ATLAS OF THE HOLE HOUSE OF DEMENTIA

THE ESCUTCHEON,
THE HEARTH & THE FLOOR-CLOTH
AS MOTIFS FOR DWELLING
& STORYTELLING

DIEGO DELAS

THE ESCUTCHEON, THE HEARTH & THE FLOOR-CLOTH AS MOTIFS FOR DWELLING & STORYTELLING

DIEGO DELAS

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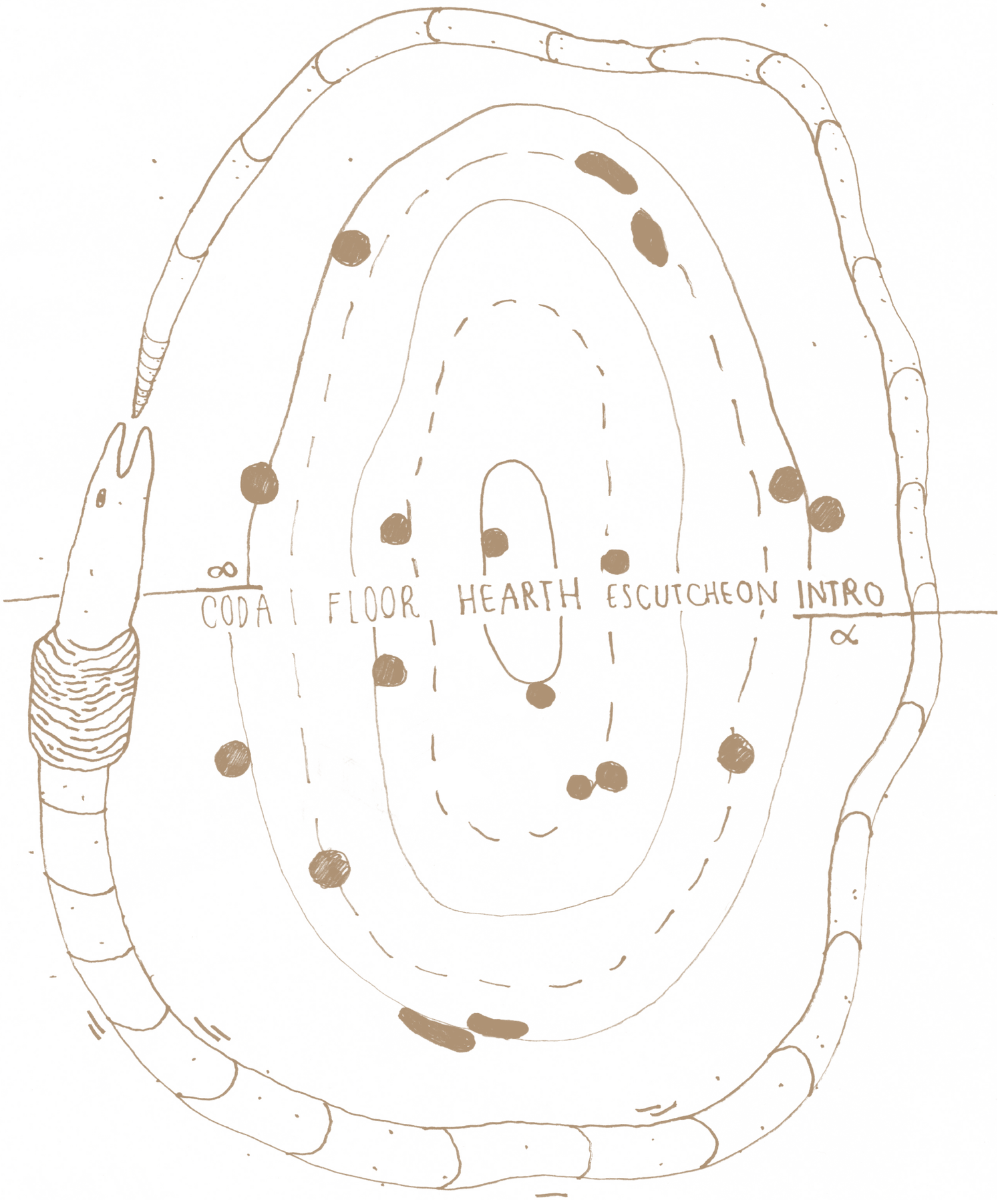
This thesis presents a set of reflections in object and textual form on some questions of dwelling, memory and the experience of movement within architectural space. The research builds upon an older tradition of investigation into the phenomena of remembering and forgetting in the pre-enlightenment world. The exhibition is structured around the three figures of the escutcheon, the floor-cloth, and the hearth. Each of these figures opens up particular ways of moving between and around elements of a dwelling.

The methods and structures developed in this thesis respond to memory and the idea of the childhood home. These configure into mnemonic devices which are comparable to those rooted within the texts of the architect and theorist Juhani Pallasmaa and certain images that appear in Italo Calvino and Jorge Luis Borges. The research proposes that the human brain learns faster through analogy, that human cognition is wrapped within narrative and motion such as are inscribed on the mind and can easily be revisited. The objects, diagrams, paintings and installations contain a rich iconography of shapes and structures that prompt partial memory of real dwelling spaces. The textual component of some 15000 words follows the practice of the objects themselves in providing fragmented journeys through incomplete and misremembered spaces.

At the end of each chapter appear images of an ongoing architectural project for a sunglasses distributor in Spain that I have been undertaking during the period of this research, with all the pragmatic compromises and contradictions that this involves. The invitation offered to the viewer/reader is that those stresses that appear within the structures described in the thesis should be embraced in favour of the proposals it implicitly rejects.



* CHART OF DISCONTINUITIES *

EXIT
1—20

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21—50

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ENTRANCE
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EXIT



Begin with a hug, or a *Hi* or a Dear Reader

Please, make yourself at home, be most welcome. Either way, be, inhabit, enter, slip into the text. Since this text you have been handed is made out of space, and might have been meticulously woven into such a matter or vessel of vessels: unlimited yet finite room for rooms.

Now, Walk into this Text

This is a distracted text that speculates on ideas of dwelling, thinking and remembering, composed and woven on three linked threads, three different levels of thought and reflection. Obsessed with the possibility of accessing a time no longer present through the use of analogy and repetition, it takes the shape of a progressive dementia, introducing gaps and enlarging the hole of unknowing. But since it proposes to cast light it shall start from the end, reverse its own means, learn rather than forget.

The methods and structures developed in this text grew from my interest in memory and the idea of the childhood home. They are assembled into a mnemonic device, rooted in fiction. Since the human brain learns faster through analogy, this journey is wrapped within a narrative and structured in such a way as to be inscribed on the mind and easily revisited. Hence, the stresses that appear within the structure should be embraced in favour of the thesis it implicitly rejects. The annotation comes in the form of diagrammatic drawings and pictorial illustrations introducing another, parallel, space for understanding. Located, lost, scattered within chapters, the images are connected with the text, constituting its context. They also create another space, closer in nature to theatre sets, or temporal scenery.[1]

At The Speed of Speech

See, as long as I am speaking, as long as the story is told, it exists. Memories are substances highly volatile and flammable and therefore reactive: in continuous flux, growing, diminishing, ever mutable and interchangeable. Perhaps one of the most cinematic of human fears is the vertigo: not trusting your own memories, recollections or personal history. Did I just make this up? I believe our stories.[2] My memories are built and destroyed at the speed of speech. It is amusing to hear Orson Wells (renowned magician and painter and writer, and therefore a trickster) to tell the story of the boy who befriended a bull. In the course of eight minutes, he built and presented this story with great skill, in beautifully raw pre-television storytelling style, to reach a climax which both denies the point of the story (the defence of bullfighting) and transforms this tale of death and tragedy into one about a childhood friendship. We learn that whenever it is not desired to reach a certain point, it is always wiser, more effective and spectacular (also from *spectaculum,* the spec- root) to trade it for another type of story.[3]

Foundations for a Tale

I am not going to lie to you, but I need to explain something in a very specific way. There is no need, I assume, to use the word white lie, even though, trust me, I am tempted to use it. They use the word fiction nowadays, so to hell with it. Let us pretend it all happened so you get to understand my current situation.[4] Here I am, walking these unstable territories, and my traces, I may not find. The sooner I tell you my part, the better.

A Defence of Fiction

House of dementia borrows from three strings of thought which, as much as being key in my understanding of the use and functioning of exhibitions, are also elementary for the study of early onset Dementia. Dementia is also the narrator, a woman wondering – as much as wandering – and hosting you, dear reader, in her home: The House of Dementia.[5] It is an attempt to pull this conversation away from the clinical, which is not the point of it at all, even though informed this text and shaped its structure.[6] Ours, I am afraid, is a cultural malady, rather than a mental one. But still, named in Roman numerals, each of the chapters stands for a place, a room for the exploration of particular ideas. First, the navigation in space which carries meaning and directions; the skeleton of space being essential in understanding and self-understanding, bounding memory and feeling is the first room.[7] The second one enquires weather crafting: the making of objects and artworks, the ornamenting and embellishing our daily environments (altering that which surrounds us) is key in keeping the sense of belonging through active agency in the fight about mental distance is.[8] Finally, the last room, which in this deliberately subverted narrative is named the first, investigates allowing yourself reading that, which happened to you, subjectively and personally, adding meaning to encounters and images, even though heavily relying on fiction in order to rule affects, which never fade, rather than the rational facts (what are they, anyway?): inconsistent and doubtful.[9]

I am uncertain whether embarking on this journey will allow me to go back home, still myself, without deteriorating into a rosary of slippery thoughts and broken words. I am speaking to you from a land which no longer exists. Not really writing; talking. Listen, old friend, my relative, my reader, listener, spectator, visitor, parent, sibling, or carer. You, who care, listen first, then look. What I am about to say is just the physical foundation for a tale: fiction on which to build personal and collective truths. Let us start with ashes and debris and the uncarved stone for the foundation pit: let's leave the polished materials for wall finish and façades.[10] Let your eyes become the hand that pets the building. For anything constructed was surely desired first. Such drives find their origin in the very centre of your body, in the closed eye of the navel. Now, let us walk while I describe events long past. Now, lend me your ears.

Retracing Distraction

I know I got distracted. I am thinking about this element, alien to what I was reading. Perhaps a sort of protuberance erupted through digression into a different time and a different place, for a moment even suppressing all reason. As if stranded on a fair-weather sail, only to find yourself adrift in a vaguely familiar yet inherently unknown land. You would argue that in order to travel back home, eyes must be closed upon visions; let it all be forgotten. This way you would navigate backwards up the streams of time and tides to the treasured land you were expelled from. You know the point at which the dream interrupts itself. In dreams, I can see my feet, extended before me as I am carried out of a house, between long, pale faces which never make eye-contact. When feet precede you, godspeed to you: the unwinding of time and the suppression of if all. Death, dear friend, engulfs us and our memories.

Pallasmaa Talks Nests

Now that I have your ears, and I have your hands, in the tunnel vision I am nowadays, I need your eyes. One thing at a time in the focal centre encircled in this mist.[11] Witness the traces of my finger, pointing towards the paper. See, I am going to use hands before speaking: this finger traces letters. In *The Eyes of the Skin,* Pallasmaa talks about nests, at one point describing the relationship between movement and the haptic in construction, translated into visual languages by pointing to a birds nest.[12] To what extent could you regard these nests not only as the result of dexterity, but also as the accumulation of bird movement that produced them. Did I allow myself to be distracted once again?

Circumnavigation

Let me take you through a number of rooms, containing a number of stories, and a number of constructions and ideas, and failures. Bear in mind that what you will witness in a minute or so is pure construct, nothing but a theatrical prop, the sort of fabrication used for storytelling or tricks, of the magical or confidence type. It needs to sound easy and, at points, dull, then spectacular, then witty, then all wrong; but such is the idea of circumnavigation.[13] You do not know the core or the end of the story and yet you follow it, like a moth flying towards the warm light of a porch.

The Summoning of Ideas. (I Was Wrong)

I now realise that I may have been confused in my previous attempt to write about distraction. I conceived it as a textile, woven, fabricated as a fabric in order to gain specificity whilst still attempting to bring a sense of distraction. In some sense, I am still an architect; I hope the text I am writing now will allow me to pose questions physically, to put forward a spatial proposition. Like a surrealist game, this text, woven against the grain of distraction, operates as a disinterested play of thought.[14] A disoriented journey ensues, one that wanders, doubts, and suffers constant interruption and diversion.

Plagued with analogies, metaphors and visual references which become written images, this text is intended to have a meandering structure.[15] Thus, this text becomes a diagram that illustrates a diagram. As an essay that navigates between ideas, references and theories, its ultimate goal is to draw a diagram to be read and memorised easily, once finished. Though a text, it unfolds, poses – or crafts – a drawing within its lines. The text illustrates a diagram within a diagram.[16]

Distraction

In this text, the term distraction is used as a temporal lapse where reason is suspended and a non-linear logic operates in the stream of consciousness; a soft logic perhaps, in which unrelated ideas appear side by side.[17] See, whenever you get distracted and try to recapitulate, you may need to revisit all the images flashed in front of your eyes by the distraction, but in reverse order. Like an automatic pilot only temporarily in charge, you may see yourself forced to travel

backwards, following tracks through unfamiliar territories. This text aims to be a distraction for several reasons. One is abandoning the track of the known, inviting on an exploratory walk into what we do not know. This points to an art practice I am drawn to: finding connections through collective stories from the unknown with the knowledge that is fading away.[18] Distraction and slight of hand are used in order to speak of the elements that are present in my practice. In a failing attempt to reconstruct the material of memory and its diagrammatic nature, it is reversed and flows backwards, from end to beginning, trying to learn rather than forget. Inverted and written down, beginning at the end, it is conceived in the form of a hole.

This Crumpled Piece of Blank Paper

Before I open my mouth and dare to speak, I am laying a piece of paper on top of this table. It is not white, really, more like newsprint, greyish, brownish, yellowish. See, I take my time and gently arrange the paper. You know how old people tend to take their time with words and actions, a bit too solemnly. Well, that's the way it is. See, I am placing the paper along its longer side, perpendicular to us both, carefully straightening the creases with two fingers as if touching a frightened bird. Now I am ready to move my lips, as if to utter the first word: "I." I stop and doubt, still silent. If I stammer or mumble, be patient. Please. Age will come for you as well, like rain disfiguring the paths and topographies of youth. Even words will fade.

III THE FLOOR–CLOTH



THE JUGGLER STANDS BY A COLORFULL TABLE
PERHAPS THE BEGGINING OF ALL NARRATION
WITH THE VERY FIRST CARD: AN ARRAY OF PROMISES
WITH THE VERY FIRST SMILE: ONCE IN INFINITUDE.
HANDS MOVE FAST FOR THE JUGGLING RESUMES
QUICKER THE HEART JUMPS FOR THE JOURNEY STARTS
ETERNAL RETURN IN AN ENDLESS ENNUMERATION.
AND ONCE AGAIN GOES: THE MAKER, THE TRICKSTER.

