damals ausliess - was für ein unmögliches Buch musste aus einer so jugendwidrigen Aufgabe erwachsen! Aufgebaut aus lauter vorzeitigen übergrünen Selbsterlebnissen, welche alle hart an der Schwelle des Mittheilbaren lagen, hingestellt auf den Boden der Kunst - denn das Problem der Wissenschaft kann nicht auf dem Boden der Wissenschaft erkannt werden - ein Buch vielleicht für Künstler mit dem Nebenhange analytischer und retrospektiver Fähigkeiten (das heisst für eine Ausnahme- Art von Künstlern, nach denen man suchen muss und nicht einmal suchen möchte...), voller psychologischer Neuerungen und Artisten-Heimlichkeiten, mit einer Artisten-Metaphysik im Hintergrunde, ein Jugendwerk voller Jugendmuth und Jugend-Schwermuth, unabhängig, trotzig-selbstständig auch noch, wo es sich einer Autorität und eignen Verehrung zu beugen scheint...

Part A

The year is 2015. It is 129 years since Nietzsche wrote this *Attempt at Self-Criticism*, 126 years since he stopped writing, and 115 years since he stopped living altogether. To understand what 129 years mean in the history of thought, we could go back a further 129 years before 1886 to the year 1757, which is thirty-two years before the French Revolution, twenty-four years before Kant published his first *Critique*, and forty-one years before the first issue of the *Athenaeum* was published. However, 1757 is seven years after Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, which announced the possibility that art could, one day, matter epistemically, albeit not quite in a manner we can recognise.

The year is 2015. What has been called 'practice-led research', 'art research', or 'artistic research', and what many call 'nothing at all' is a fact: we cannot discount the possibility that art has its own relationship to knowledge and that many artists systematically push against knowledge to reinvent reality. There are, however, positions that doubt whether methodologies or epistemologies of artistic research can ever be had, since the *logos* they claim to deliver may contradict the project. The choice is simple: reject the fact and cut out one of life's organs, or accept the fact and rethink what *logos* might mean today after so much history and intellectual destruction. Why not now – that God is dead – liberate knowledge by giving credit to all possible modes of epistemic labour?

Before you shout 'YES' in the name of art, remember that a dialectical game has been forced on us right from the start. Consider that art, while mostly acting oppositionally, is also an expression of *logos*, which art, complicit as it is, cannot undo; 'art' – a lazy label for those in need of elevation; a conceptual trick to make the dead say: 'Given by the almighty power of art, I am life.'

We must say: This is *not* a dialectical game! Artistic research cannot be the re-affirmation of our presuppositions! We refuse to be called ‘artists,’ and we refuse to be called ‘philosophers,’ and we also refuse to be called ‘artist-philosophers’. When we temporarily settle for ‘researcher’, we do so to highlight our epistemic determination, although we are fully aware that such appropriation will only be effective as long as art remains religion.

Still, while we emphatically fight those whom we are supposed to be, let us not forget that it was not ‘art’ that masterminded this dialectical game. At the fringes where we stand, there will always be a bad fit so that an order not quite covered by the game *must* be co-present. When today, we turn to the philosophers, who are the perpetrators of the game, to put forward our case, we do so to seek the recognition that alternative epistemicities are possible and to ask whether business as usual is still an option. Do you have an intellectual conscience?

We accept spatio-temporal epistemic particularity, and we ask our *logos* and yours to first respect the locality that each becoming-individual, that is, becoming-knowledge *must* be. We then demand to go *through* this point and seek epistemic solidarity across times and across places in the imaginary.

Part B

Radical epistemology has broken free from ontology. What the world *can be* is limited only by the ability of researchers to radicalise their *episteme*, not by what the world is.

Radical epistemology is nihilism, whose ‘nothing’ expresses the absence of any ground other than what can be made here and now. Only then can researchers ‘experiment on the truth’, finding out what else ‘truth’ can be. If truth exists, it can only be a multitudinous and fragmentary expression of open and experimental practice.

Within radical epistemology, fragmentary knowledge can only be achieved creatively. Each epistemic thing is a fragment that challenges the ensemble of all other epistemic things every time it appears since it *is* a world. The only *just* representation of a world is its transformation.

If before Nietzsche resolution was imagined in some form of a higher world, after Nietzsche, the fragmentary is first of all violent immanence. This violence is a response to the late-Romantic sleep that harmed art’s epistemic project. Philosophy with the hammer is a search for survivors that would be undetected by formal analysis.

Radical epistemology is fragmentary epistemology. It links the incomplete with the complete – a link that is accessible only in the imaginary. Within the fragmentary, pushing for specificity on all levels is the difficult task of knowledge. The heterogeneity of the fragmentary corresponds to the impossibility of containing meaning in any single unit, the fragment included.

The same is true for history. Radical epistemology radicalises the temporal movement of the *episteme* through asynchronous, temporal diversity, producing multiple futures and the possibility that those futures

may, historically speaking, be in the past. Thus, epistemic things can change history not only by changing a future that sits on a stable past but also by changing the past itself and all futures that come with it. There is no single and simple passing of time, no truth-history in which a point of presence is shared, since each epistemic thing has its own temporal horizon as past and future worlds.

In what looks like a crystallisation process in reverse, radical epistemology aims at dissolving all fixtures so as to allow material potentials to settle anew in often contradictory, multiple worlds-in-movement. As this happens, at the borders of these worlds, human subjects also become jeopardized.

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