THERE'S A TABLE

Now, let me start by presenting the character in the card. It is about to unveil a whole realm for interpretation and reading and storytelling about the fading of rural culture. The character in our play, not the main one but the first to appear, is a juggler, standing in front of a table. The world of tales contained within that colourful table is right about to be opened and scrutinized, in an infinite loop, a garland placed on the floor, a floral offering. Sure, some petals will fall, but still, you will carry scents in both hands for the rest of your dreamlike travels. Bear in mind this spoken memory is ever fading.

THERE'S A FLOOR-CLOTH

When you daydream, when you slip into distraction and lose yourself in it, thinking becomes a soft parade. Threads of speculation and past, present, and future reflections follow one another. Reality and fiction, old and new ideas, all collide and galvanize in an odd amalgam fabricated or woven, this time at the speed of thought.

Let us wander through this room, this floor-cloth step by step, as in yarning or weaving. But pay attention, the pace now is determined by our walk. This knitted ground for thought to grow and expand may be only tangentially related to the place you inhabit in your everyday life. It may be, for instance, the temperature, the level of noise. This mist of distraction, this daydreaming may occur when one idea comes hand in hand with the next, when you are waiting, or when something only slightly strange arrests your attention. Spatially, this daydreaming can only be evaluated, once it is over. You are doomed to contemplate it from afar, reflected in memory, when pulling by the string of distraction. You remember starting at the end of this distraction, like this text, then following towards its roots in order to be awakened, illuminated by its blurry trigger. What is it that I was thinking of?

You wonder whether installations can be read like tarot cards, like alchemical emblems or mediaeval diagrams for the art of memory.[19] Objects in space replacing words in a cell, to be extracted by a trained scholar, a beholder, a reader. Long story short: perhaps entering an exhibition would be like navigating with your body amongst symbols and signifiers. In the same way, the eye is involved in navigating, its movement through space influenced by signs, in a particular order, through diagrams of memory, through cards and emblems.

MAGIC DIAGRAM & MIRROR OF INK

Some time ago, when researching the subject of amulets at the British Library, in an outdated book on ancient Egypt, I came across a hand-drawn beautiful diagram.[20] The book, written by an Englishman, described a fortune-telling practice, on the verge of vanishing even then. This cartomantic procedure was rather arcane: a drop of ink was to be spilled into the centre of a square diagram, sketched on a piece of paper. A boy of bellow the age of 12 would be asked to look into the black pool of black. Then, he would be questioned about what he saw. Thus, by describing shapes and forms later to be translated and interpreted by the divinator as the final outcome, he would reveal the supplicant's future. The diagram in question consisted of a magic square, with the number 5 in the centre: the Mecca, the centre and origin of everything, hosting the black pool of ink, the makeshift mirror for the gaze to land upon. The mediaeval speculative book form known as *Speculum*, on the other hand, metaphorically relied on — by looking at double reflection — the reflection in another surface to see that, which could not be seen directly.[21]

There still exists this tracing house in York Minster. The drawings produced inside that room were the actual plans, used for the building of the cathedral. What most struck me about it was that its floor contains many layers of plaster, each of them a background for an architectural drawing. The juxtaposition of drawings and sketches and views of a model is like in CAD drawings, like the ones I used as a student, which gave me weird dreams after late-night work: zooming the drawing in and out, switching between elevations, volumes, plans, and isometric views. It also makes me think of material history in cross sections, as on archaeological sites, tree growth rings concealed inside trunks, milk teeth forever nested on the gums.

A BAGGY GARMENT AROUND THE BODY

But how do you even go about starting to build such a thing, a thing you know you will not see completed in your lifetime? First, you have to know what direction to point your future cathedral. Orienting involved, before anything else happened, drawing on the ground. With a piece of rope and a compass, the master builder – perhaps on the day of the saint in whose honour the cathedral would be consecrated, would draw on the floor the new body of the building to come, using the length of the day, a *vesica piscis,* and the square and the circle to align, to orient the nave. After that was done, usually built simultaneously with the first wall of the cathedral, a small hut would be erected: that was the tracing house, the source of all the drawings and decisions, and details to come. This house was reserved for the master mason. On its gypsum floor, constantly renewed with a new layer of gypsum, details would be carved, scratched and drawn over and over again. It was a sort of magic floor plane in the centre of which – as in a dark pond or mirror – visions of things to come, emerged. A layer of chequered pavement and some builders' markings

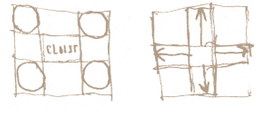
on the walls may be the only visible traces of these century-long efforts.

From its history, you know the probable name of the master mason of York Minster, head of draughtsmen who carved in the remaining plaster floor of the tracing room: William de Hoton, Jr. succeeded his father in 1351 and designed the choir aisles. You can even suspect the still visible designs carved in the chalky floor with incised lines, may be his. I keep somewhere a picture of the floor, the window, and the drawing he produced and still exists, kept in the plaster floor of the tracing house – in the mason's loft, the attic of the cathedral.

And then it strikes you: what if the entire church is nothing but an extension of the coffin, of the mausoleum; if it is made in the image – like man is made in the image of god – of a human body; if it is built out of a lack of presence, itself an artichoke – layered but hollow at its core – a box to keep at bay the feeling loss. That which is to be kept is usually somewhere else, it functions as a spatial symbol: it carries meaning, stored and present, surely somewhere else.

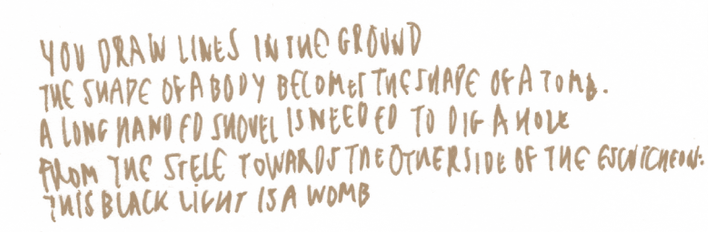
NOW DRAW ON THE FLOOR LIKE THIS

In York Minster, the floor was used to represent the shape of things to come, of things to be made glorious and ever present. Now, let me tell you about the dark and secretive relative of that gypsum floor: the floor-cloth.[22] It was a drawing on the floor as well. It determined the placing of objects. You see, floor-cloths were used to place on the ground, the signs and symbols crucial for the performing of the masonic rites of passage. These floor-cloths were originally used to leave no trace yet to secretly convey knowledge when freemasons were persecuted and their meetings illegal. These floor-cloths originate in the mediaeval tracing houses yet were developed



into more sophisticated drawings and paintings.[23] And so, by informing the navigation through a symbolic space constructed to convey meaning, they also resemble, modern-day exhibitions. In other ways, they are like an attic too, which is the museum of what a house used to be, and of activities long gone turned into objectual traces.[24]

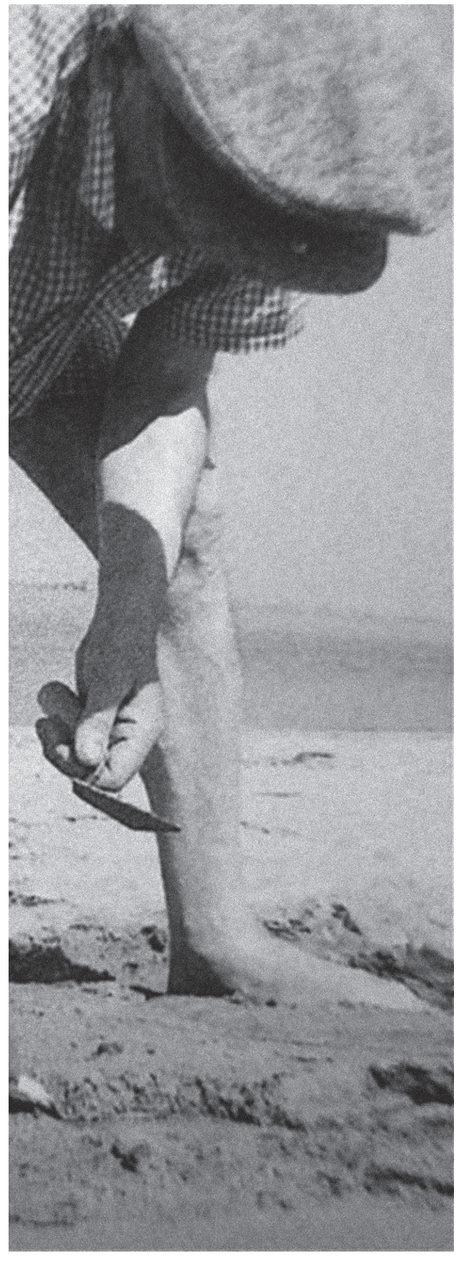
BUILDING & LOCI: REMEMBERED HOUSE & VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE



You draw lines in the ground. The shape of a body becomes the shape of a tomb. A long handed-shovel is needed to dig a hole. Through the stele towards the other side of the escutcheon: this black light is a womb.

The mnemonic practices of certain monastic orders used space as a blank canvas for the recombination of knowledge and imagination, and as a compositional tool, built within.[25] Can we regard diagrams and artworks as descendants of those mediaeval gypsum floors and floor-cloths, devices for building and rhetorics, devices for spatial navigation? Can we take images, pictures, installations or any form of art for that matter to be sets, props, and stages, waiting for stories? As if drawing on the sand, these diagrams used for the art of memory speak not only about structure and geometry, but above all about growth.[26] In the same way, space can be seen to speak of the storing and reconfiguration of memory, imagination and the use of narratives in the perpetual redefinition of what we believe we are made of, what we carry within





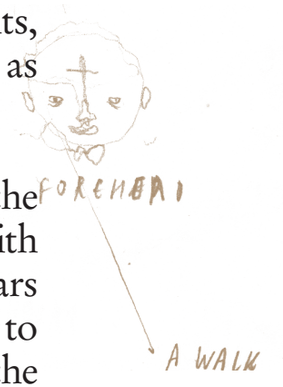








from life past. What if, in order to experiment with thoughts, memories and recollections these images could function as mnemonic devices in space?



We could relate certain aspects of the idea of dwelling to the three key figures in time in which images are interwoven with memory, space and knowledge. The first is mnemonics, or ars memoriae, the old art of memory, or Anamnesis, referring to the forgotten art and mother of rhetoric. The second are the emblems and alchemical drawings of the seventeenth century, as well as the freemasons' tracing boards and floor-cloths. And the third are tarot cards understood as spatial diagrams and their symbols.[27]

This text aims to become a physical construct, not only a diagram of a building but the building itself. Since architecture – at least of the vernacular kind – is shaped by its surroundings and the culture of those who build it, I want to tell you about my childhood landscape: the village of eighteen inhabitants where my mother was born, and where I grew up. As many remembered places, the one I refer to does not exist anymore. Neither do its inhabitants. In these days of silence, my grandparents, uncles and many others, inhabit only the cemetery. Let this text be, if it is at all possible, a wind blowing from that landscape, a voice that murmurs.

CLAUDIO ARRAU ENTERS A ROOM

In order to play the piano, the one called The Emperor, the second Mozart, born 4 years ahead of my grandfather but dead ten years before him (as he used to recall) was spontaneously given a diamond brooch by the Queen of Romania[28] after a Concert, in 1913. Later, I read in an interview in Life magazine of August 1972 that it was in fact a necktie pin with an 'M' and a crown of diamonds; it belonged to Marie, the last Queen of Romania. In the same interview, Arrau mentions playing his recitals on nothing but a cup of coffee, hungry, so as to perform better. As a young prodigy, he gave public performances since the age of five. He also used to say that, well, he entered the concert hall with just one thing: openness. There may be no other way to enter a room, any room, a museum, a cathedral or an exhibition, if the goal is to grasp everything, if the aim is the absolute. But does that involve forsaking memory, forsaking names of our own? Still, you can't help but doubt the character of the person crossing the threshold.

Now bear with me. Possibly the most intriguing thing is that, in a sense, he learned from Beethoven's own voice. See, Beethoven had a pupil whose name was Carl Czerny; Czerny taught Franz Liszt. Liszt taught a pianist called Martin Krause, who in turn became the severe old man who taught Arrau, brought him to museums and made him learn about all the fine arts.[29] Arrau played all of Bach's keyboard music for the first time in a series of twelve recitals. Critics were awed by his memory. When the old master died, Arrau got lost it in puberty, to recover after therapy with a friend, Dr Abrahamson, himself an apprentice of Carl Gustav Jung. If you listen closely to Arrau's recordings of Brahms, you can still hear his voice, muttering and singing. He wasn't the only one taught vocalisation while playing; Gould was one such pianist, Pollini, even, occasionally, Ashkenazy. But Arrau's voice you could trace back to these other voices: to Abrahamson, Czerny, Liszt, and finally, to Beethoven himself. When it was his turn to teach, he never struck a single note himself, nothing. It was the pupil who was supposed to play in search of perfection, to be directed or advised by voice alone, through a stream of words. The voice of the master resonates through

time leaving flimsy traces. The point is, Arrau enters a room. To enter a room is to access memory. The wind blows both ways. Story-telling in a place without books leaves ephemeral traces but like the earthworm Ouroboros, it travels across time in cross section to perform its trick and drag you into my story, my dear friend.

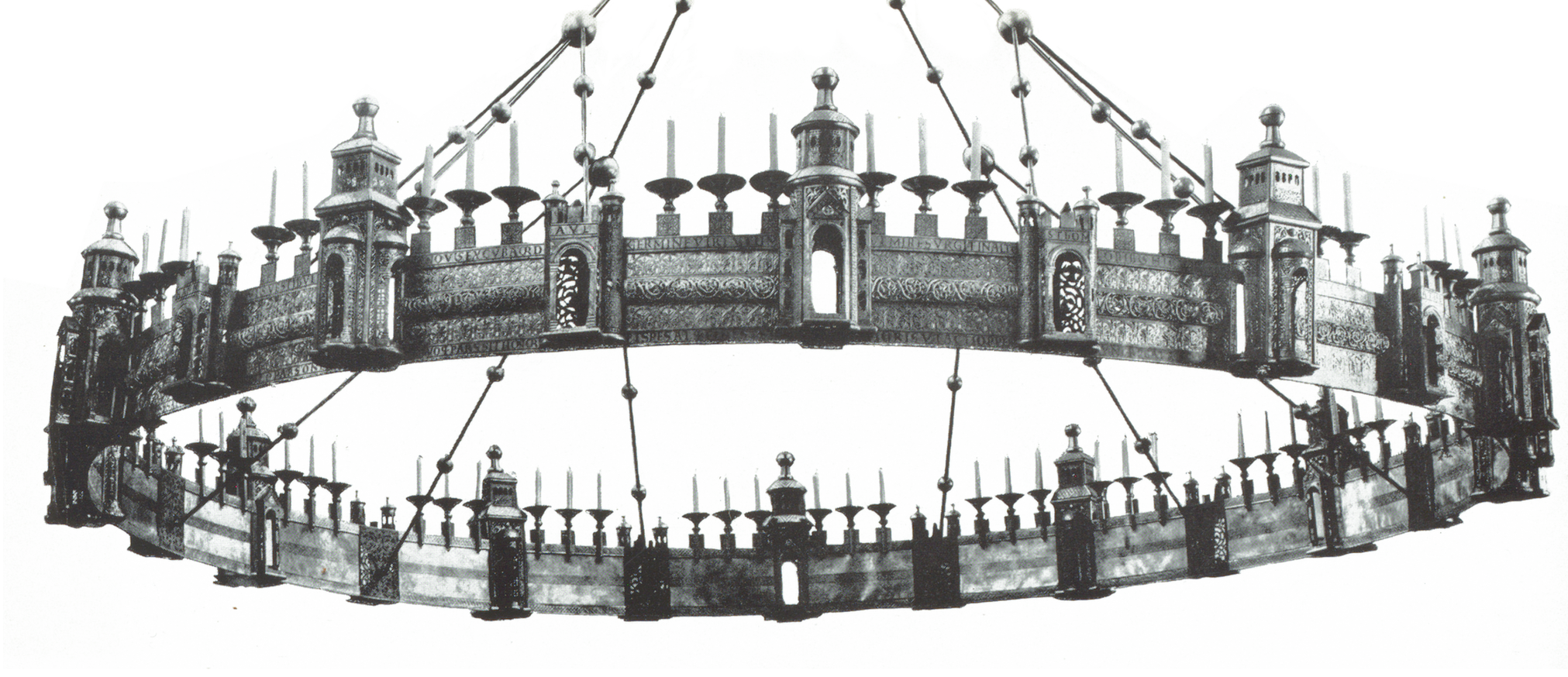


MUSEUM AS A MNEMONIC DEVICE

A museum is an artefact of memory, and I can see two opposing reasons for it. On the one hand, through the presentation of exhibits and the archiving of objects and documentation, a museum has the power to shape the truth, material truth at least.[30] On the other hand, you get a feeling that a museum exhibition is meant to become a landscape of possibilities, through which you wander among objects and visions. If that allows you to desire in a different way, if that seduces you into estrangement or defamiliarisation, perhaps such space and its contents also enable pushing ourselves into otherness: into a different time, different sensibility, another's skin. These landscapes, these spaces of possibilities, turn out to be machines for desire and devices for imagination.

WAITING IN THE ATTIC

If it is to be a narrative exercise, let me tell you a story. Up until I was fourteen or fifteen, our mother made us go to church, which I found depressing and unbearable at the time, so instead, we hid in the old, secluded, almost unreachable attic of my family home. The church audience was even then turning older and thinner. The few curious events happening in that ancient choreography of words and gestures I knew by heart. My first proper job was that of an altar-boy. Every summer in mum's village, I became the bearer of the heavy bell-tower key and, as a result, the owner of the pigeons nesting there, some of which I took to my grandmother, for her



to cook with rice and pine kernels and cumin, garlic, shallots, sultanas, and rosemary. She was already in her eighties and still cooking and peeling the pigeons and walking to fetch milk at 7 am on frosty mornings, always followed by her inseparable shadow: me. Even on rainy summer eves amidst the thunders, she feared nothing, and I feared all: flocks of sheep twice my height the most, and goats with empty hollow eyes, passing by. But back in the attic, I and my younger brother would talk and fearlessly smoke cigarettes and play the guitar, anything to skip the mass, and we would hide there for an hour or so, and then pretended we came from the street and did whatever. Strange place, the attic. Perfect for recollection. Just like the peeling of pigeons: the large, ancient hand of my tiny grandmother, by the bucket; the worn off axe and the worn off trunk; the rammed dirt floor of the pantry; the snow-white string of garlic as a maid's braid, hanging up against the soot-covered adobe wall, pearls in a dream, shining like white teeth in the dark for good luck. Time runs fast when you are daydreaming in the attic. When I grow old, very old, I want to be a grandmother. Perhaps I am already, only I forgot. Garlic, grandmother: Herzog in Les Blank's *Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers* t-shirt shooting *Fitzcarraldo* in Les Blank's *Burden of Dreams.*

STORY TELLING BY THE FIRE.

EVERYTHING LIES IN THE ATTIC

All the things in the attic – or are they installations? – would be like that: materials and objects pointing to a different time, words on top of words, a different sensibility than this, ours, now. One thing leads to another, but in order to get to the root of the distraction (what was I thinking of?) you would walk backwards, tracing the origin, searching for the trigger. And the trigger would be, for obvious reasons, the text you, dear reader, have been handed.

STORY ABOUT CONSTRUCTION

The attic of my daydreams is my grandmother's: like the layer of lime mortar on the tracing house floor, like the masonic floor-cloth. Deposited gently on cane, straw and wood, tools and no longer needed furniture awaited obsolete tasks.

But look, look:

the roofed floor and the floored roof are a folded plan: 'up' and 'down' correspond with each other and light is cast upwards as much as downwards. Upside down, like the chapters in this book, the attic is a never-ending womb in which objects await rebirth: either to be thrown into a new life or thrown away. Such is the logic of the attic: a gigantic floor-cloth for old things that wait to be trapped either in dust or in time. Thus, this archetypical attic could be operating as an in-between space, perhaps as a waiting room, or margin where you can indulge in chains of random thoughts, unlimited daydreaming and fully embraced distraction, all at once. This room embalms objects and feelings. All of them progressively clothed in the grey matter of wait and want. Say, for instance, this text is that attic: now let's walk through it.

DISTANCE, PLACE, TOPIC

On the topic of attics, the very term 'topic' comes from the Greek 'topos', meaning 'site', or 'earth'. You see, there was a strong link between the subject of discussion and the land, or the site, or the room used for memorising them: places where, ultimately, ideas were meant to be stored.[32] In that sense, Topics are not only ideas, but also places in memory, rooms. To debate, to discuss, was meant to move from one place in memory to another. To navigate from one word to another, drawing from the material to the abstract and the immaterial.

DIAGRAM, BLUEPRINT, BUILDING

What would it mean to physically enter and inhabit a text, to arrive at a plot of land which functions as a diagram, a representation of itself? Perhaps as a plot of land for words to be placed beside each other, or a field for stones placed upon stones, landmarks on country paths of memory. Is this the floor-cloth? This pattern? This attic, this room – or the text itself – is after all only an alibi: trading skins and thoughts and visions, momentarily becoming the outside. The room under a roof inaccessible to strangers, scarcely visited, an island for the old or, when needed, a peninsula: within reach of the door handle yet autonomous, remote and governed by its own rules. This text is that analogy or map, perhaps even a familiar sketch you can return to, like a home you remember from sunnier days. Perhaps the space where all the ideas you had – before dying memory – are kept deceptively safe inside the objects you named and so domesticated, brought home, stored in a mental map, in the celestial Jerusalem of thought, in the square-made-circle.[33]

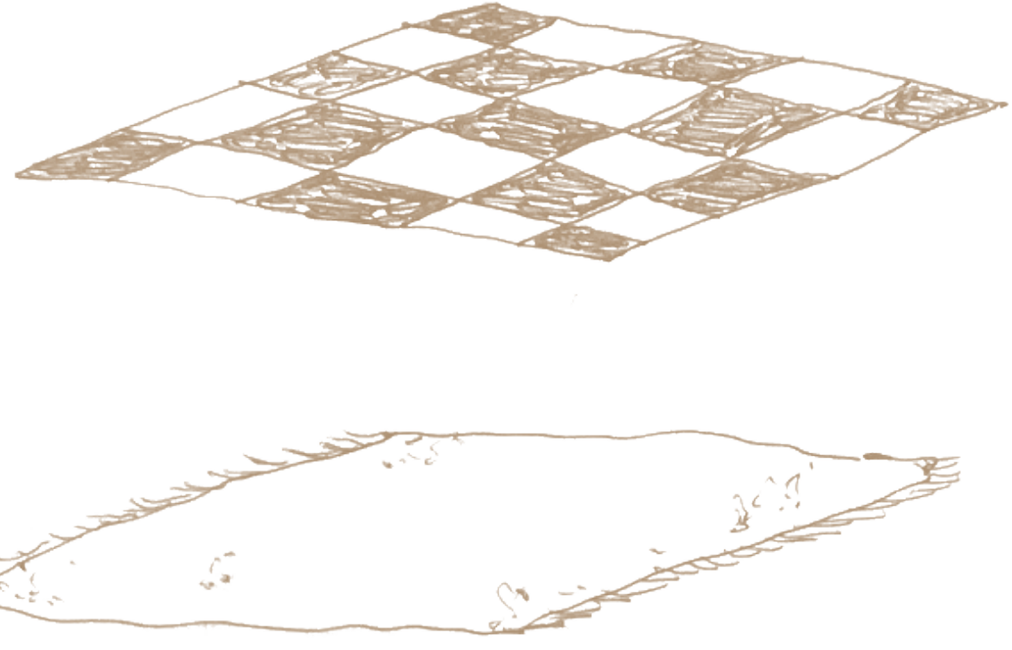
It seems to me that the house, the very idea of a childhood dwelling, could operate like Aldo Rossi's a garden, where he writes about the idea of a city.[34] For him, the function of not only gardens, but even cities, is mostly recreational: they lack a historical time on their surface. Moreover, the idea of a city could be accessed, or regarded as a psychic being, where its previous structures are visible but inaccessible. You may think of them as games, or gates, but ultimately mnemonic devices, nevertheless.[35]

HOUSE AS *MACHINA*

The house is also a machine for learning. What moves under the roof but bodies, walking novels in perpetual exchange of words, of stories, or memories, tale-like inventions?

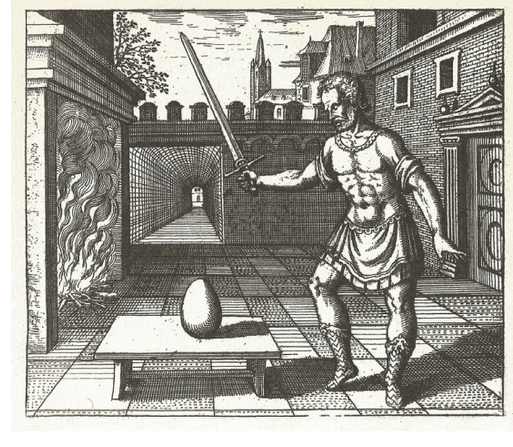
We tell ourselves stories in order to live […]
We look for the sermon in the suicide, for the social or moral lesson in the murder of five. We interpret what we see, select the most workable of the multiple choices. We live entirely, especially if we are writers, by the imposition of a narrative line upon disparate images, by the 'ideas' with which we have learned to freeze the shifting phantasmagoria which is our actual experience.[36]

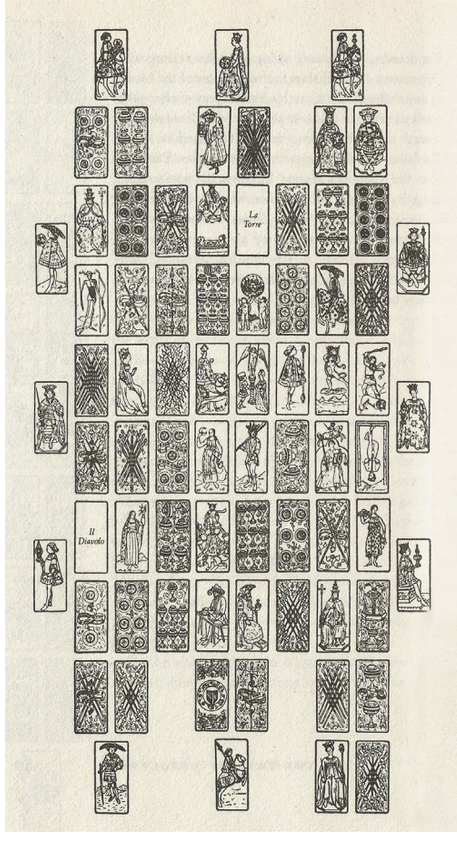
Didion / The White Album







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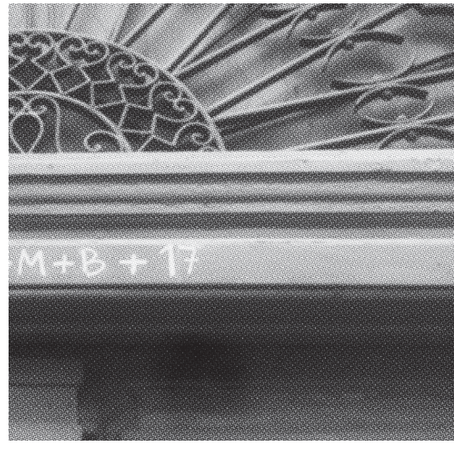
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II THE HEARTH

FIREPLACE AS A HOUSE WITHIN A HOUSE: A MODEL

Underneath the tracing house in York Minster there still exists a hearth, buried below a chimney. Even when placed at the heart of a dwelling, the chimney presents a peculiar feature: a tree of life supporting the house both outside and inside possesses a façade and a roof of its own, and even its own foundations. A house within a house, a model inside a model, you would say. Even when built underneath floors for heating (like Roman hypocausts, Korean ondols, or even Castilian glorias), these underground chimney flues were built and plastered in clay, finished as a façade, only to be buried underneath a room, with masonry floors, plastered or finished in rammed earth or clay, sometimes with an oil finish.[37] At least in old Castile, this mediaeval heating system (a precursor of the modern radiant flooring) constituted an integral part of the house even until the 1960s. But times change. Women stopped working at the building of houses; people left the countryside. The familiar ancestral home, vacated, not looked after or maintained, became a ruin, returning into the earth.[38]

ON AMULETS

I think Burmese amulets, which are mainly stones or metals, inserted under the skin to obtain their full power, may have worked in a similar way to the magical function of the hearth.[39] We protect the realm of the visible by conquering the invisible. The Lares and the Penates, the Roman gods of the household, were the protectors and benefactors who brought luck and wisdom, and were meant to inhabit the domestic space, and reign over the house.[40] But the votive offerings, the figurines of the deities, were placed underneath the hearth, below that which is visible.[41] The floor you walk on now is made out of skin and hosts words, inscriptions, and hidden gems, and items for the world to carry on spinning. A poem to be read in both directions, an Abracadabra projecting itself in space,

reflected in water, open to interpretation.[42] Sarcophagi, tombs, boxes filled with pebbles that we kept next to jars with burnt, rusty nails.

DOWN THE CHIMNEY HOLE THIS TIME

Now listen. I enter a room with no corners, no up or down, and barely any noise. The sound of footsteps reverberates with the sound of my beating heart, and the hybrid fabrics of my white boiler suit parallel the palpitating veins near my ear, disemboguing into the racing brain. Deflated, I fall into a chimney, down into the hearth and its realm of ashes and by doing so, I am sketching in dust: my benumbed finger draws and ploughs and scratches the concealed internal walls. I carve signs in stone next to openings, portals redrawn in geometry, and lines in prison cells flourish in the dark, calling for the passage of days to speed up.[43] Marks are for the mumbling of spells and chants, and remembering. Both storytelling and the apotropaic begin with the act of naming, in the christening of buoys that keep words afloat in the slippery net of facts. Events occur, most of them worthy of nothing more than minor anecdotes. But this hearth is the house's stomach. It has an eye between two words: one thought of leaving a mark on this womb before departing. Since eventually you will forget this body, these lights, and sounds, and feelings.

TO MAKE, TO CRAFT AMULETS

Roman votive deposits dug underneath the house, next to the hearth: the hypocausts, those incredible worming and rambling underfloor chimneys for heating; figurines, lead plates with inscriptions spreading their influence through the floor which becomes a membrane to the underworld.[44] The vernacular home is a navel for the clan, in which to gain protection and shelter from the universe, at the same time creating another universe, that of the interior. Underneath the floor, next to the hearth, usually farthest from the entrance and so sheltered also in the physical sense, I placed my man-made prayers into the niches and holes, into nooks and crannies, to use a rambling story to explain what moves the air from one room to the next.

"Few things are as frightening as the eternal growth of stone-like appendixes within our body." she said, bringing her full hand, hieratic as if fossilized, solid, megalithic, ancient and arcane, inextinguishable, as old as old turtles in motion. She then named a few. Bladder stones for calculus. Milk tooth growing, as teenagers do: fast and shiny, only waiting to reveal the inevitable decay, to suffer loss and bloody holes where there was pearly exuberance. Loss inflamed by storytelling, holes become circumscribed, imagined, conjured with words meant for healing. She mentioned mediaeval amulet-hunters for the descendants of Kings: silver-set hog fangs and thunderstone-festooning silver necklaces for infants.[45] Last but not least, she described an eye-like stone and the folded scraps of cloth, carrying words and omens, coloured garments with knots tied on them.[46] Many others were concealed, for secrecy is necessary for them to function. They act from the folds of the warm whiteness of baby-clothes, away from the eyes of strangers, their lips and, even more, their dusty fingers, grubby nails, and limbs exposed to a multitude of forces and spells, and, above all, the air. Later, I will reveal to you more about those invisible forces. Later.

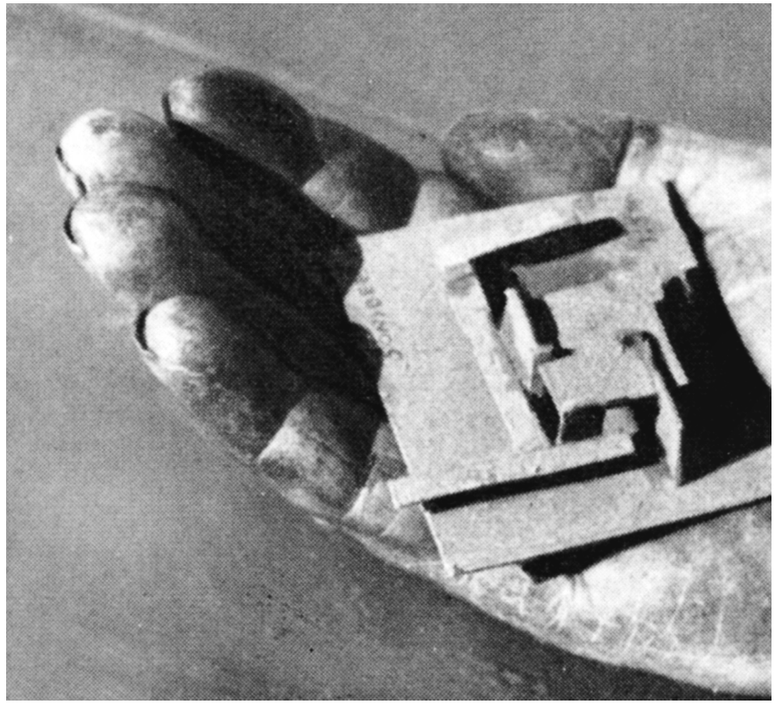
THE APOTROPAIC

Since you landed in the hearth of the house, let me tell you about the apotropaic. The hearth exists not only in the physical space as the source of heat, and therefore the essential condition of life, but also on the symbolic plane: It connects the actions, activities and human productions made for protection in a













551. ROMANESQUE. LANGUEDOC. Head of the Prophet Jeremiah, from a pillar on the portal of St Pierre at Moissac. 1130–1135.

superstitious sense: portents, and talismans, ornaments and, scriptures and inscriptions, plants and amulets to be worn ensuring the luck of the carrier or the house, family or the entire clan.[47] It stands for more than a mere belief: it relates to action, a physical practice: the act of touching wood to prevent bad luck, the crossing of fingers after bad encounters, or the closing of open scissors. Due to their connection with the physical act of crafting, we will be focusing mainly on the practices applied to, or existing in relationship with, the vernacular house.[48]



THE HOUSE

This house you are walking through in this text, an imagined, timeless composite, is mostly vernacular: built with materials locally sourced by its owners over many years, bit by bit, sometimes with the aid of a builder, constructed with simple technology. Such was the way the average Roman citizens built their houses: with wood, stone, mud or adobe, depending on the region. Not only did their house host a family, but also its tools, its beasts (usually in the room beneath the main bedroom), and a kitchen. This type of construction was prevalent well until the industrial revolution. Mostly because peasants, land workers, and shepherds had the entire autumn and winter to maintain and fix the house and its features: its structure, floors, mattresses and fireplaces as well as chimneys, all of which demanded cleaning, mending and replacing. All these links to early modes of constructing shelter, loaded in terms of psychoanalysis, not only carry notions of growth and protection, but also touch on the poetics of emblazoning.[49] Of dressing up the house-body for the Sunday service. In line with this idea of sprucing up, of festooning the house as much as yourself, some works of art you are looking into – these installations you navigate with the body as much as with the eye – seeking a narrative to extract meaning that

is perhaps not even there, could be rooted in two different ways of crafting.[50] Different but connected with practice as procuration of the good: as a struggle against the not-knowing, as a quest into the unknown but located in the realm of active forces. The not-knowing would be something you can struggle with just as you can struggle with not-remembering and dementia: the materialisation of the lack of knowledge. By this I mean making as an attempt to get to know and to connect with the rural culture, slowly vanishing, already gone, or even unknown. But also, as making, as the practice (of art) related to the apotropaic: what we do in order to attract good luck, embellishment, kindness and beauty. Because you may not know why you work, and still, you carry on. You draw to explore the circle, but at the same time, to protect yourself from it, or rather from what remains outside it, to guard yourself from the vertigo of not-knowing. The hearth is a place for the fire, at the heart of a home, but subjugated by enclosing in ancient clay so as not to burn the house down and destroy it from within, whilst keeping your face warm and the house-body alive.



Healing magic and written formulas, spells and paper amulets folded three times to be carried by the bearer. Writing a spell on a piece of lead which, folded, then nailed to the structure, to the beams of the basement functions, hidden from sight. Is it not similar to the origins of sculpture itself, of the Egyptian *Skulptor,* carving the bust of a pharaoh to be placed in his death chamber, never seen by anyone but the sculptor himself, who would be sacrificed after the task was complete?

ON REPETITION

See, I come from a land of strong women. In the fields, in the house, in the stable, tasks are equally distributed between men, women, and children. Depending on the season, whatever happens under the roof of the vernacular house is a team task, no matter what. I learned from my mother that the mending of sheep-wool mattresses – woven from a yarn – was the task for an entire day. It first demanded the un-sewing of the sides, followed by extracting, airing, and battering of the wool, until it was swollen and supple at the end of the day, finally to be placed back and sewn in again. This was done by children and adults alike, all together with the help of a long needle, not to be lost, the size of an infant's head. Now, picture the noise it made and imagine how strange to unmake those stitches over and over again for aeons. There is a hidden power and forgotten strength in repetition, in looking after precious objects, that still puzzles me. I hope this text exercises some of that repetition, the remaking, the care for the physical object, the matter-that-matters. The same applies perhaps to the work in the fields at harvest time, taking turns, all together.

HOUSE AS A BODY

Now I am thinking of this very particular interior picture of Lygia Clark sewing – or perhaps mending clothes – against *A Casa é o Corpo,* a wall with a poster on it, reading: "to think is a bodily experience hosted in the guts of the house, in the catacombs of the spirits, there where the wind spins against corners, crannies and holes, et cetera."[51]

Objects aligned and put together only with – and thanks to – this soft logic. Just like in dreams, or inside an amulet, where imitative magic takes place, the contagion of features through touching, through contact. Imagine you have sketched the shape of a space you remember, a very particular architecture of

your infancy, containing a myriad of fragmented memories.[52] Well, perhaps by now, dear reader, you may have already distrusted them all. Or maybe not? Keep on looking at that space, at that drawing.

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JULY 1968






I
LE·BATE



II THE ESCUTCHEON

What if, to tell you a story, I have to start from an absence, from a gaping hole, from the echoing cold pipes of time you looked back at, muted, outlying reflections, vivid therefore moving, effectively affective? Dream on.

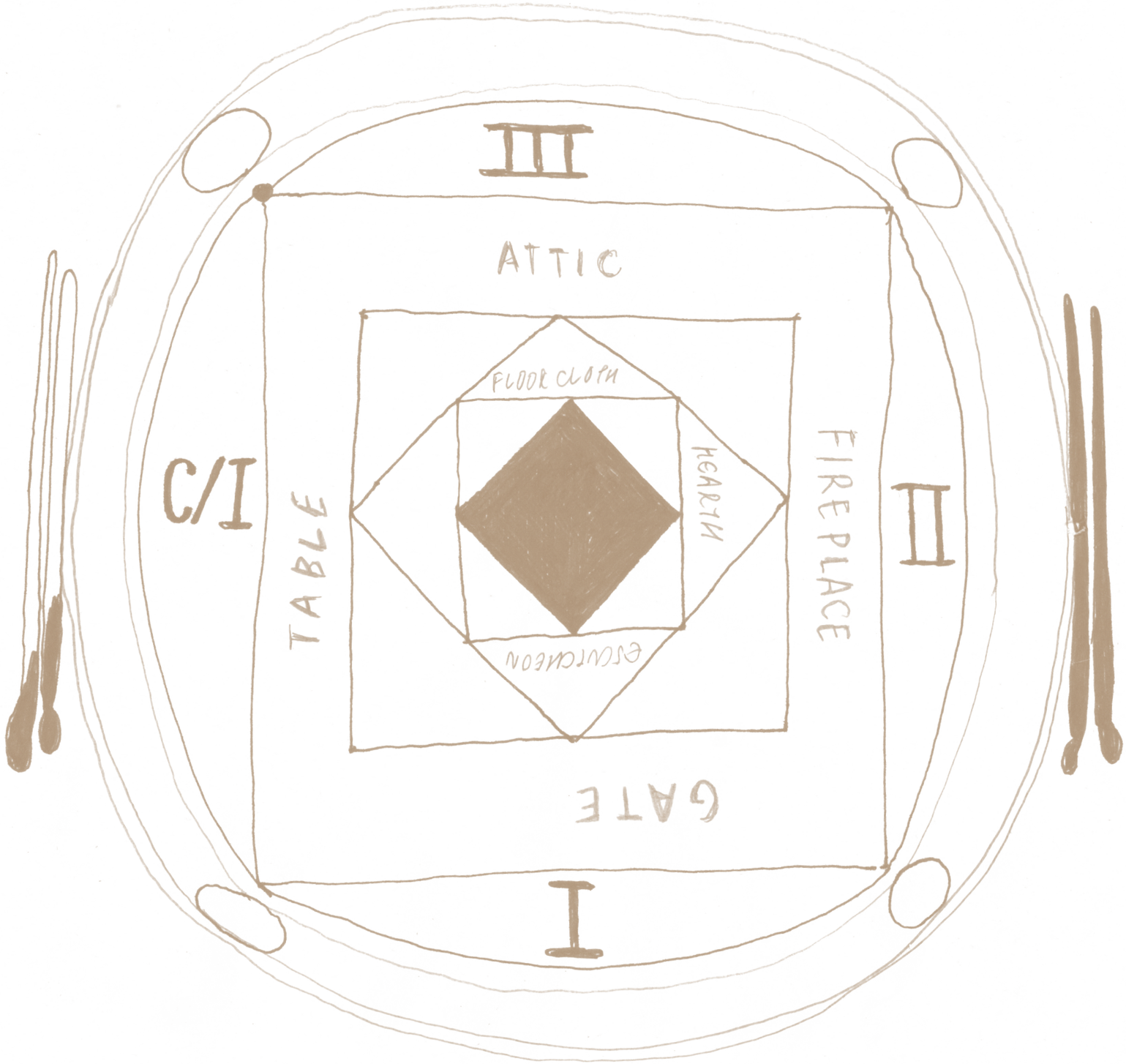
INTRO

Imagine arriving at the door of an old house. Some sort of a promenade may have led you there. Walking on flat, old stones next to perennial Mediterranean plants, you see vines on the south wall, a willow, and a well.[53] Pallasmaa says a door handle is the handshake of a building. After that greeting, you enter a house, you glide into it and touch it with your wide-open eyes, the spaces intertwined and conjoined when navigated, when passed through.[54] All this in diagrammatic progression, a conversational piece. Or a drift into your ancestral, intimate trip towards the hearth: from the skin towards the heart you travel, piercing function, matter, et al.

But you will never get there without transgressing multiple borders. You pass by a niche between the attic and the kitchen, or you slide carefully down the chimney. What, in your meandering drift through the body of the house, connects the chimney, the hearth and the kitchen with the façade and the entrance? Perhaps it is the idea of retracing steps, of navigating backwards, perhaps it is the idea of reflected spaces and events, of inverse order and means: leaving feet-forward or walking backwards. Escutcheons are silhouettes.

MASTERS OF THE MIRROR

You could easily imagine early mediaeval printers as masters of the mirror, writing backwards on wooden plates, kings of the reflected celestial dome; on the water surface, a mirrored floor plan turned to marble, they spelled magic invocations. Since magic comes from words, and words animate things,


III
ATTIC
C/I
TABLE
FLOOR CLOTH
HEARTH
ESCUTCHEON
FIREPLACE
II
GATE
I

they opened a gate long closed in the realm of anamnesis, the art of memory.

Before the development of print, in mediaeval times and up to the 1400s, tombs seem to me some of the most striking examples of architecture that speaks. Open books crying to be read and screaming for attention. And you are indeed, without knowing, trained to read them and produce stories and sensations, and you extract the story of the life of those awaiting to be woken. See, you can always make it up and say crossed legs about to walk for the ones gone too early on the path of life, perhaps leaving unfinished work or promise. Others with dogs at their feet or touching hands, some still fiercely grasping swords as if needed in a plausible in-between land of contests, fatigue, reassurances and malady of the soul, awaiting birds.[55]

Now read this other craft, this other building you are navigating, and explore the inside of this fingerprint-like skin of labour and time. Wide-open palms and walking: reading with your body as you walk towards the façade, into a mass of matter drawn, thought of, dreamed of, designed, constructed, looked after, and perfected in time, still standing to convey meaning into your approaching body, against all odds still telling the story of its conception, of its construction, offering itself as the embodiment of knowledge, to be read with your bodily senses. Forget about the head and enter with your full open body into this story of fading.

GARDEN: MIRROR

Any enclosed garden is built upon a gap, an absence: the source of all stories. Be the well in the cloister or the mirroring pond in the middle of the walled villa or be both, a dark surface for the encircling certainties to grow strong as the dragon with its one and only weak point: the dark heart in the even darker creature or the wounded tree, growing swollen and callous within tender bites in tender trees.

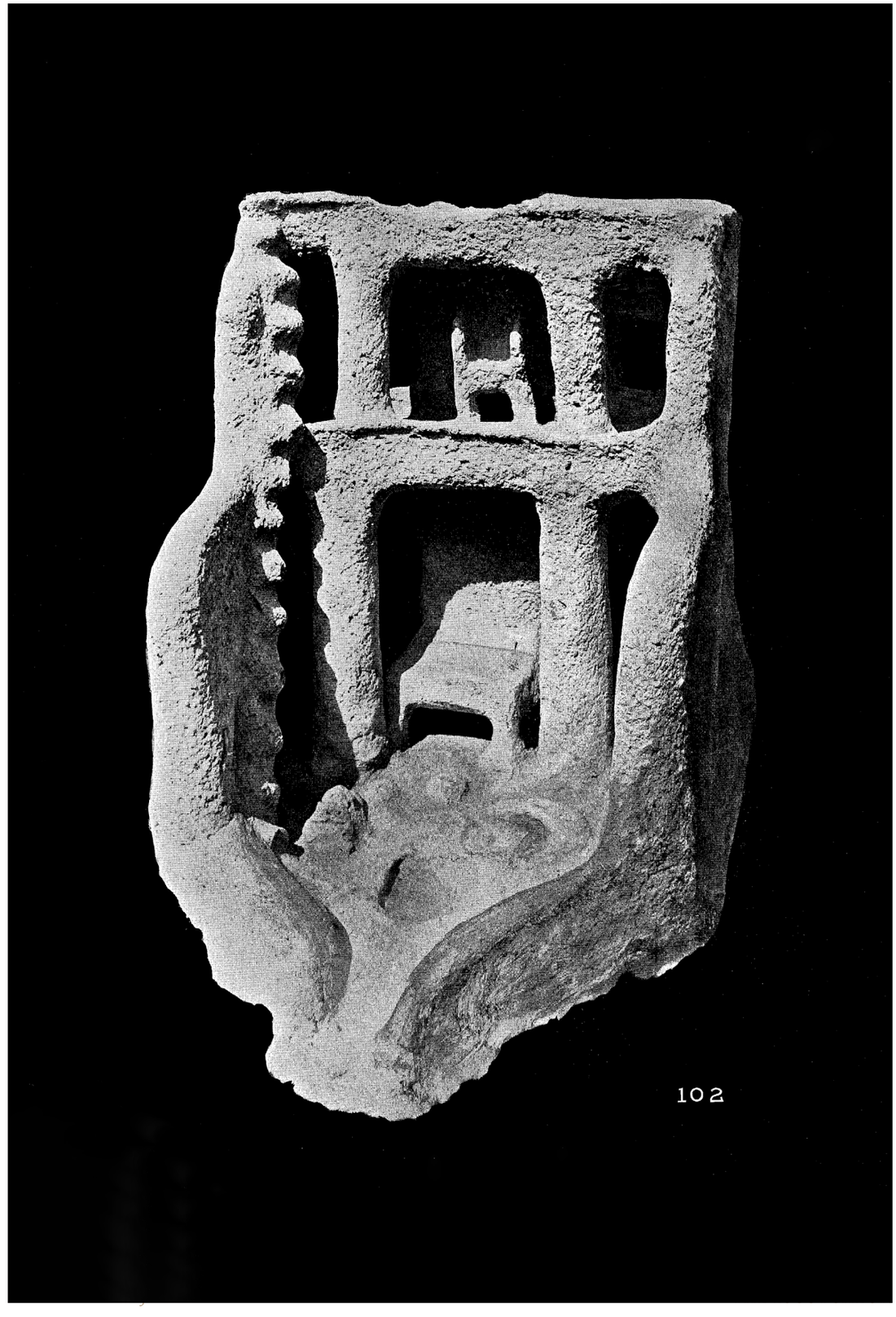
MENTIRAS: THE HOUSE AS A STORYTELLING DEVICE



> *The lamp of the body is the eye.*
> *If therefore your eye is sound, your*
> *whole body will be full of light,*

Writes St Matthew. I am aware that 'lamp' is a contested term; in several translations of the Bible it is not 'lamp' but 'light'.[55] But there may be something in between, something about the perception of lights descending into darkened spaces: a basilica, a chapel, a church, an empty house. Like the light from above, as in a prison cell or a morgue or a mouldy cellar, light perhaps brighter than thin air spiralling in a straight line, falling into decay, into static time. This window, floating above the dark cellar of the body, this lighthouse above the pitch-black cliffs of the house could find its counterpart in the keyhole: *el ojo de la cerradura,* the eye of the lock. But the eye is only the hole in the keyhole. The stress lies upon that, which defines and encircles – as in a profile – the keyhole. Now you encounter, my dear friend, a well-travelled word, a word that came to us from Portugal: 'the escutcheon'. Derived from *escudo* or shield, it is the escutcheon that bears the coat of arms. It is the medium, carrying the heraldic language and is semiotically charged. Do you know that in Castile, where this tale has its origin, we call escutcheons *mentiras?* That's what we call them. Lies.

There has to be some sort of fear of forgetting, inherited at birth. The forgetting not only of memories but of the very time spent in this peculiar limbo inside another's body, memories



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discarded when we are born. After that, the clock is set to zero and it all begins in earnest. But memories of that space, bodily sensations and experiences must be kept, imprinted somewhere. Perhaps these feelings even influence the way we navigate spaces we encounter in our future life. Psalm 139 gives a bizarre but clear example of the new-born's dark inheritance, somehow built upon the idea of craft, of creation in absolute darkness, in an underground vessel of vessels as much as drawn into the book of books.[56] I wrote it down so I can remember:

> *For it was you who formed my inward parts;*
> *you knit me together in my mother's womb.*
> *I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*
> *Wonderful are your works;*
> *that I know very well.*
> *My frame was not hidden from you,*
> *when I was being made in secret,*
> *intricately woven in the depths of the earth.*
> *Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.*
> *In your book were written*
> *all the days that were formed for me,*
> *when none of them as yet existed.*

GIACOMETTI AND THE WOMB

At this point, I wonder, what if you had in front of you one of Giacometti's plaster works, the *Project of a Passageway.*[57] This tunnel-like space which expands and contracts throughout its length creating chamber-like cavities, makes you dream of rooms within the body. Walking back along these passageways with your gaze (the sort of looking that is like touching) navigating, sliding, drifting through tunnelled matter that is both flesh and space, may lead you to the uncanny point zero of the womb. Since we all inhabited one for a long period of time, I wonder what is left of such an experience. Perhaps we cannot remember without looking at and imprinting, moving. Walking engenders thinking; forward for reasoning; backwards for recollecting. But how about the spatial experience of being in such an interior without the knowledge of inhabiting the womb of the nesting of another, not completely there yet but drifting away?[58]

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE AGAIN

The same door that welcomes your hand and arms and then your face, embracing your crossing of the threshold with its unfamiliar fragrances, sounds, and warmth, presents you with new discoveries and visions from inside the whale-house. It will surely bid you farewell by expelling you again into the cold. Though the door is the same, the nature of its two faces is as much an opposite as the barking scowl and the smile of youthful teeth in the same mouth. So now that you are leaving back into the silent outside, you are about to slip into recollection, into distraction. And there you go.

TU QUE ME MIRAS, ¿QUÉ VES? YOU WHO ARE LOOKING AT ME: WHAT IS IT THAT YOU SEE?

In *Future Now* ('Framtiden Vari Gar'), a 1986 programme on the Swedish national television, J. G. Ballard walks the reporter through his home and refers to his studio as the place where his imagination dwells. The room, filled with notebooks, books, a poster, and an assortment of other items, overlooks a tiny garden. I almost wept when I saw that garden, when I looked through the writer's eyes and howled in silence against such a vision. And yet, his imagination was able to flourish there, as in the poem that I may be making up or destroying: "let the crooked flower bespeak its purpose in crookedness – to seek the light."[59] Anyway, perhaps a landscape in itself does nothing grand for the imagination, it may even thrive in its absence. Jails could well be machines for desire and

imagination, cells turn into darkrooms where entire movies are projected at night, beneath the eyelids of those in sorrow and ecstasy, just like in Jean Genet's 1950 short, dark film, *Un Chant d'Amour.*[60]

Some would say we tell stories in order to survive; *this demented narrator* would perhaps add, rather lightly, that we tell stories in order to exist, in order to remain: we align our personal narratives with a grand one, speculating by adjusting sketches of this thing we suppose we might be, we look from the outside as if we knew. A mirror for this other thing (is it otherness?) to be grasped, apprehended, recognised or known anew, held in the hand like a bird you cannot keep but which still warms your hand and transports you somewhere else; always reflected, the light travelling away from the surface of the mirror.

CIRCUMSCRIBING THE HOLE

You may wonder about this hole-proposition. How do you even define one? You'd understand it all if you'd just trace its edges, if you'd touch its borders with your fingertips and your eyes. And you would say it happens because of the practice, because of conversations, and walking. Not-knowing only takes shape when it is circumscribed. Not that it is new, but it reaches the surface when you work, when you draw, and talk. You may be a maker because of it, to protect yourself from this hole, not to forget but to learn, to progress despite the only certainty, that of decay and forgetting.

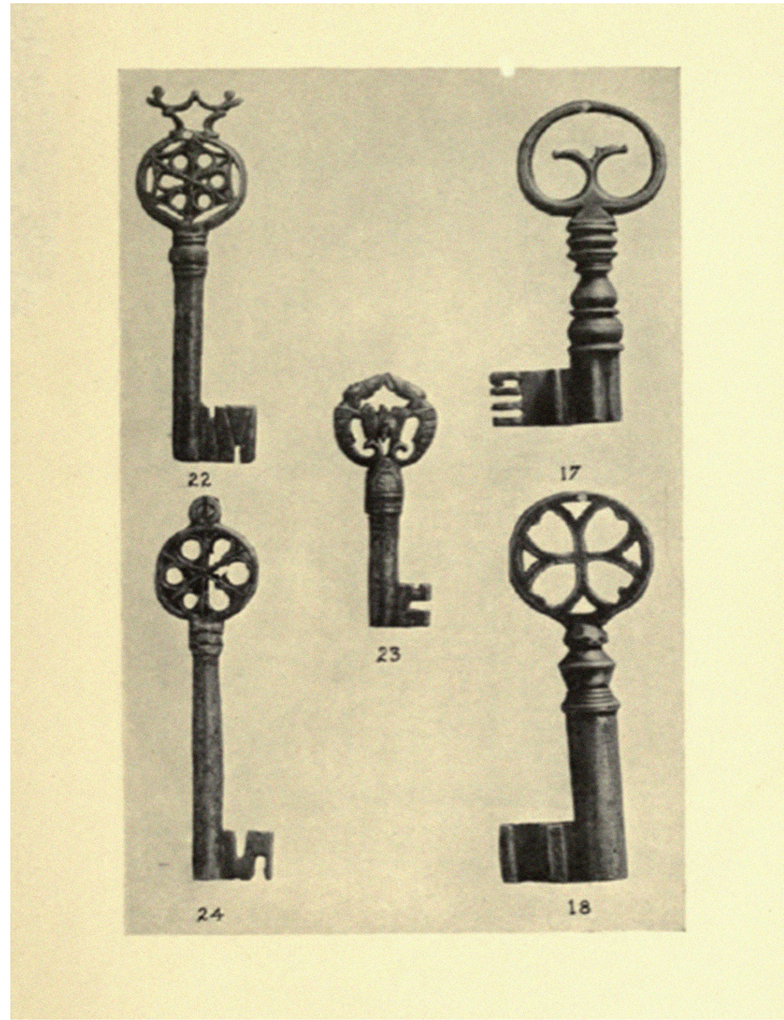
Holes, keyholes and escutcheons are in their very essence thresholds. Now that you have squeezed through the keyhole, you find what seems to be the ruin of an adobe, a mud house. I too built an adobe house, with the help of a builder, when I resigned from my job as an architect. The house belongs to my parents now and in its walls numerous amulets are concealed; its foundations contain fragments of nearby ruins; talismans rest in its beams. It has a name: *Corral del Aire* — The Barn of the Wind.

THE MIRROR OF INK

Do you remember the book about ancient Egypt? You have to go back, retrace the text. The book. The library. The ink. If we trust the author to speak the truth on his travels to Egypt, we quickly realise that all the stories about the cartomancy, about the drop of ink and the young boy is merely a prop and a work of structure both to hold attention and quickly gain access to the psyche. I will try to explain this to you and make it as brief as possible. As a prospective student, I assured everyone during my interview that the trick is to set up a vision on which to structure and build the idea of generative fiction. In my case, I spoke about a castle buried under mountains of dust, and why I knew of such a place, my links with the remote land of its origin, and the idea of a bookless village where stories lasted only as long as the voice echoed. Stories need images and spatial references to get a foothold. But the shape of the images is key. A three-point key that opens the doors in this ancient house, from the end to the beginning, from the exit to the entrance once again. You know of such things from the Baroque, but we are built of volatile materials, we decay faster than books and more rapidly than promises.

But nonetheless, what seduced me was the idea of speculation. To speculate is to play with a reflected image, instead of the thing itself. What speculation demands is an image, a token of something not necessarily there, something that stands for something else – the other thing – which is the subject of speculation.

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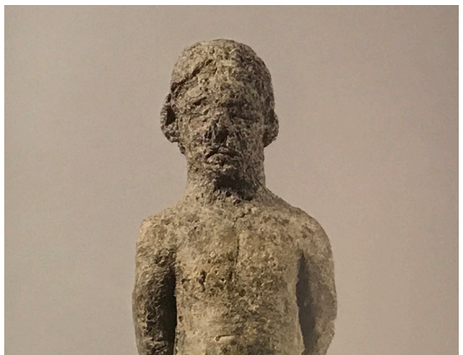
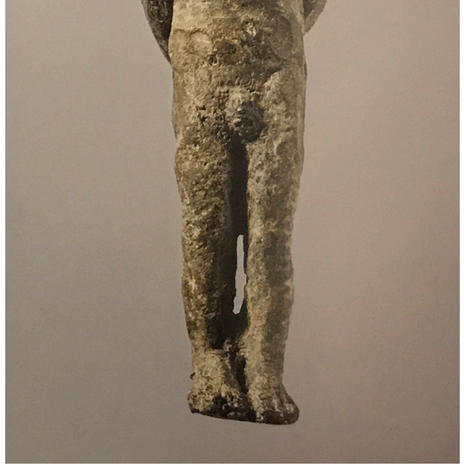
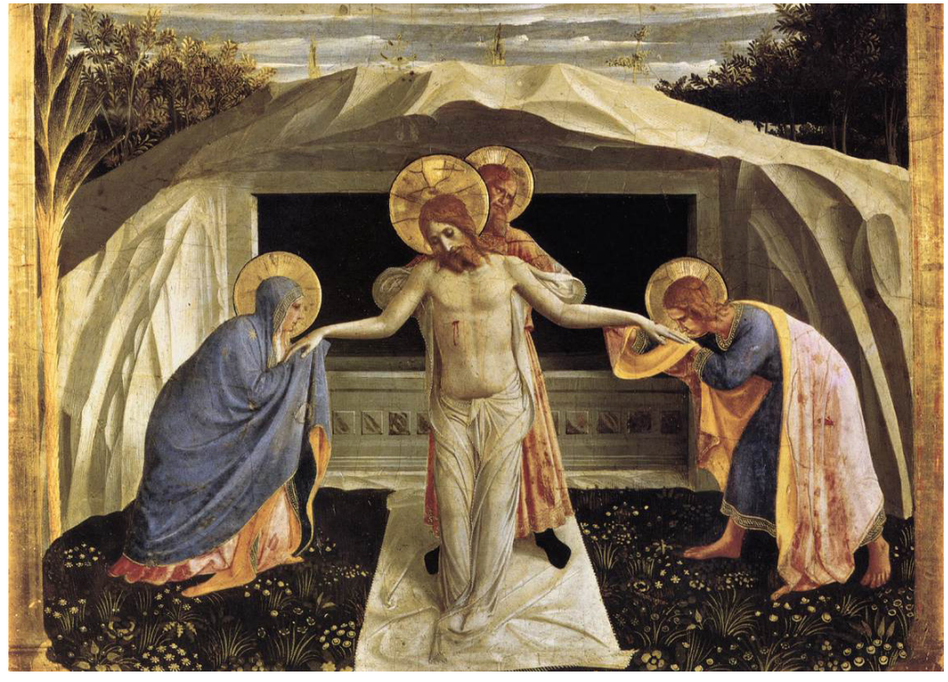








FORM AND SPEECH

If I say there is form to speech, I mean to say: physical form, I mean to say that when we talk, we draw geometric shapes. The English language seems like a ladder to me: a straight rhythmical line where every step on that ladder brings the speaker closer to the top, the point. This would find its acoustic representation in the sound of a drum: 4 by 4. Romance languages have a different structure. Take Spanish, for instance, my mother tongue. We may approach the point only tangentially, as we approximate the topic with a gentle cadence, a rhythm. No drum this time, but a castanet spiralling into action; *piano, piano.*

CHOREOGRAPHY

You walk towards something, a door, most likely. There are usually stone steps that you are following. You find inscriptions on these steps, on the walls, cavities with colour and items inside, finding a sense of order, readability within, progression.

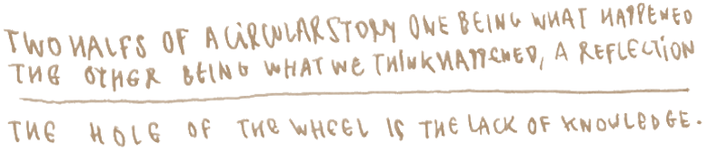
Something may be written on the door. You walk up to the keyhole and notice the marks on the outer skin, badly sketched profiles, fragments, signals, cries for help, symbols on the perimeter, at the threshold, boundary-crosses and weathervanes, door handles and escutcheon plates, *Reja* cresting and wrought iron hinges, iron firedogs and ornamentation around the thresholds to ward off the evil eye.[61]

WALKING IN SILENCE, BEING THERE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY NOT THERE

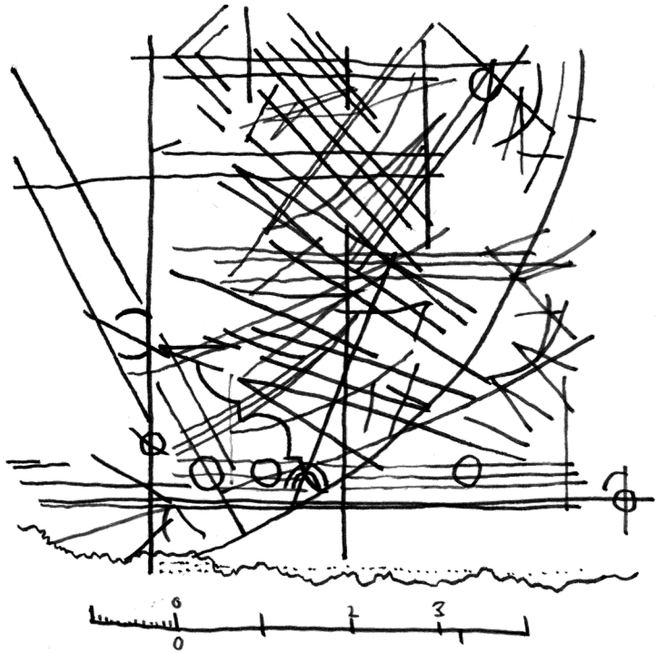
When we were kids, back in my hometown, we used to sneak into construction sites at night with those boxy old lanterns, the size of a flashlight. Anyone who has entered the skeleton of a house under construction in the dark can perhaps recall the feeling of being underground. Cured concrete releases a lot of humidity and turns the surrounding air cold and heavy

with the smell of clay wine caves. That makes overground construction not unlike a cave; both keep you dry through the wet and muddy dark matter of the underground. In absolute silence, we jumped over fences, crawled and clambered through holes, navigated spaces imagining we were in the future: that was quite striking for 11-year-old kids. Walking in silence, looking for leads to the desired liquid elixir. We would walk through the floors, staircases, foundations and cellars, looking for *Clarete*, the cheap wine the builders would drink. This juicy soft *roseau*, closer to juice than wine, was meant to cheer the builders up and give them strength in the extremely cold winters and the desert-hot, short summers. Sometimes called *ojo de gallo* (cock´s eye) because of its colour, the *clarete* was usually unfiltered and brownish, ranging from seven to eleven percent alcohol. In my grandfather's time, it was the only liquid taken to the countryside for working the fields and getting widely drunk. My great uncle brother used to make his own *clarete* and drink three to four bottles of the stuff a day, until he was crippled and became frustrated and furious for being a cripple. Antonio was his name and he couldn't drink without working, just didn't fancy it. In that sense, winemaking, especially in the caves of Ribera del Duero where wine is stored and made, could be regarded as the extension of ploughing. As if working the fields turned into mining.

Nowadays, *Clarete* (since *claro* comes from light colour) usually has fourteen percent alcohol, filtered and plain, reddish-pink at best. I became an architect myself, perhaps influenced by those night, craving-motivated explorations.



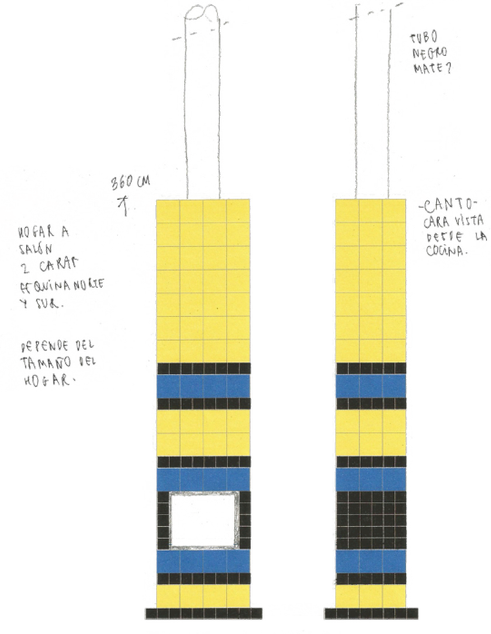
Now, lend me your ears. This story I am about to tell you has been told many times. Not once, not twice, but many, many times. You knew it before: that's what you said the first time. Obviously, it is an old one. What I do, what this text does, is to be a memo, or a reminder. My task, dear reader, is to make you remember. I am trying to do that by repeating the same old story once again, but also, anew. And as 'memory is the most stupid dog (you throw it a stick and it brings you any old thing)' I come to this table, so you remember the story you told me, before forgetting, before dementia.[62] After all, we named this house, our house, after her. Dementia is not only the name of this place, it is also a woman's. The umbrella with the rain inside and the room for all the displaced and lost watches and burnt pots and all the falls we went through and even this silly story, you would say. But this house named after the woman, this never-ending home of recollection and imagination and, obviously, lies (and white lies even more), carries a map within: in its corners there are doors and portals to a map on a higher plane.[63] Out of fear, devotion, abiding interest, and curiosity, an *Atlas of the Hole* may eventually appear.



Wells Cathedral.







* CHIMENEA EMPOTRABLE DE 2 CARAS


(nº 229=)
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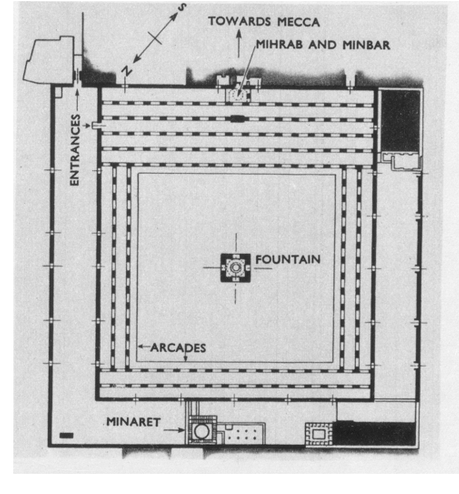

TOWARDS MECCA
MIHRAB AND MINBAR
ENTRANCES
FOUNTAIN
ARCADES
MINARET

ENTRANCE



IN MY MIND, I SEE AN EARTHWORM ENCIRCLING THE I-DO-NOT-KNOW AND IT POINTS TO PRACTICE AND SOUNDS LIKE SSS

I am drawing an earthworm with no beginning and no end like the ouroboros eating its tail or spinning both ends in order to maintain the inertia that once set her in motion. I say 'her' since, in my mother tongue, earthworms are feminine: *lombrices.* To meander, to worm, to draw an S after an S after an S or to concatenate U-turns in order to conceal her trajectory, her direction, while piercing the under surface and whatever lies underneath: that, which cannot be seen but contains (and is made of) the debris of minor stories, histories, and the dust of time being ploughed through by the earthworm. You may not be able to draw a circle with lines of text but perhaps, like the earthworm, you are able to arrive at a point where the tail (or was it the tale?) ends, and bite it or touch it so as to begin again, anew, into another circle of the growth rings thickening all along a tree's longitude: towards the sky and into the deep, warm soil.

AS AN ENUMERATION:

Just after you slip into a distraction, there is a gate; crossing it is a rite of passage.[64] The distraction engulfs everything like a bubble, surrounding this entire text within itself and framing what is written. Perhaps in this sort of drunkenness, a black pit of unreasonable events take place, occurring one after another depending on chance and predisposition. Just like being new in town: anything could happen to you if you don't know around. So there you go.

A, PARENTHESIS

At some point, the text and the thesis switch directions, as in the Welles story, when finding a narrow end and then changing directions to shed light on a new issue: the house as a device for thinking, as a repository of thoughts and recol-

lections. The text needs to crawl backwards as if into a cave, and ideas need to be darker and more acidic and greyer and less pleasant but still, they need to cope with dementia just as a carer would, as a friend rather than an impassive reader. This is the moment you realise the necessity of re-writing after reaching a dead end. At first, it seems some sort of an end to the text, only to turn into speculation and recount what had happened before. Now you find yourself, dear reader, at the entrance once again.

Why does the text run so haphazardly among the detritus of construction, ideas, recollections and, above all, notions of making and producing and looking at the produce of art today? Can art installations and entire exhibitions articulate the unknown? Can not-knowing be articulated? Can a thesis on not-knowing be presented? Even more, in what form this gap in knowledge, or perhaps fragment of ignorance can be organised, interrogated, scrutinised and tested?

DEMENTIA IS FOR DISTANCE

Looking up Dementia in Partridge's *Origins,* you quickly realise that, as an illness, is manifested not so much by being 'out of your mind' but being far from it, distanced or removed, but still within reach. The idea of both a separation (the lack of contact and touch) and the promise of regaining that contact, the promise of intermittent understanding, of still hoping for some decent days, with all the words you once knew at your disposal. This way, another type of certainty sneaked its way into text, a means of communication forged in the guts and the hearth of the body. So you wonder about the inconsistencies. Are those markers or pointers to this other rationality needed in accurate reading, not only of exhibitions but of artworks in space and texts and also our own fading, fearful minds?

Perhaps your memory is hyperlinked, nested in the space you inhabit and care for, those that were your lodgings and, unbeknownst to you, the making of your dreams. And yet, your narrator navigates all these rooms back sleepwalking attempt to reach for words that are no longer there.

But I wonder about your experience, the meandering mental experience of dementia. Of being left to wander, separated from geography. The very idea of a map, an exercise in quantification of shapes and relative distances being thrown off the edge of the map. A distorted sense of navigation, being forever lost until you become a ruin, a walking ruin. Every day to wake up in a different, unfamiliar room...

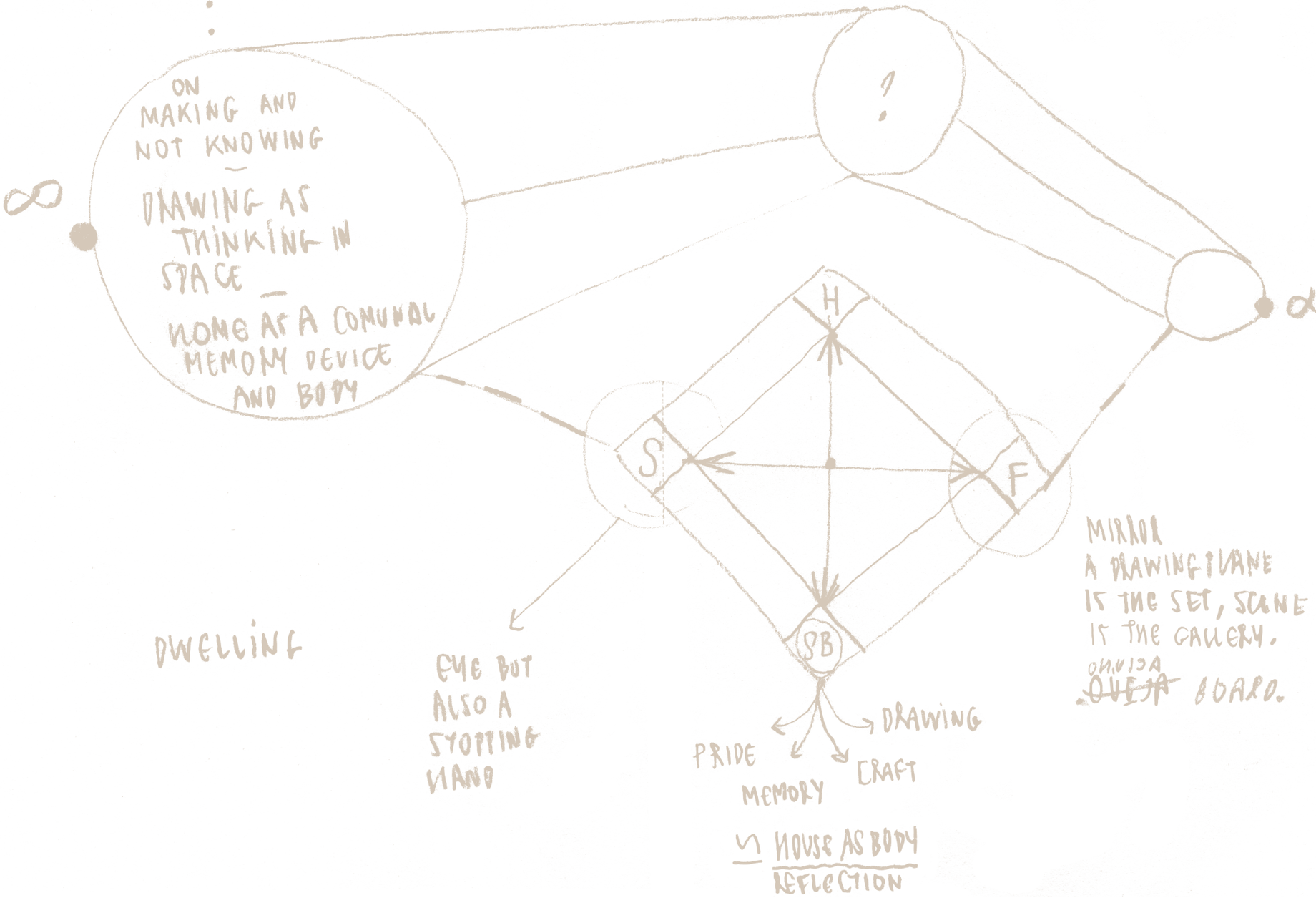
UPSIDE DOWN TEXT

Reaching this point, you must face the fact that this is an alleyway into which we have ventured only to find a dead end. In this dark corner of the city (or was it the house?) you are struggling to keep your eyes open, with the sense that the morning is being irrevocably gone. Look at things past, at debris and the shattered splinters that remain, revisit the ruins: once the drawing is finished and the hand pulls back, the story begins.

SEÑORA – LADY – DEMENCIA

It was my intention to fabricate a piece of fiction where Demencia, the Spanish word for Dementia, as your host guides you, dear reader, through her dwelling, home, palace, castle, or ruin so you can go back, retracing a distraction she may

CODA


ON
MAKING AND
NOT KNOWING
—
DRAWING AS
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HOME AS A COMUNAL
MEMORY DEVICE
AND BODY
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F
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STOPPING
HAND
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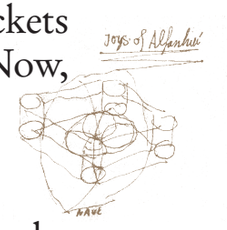
CRAFT
DRAWING
HOUSE AS BODY
REFLECTION
MIRROR
A DRAWING PLANE
IS THE SET, SCENE
IS THE GALLERY.
OUIJA BOARD.

have seduced you into: a house you entered and you wish to leave, if only you could find your way back. Dementia is also a name, a woman's name and a collective persona of many voices. Her relationship with the feared disease may not be casual, as in this tale you fight forgetfulness with imagination, impersonation, confabulation, and the loss of pretence. Since our aim are: to articulate the lack of knowledge; to rescue and reflect portions of long-vanished knowledge; to spruce up and name those holes with whatever you have within reach: objects, animals, memories, and some beautifully truthful lies you may need, as a walking stick. Dear old friend, take this as a confession, or sleight of hand but whatever you do, please, allow the images to grow and follow one another. Be light and silly and try to enjoy yourself in this, a very serious, scholarly and competent tale of blunders and wonders. As promised, we will come back to this introduction with the rest of the truth when you are ready to leave the house. Because this ending is an introduction, take this fragment of a tale only for one half of the trick: do not check your pockets yet, have I already placed something there? What a day. Now, let's walk before I start talking.

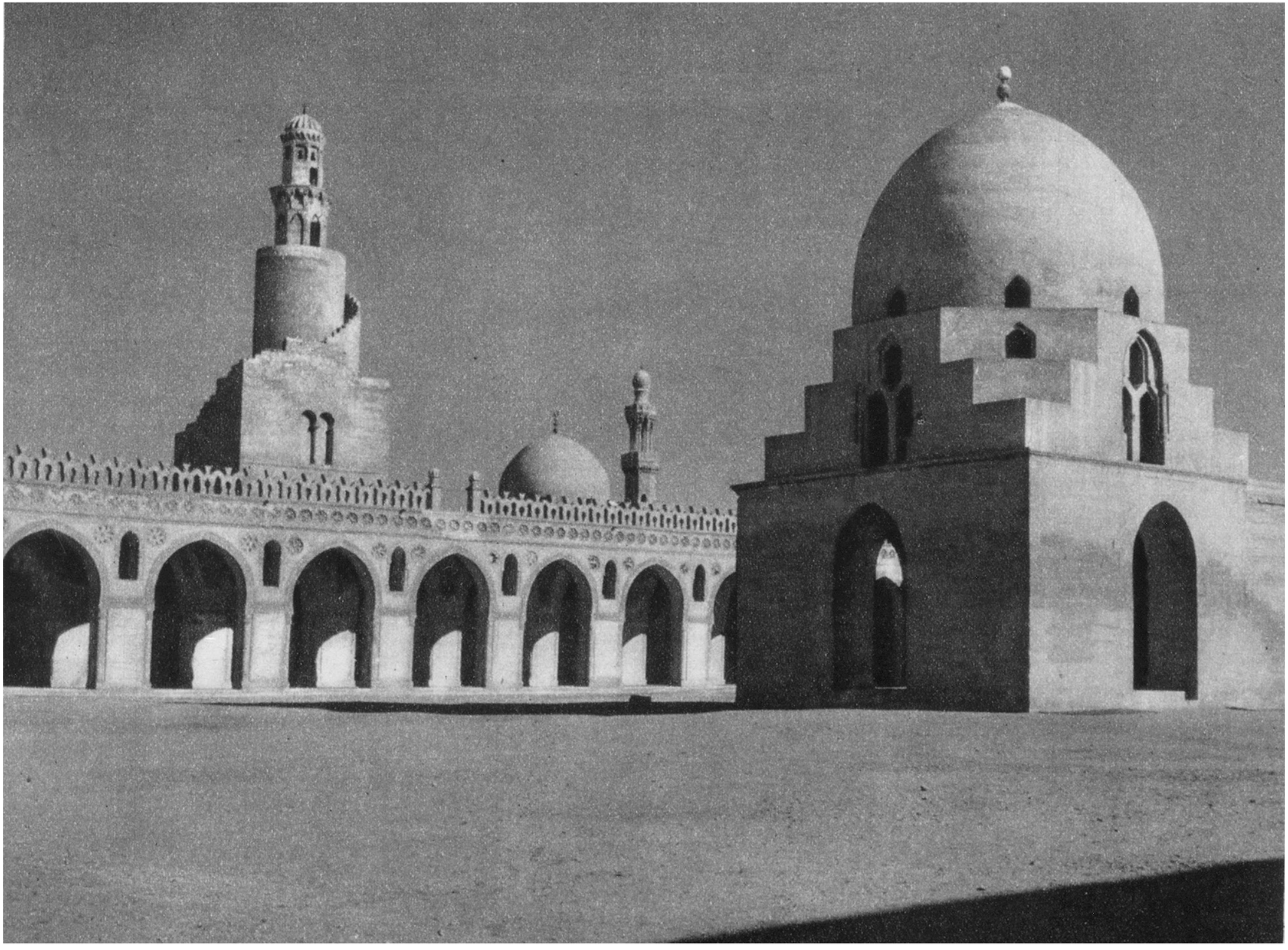


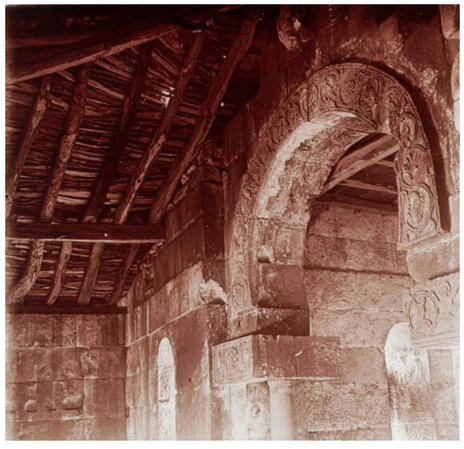
(OUTRO)

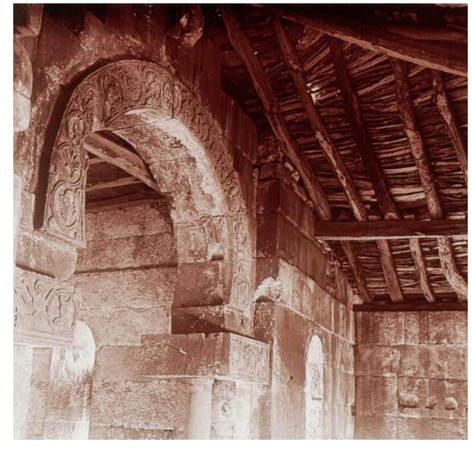
Unlike other stories, here, the point of no return marks the moment from which the only way to progress is backwards. As I was leaving the church in a dream, I could see my feet leaving the nave ahead of me, horizontally progressing into the end of the dream and therefore into rebirth. I was to leave the House of Dementia in the very same way, backwards as if in recollection, waking up from a fresh dream and still half asleep, half alive. This meandering feeling, the sense of directionless advance, echoes the early stages of dementia: the advance of days takes over your actions, you are only half awake, the dimming lights. Meandering, worming, snaking out of prudence, advancing by concealing your destination. The vision of a river carrying you adrift. Suddenly Maya Deren's *At Land* appears, dreamlike in its own way and progressing with a slow, everchanging non-sequential narrative; a space-time editing experiment in film; Deren's love for magic and anthropology, dance, the poverty that engulfed her and almost erased her legacy. I am also thinking of her writings, especially the rather scholarly array of ideas in *An Anagram*[65] …But stay with me a little longer, dear friend, we were only now together, you and I, trying to remember what it feels like to wake up, or be half awake in this house of ours, in the House of Dementia. The rooms here are like the hungry trousers of my childhood, like cereal fields observed from the air, an endless patchwork of woven skin, fabrics clashing with one another, corduroy and denim and canvas. See? There's no aesthetic principle, structural reason or architectural logic you can follow. Instead, you can enter the three exhibitions rooms, see the installations, concert halls with nothing on, to help you grasp anything. With an unsatiated hunger for stories to wear as jackets on the teenager nights of the future, it will all get mixed up so better start embracing fiction while you are still awake. At some point, we will all be assaulted by a distorted sense of navigation and gain a new grasp on things, perhaps more subtle and general, rather strange, as strangers waking up in strange rooms, day after day, in our House of Dementia. You end up separated from your notion of geography, reigning in foreign realms and standing on ever-shifting sands observing the collapse of buildings into ruins in high speed.[66]

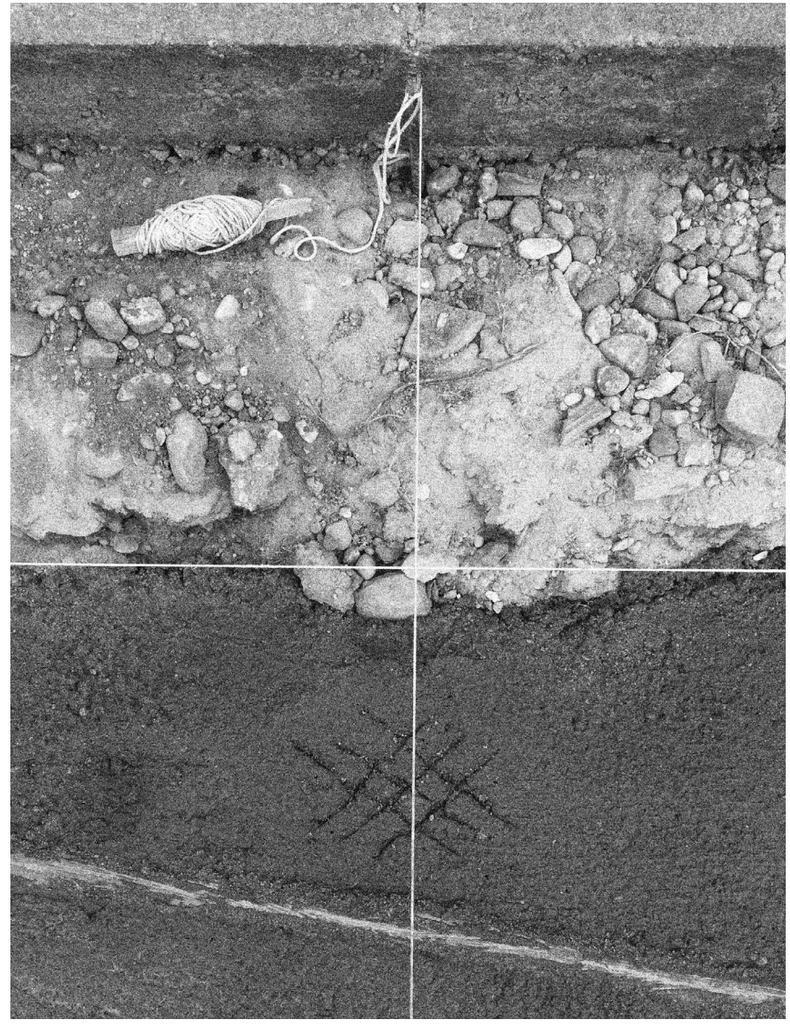
NOW LOOK AT THIS HAND, LOOK AT THIS FINGER, THIS POINTING FINGER SLOWLY MOVING MATTER AND DRAWING. WRITING FROM A CIRCLE

I am writing this from a circle made into a building, turned library turned annex, turned museum.[67] This labyrinthine,













symmetrical dwelling poses an intricate index of names and words below images to be read with the eyes first, projected into the brain and, finally, isolated again, in the dark matter of synapses and chemical reactions and the inner electricity of the wet mucosae within the skull. A bit of artifice, you think, I bet. I bet you think.

What your face looks like, I'm not sure anymore. This voice about to rise, perhaps after a cough, it's nobody else's but mine, Dementia the Elder, Miss Dementia. It is not exactly the sort of clinical dementia I, frightened and paralysed, am thinking of. You will understand this is a figure. In order to project personal truths into the collective realm or reality, I need to tell you this ramshackle story, so let's pretend all this happened and turn the 'if's into the 'be's. Like the dolls they bring into dementia care homes for the patients to interact with, without any further indication to convey emotion and caring and stories, a fabulous vehicle for stories to arise and float for as long as the fiction lasts. No promises.

NO MEMORY WITHOUT A BODY?

Inside that room with that other interrogator, she offered me a paper of pressed leaves – quite anachronistic, I thought at the time – just before throwing the idea, in the now misty-pink, fleshy cubicle.[68] "Perhaps you could blame the idea of God for all the disasters of the late twenty-first and twenty-second century," she proposed in a mellow voice, sleepy and murmuring. "Not only did the notion of the past, an individual identity and a plausible redemption not dissolve in the shiny comfort of consumption. Even worse, it propagated the idea that consciousness could be separated from the rest of being, from protein chains, from narratives, and landscapes. Cut off from natural history, ecosystems and tradition, the illusion of a stream of consciousness confined within the body was a hilarious threat to our own understanding memories. Apparently," she added, "no memory exists without a body, even less without space. Elders quickly forget and see themselves removed from this world when taken away from their dwellings. Walking illusions, so sure about their rights, identity, relationships or language, they don't exist without spatial vertebra, a fictional structure supporting their certainties."

I DO NOT KNOW

Take the *Atlas of the Hole/House of Dementia* in your hands and look at it, go through it. Let me tell you what it weighs: exactly the same as a mature pigeon; it may be just the same in size.[69] See, perhaps this humble text is not an *Atlas* at all, not a collection of maps and, really, neither is it anybody's *House.* And yet, you should definitely look at it, inspect and scrutinise it, just like you would either of the two aforementioned items: a cumulation of diagrams relating to a place in time, or a house or rooms or a ruin you go through when thinking backwards, like when recollecting or when thinking forward, like when speculating. But this is still an attempt. Since the wind blows in both directions, you are always caught in the middle of the past and the future, doing what you can: constructing, fabricating, fictionalising your experiences and yourself.[70] Fast forward, rewind. As a maker, an artist, an architect and a writer, I attempt over and over to destabilise what I do not know through practice. We revisit the same topics over and over again, we make versions and series and ask ourselves similar questions in order to carry on. The studio floor is the magnet where the whirlwind of doubt and work collide. Like moths, we stay there, trying to tame the space and make use of it, articulate what is broken. *Atlas of the Hole* doubts and wonders about such strategies in storytelling and the production of artworks. Let's walk together while I tell you some thoughts about what I don't

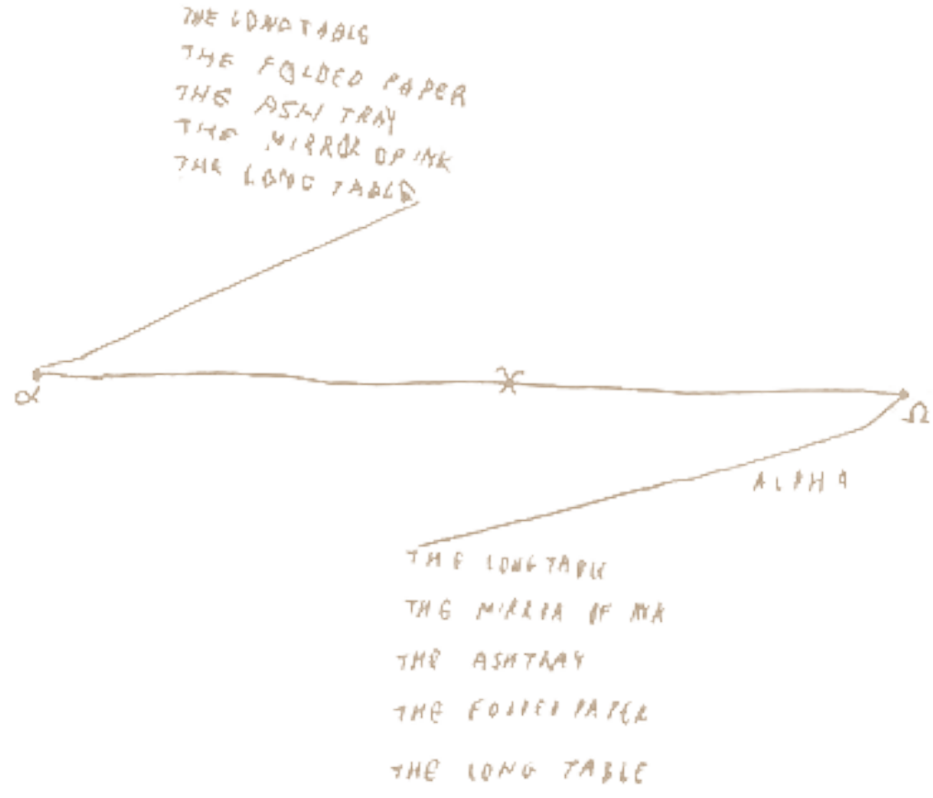
know. See, *House of Dementia* navigates through topics as *topoi,* lands. The ruins of a vernacular house could certainly be the ruins of this present time and a reflection on whatever happens when we do not know, when knowledge decays and departs deep into the ground, and what we do about it.

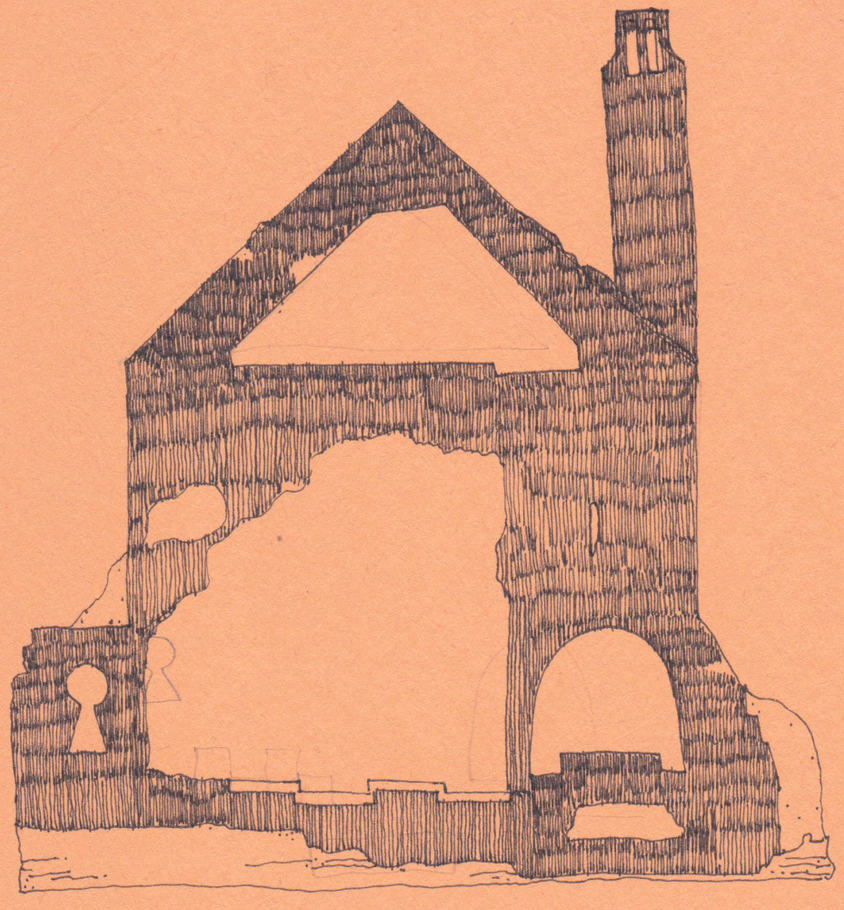
PERHAPS MY NAME IS DEMENTIA

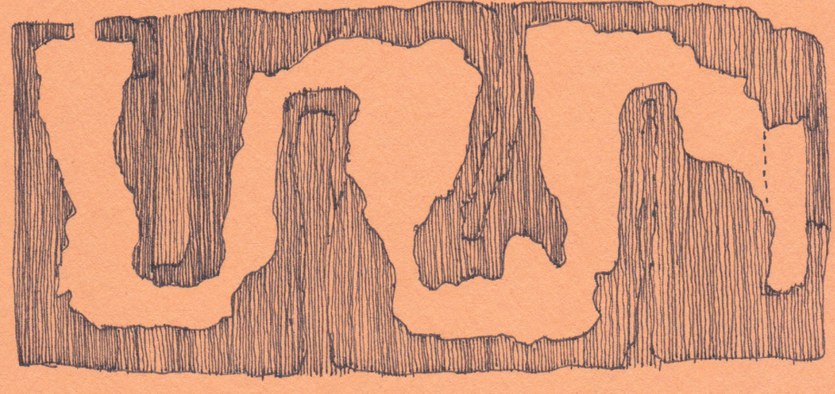
As you walk with me through these light-drenched ruins, let me tell you about my name. Be aware that I am not sure anymore, but these rooms were all once mine. I reign in this holy land of a broken and shrunken memory. Waterless and thirsty like this deserted courtyard of dust, let me show you the entrance, the exit, the gate and the hearth of all I just told you. Right here in the middle, this open sky was once an undulating, silent mirror. See this square I am drawing? This is the well, the piscina and the baptismal font for names to emerge, afloat.[71] Since every cloister has a well, ours is a portion of open air, for rain to wash off the scars and wounds of muttering, dry lips. But perhaps, dear friend, my name intrigues you.

When I told you at the very beginning that some houses had niches left empty for a purpose, empty tombs for a reason, empty arches near cellars and hollow beams near lanterns too, I was wrong. However, my error is what allowed for this story to be told.

So, you are reading for the first time some text you do not remember at all. Not in the self-explanatory shape of a memo adorned with indications but a different text altogether: wrapped in fiction so as to trick you into reading it, from end to beginning and, even more, structured so as to be remembered. Perhaps it is the written version of a piece of vernacular architecture, functional and inseparable from its own landscape.[72]







Circumscribing a hole and the text being a marginal note of another, absent and larger, like the backbone of an animal formerly there but sucked out from this plane by time and dust, leaving but a drawing of its former configuration for us to read and fill/feel the gaps in a constant struggle to remain erect, high above the ground, interpreting the floor plan in front of us, predicting the past.

LEARN, OR RATHER, FORGET

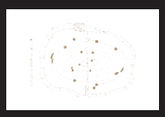
This could be more or less the sequence: the exit and the table, the table and the juggler, the objects on the table, and the hand drawing, and still: how to start moving through the house alongside dementia, entering the first room and noticing the plaster floors and attics and the dynamic of recollection, and somehow the emblem, the coat of arms, the tools and the freemasonry.[73] The link to the next room goes back to the table and the idea of drawing an S after S after S, and there hides the chimney flue, running under the floor, and also the Romans and the deposit, the amulet and the not knowing and from there we go back to the table and the juggler but how to jump into the gate and its escutcheon and so forth? Perhaps with a card from Calvino, or an artwork.[74]

MOTTO

EACH BOOK IS ALSO THE SUM OF THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS IT OCCASIONS.
GEORGES BATAILLE, ON NIETZSCHE[75]



KEY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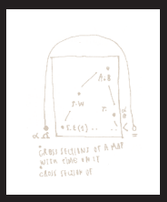
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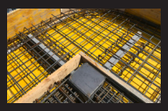
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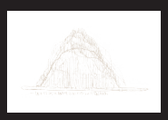
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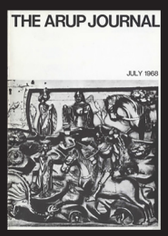

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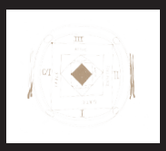
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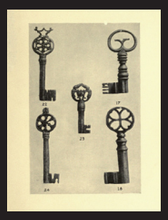
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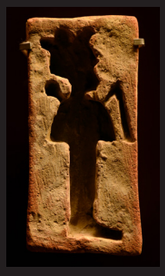
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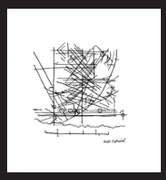
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1
Map of the Thesis as a Chart of Discontinuities, 2019. 24x28 cm, ink on paper. From the author.

2
Diagram from the author, 2019.

3
Capture from Maya Deren, At Land (1944) min 3:45 in Masterworks of American Avant-Garde Experimental Film. DVD, 2015.

4
Le Corbusier sculpting in sand on Barnes Hole Beach, 1950. From Gordon, Alastair. Weekend Utopia: Modern Living in the Hamptons. Princeton Architectural Press, 2001.

5
Le Corbusier working on sand casting with the Nivola children on Barnes Hole Beach, 1950 from Gordon, Alastair. Weekend Utopia: Modern Living in the Hamptons. Princeton Architectural Press, 2001

6
Cantoras del Ramo de Navidad de San Martin de los Herreros. Image by Joaquín Díaz. From “Revista De Folklore." Revista De Dialectología Y Tradiciones Populares 410, no. 1 (2016): 59.

7
Corral del Aire, 2107. Photography from the author. 86x108mm Fuji Instax Wide film

8
Diagram from the author, 2019.

9
30-feet diameter Hezilo chandelier at St. Michael´s (HiIdesheim) symbolizing the heavenly Jerusalem, 1070. From Brooke, Christopher, and Joan Evans. The Flowering of the Middle Ages. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985.P49.

10
Lintel of a church with hand-drawn chalk inscription, Madrid, 2018. Image from the author

11
Goosen van Vreeswijk, Cooperplate from De Roode Leeuw, 1674, Amsterdam. Sold by Pieter Arentz, bookseller in Beurs /straat, at the Three Turnips, 1672. Featured in The Golden Game. (Klossowski de Rola, 1988).

12
Emblema VIII. Accpe ovum & igneo percute gladio. Engraving by Johan Theodor de Bry and published by Michael Maier, in Atalanta Fugiens, 1618. Frankfurt 1618. Featured in The Golden Game. (Klosowski de Rola, 1988).

13
A page from Calvino´s The Castle of Crossed Destinies (1969) where tales are told trough cards in line. Visconti-Sforza deck illustrated. From Calvino, Italo. The Castle of Crossed Destinies. (London: Vintage Books, 1969)

14
On-going construction for a sunglasses distributor headquarters. Málaga 2019, from the author.

15
Limestone flooring detail at Corral del Aire, 2017. Aranda de Duero,2018. Image from the author

16
Claudio Arrau about to enter a concert. From “The Fragile Genius of a Virtuoso”, LIFE, 25 August 1972, New York, 49-56.

17
Gerrit Rietveld holding a model of his pavilion for Park Sonsbeek, 1955. Photographer unknown.

18
Alberto Giacometti, Project for a Passageway (Maquette), 1930-1931, plaster, 16x126x42cm. Kunsthaus Zürich, Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung. Image courtesy Kunsthaus Zürich, Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung

19
Head of the prophet Jeremiah , from a pilar of the portal of St Pierre at Moissac, 1130-1135. From Brooke, Christopher, and Joan Evans. The Flowering of the Middle Ages. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985. p260.

20
Diagram from the author depicting a votive deposit under the first step of a folk house, 2019.

21
Diagram from the author depicting an elephant inside a hat under a mountain of dust reading: Let us talk us though it existed, 2019.

22
Arup Journal cover from Jul7 1968. Ove, Arup, amp, Partners, and Partnership Ove Arup. "The Arup Journal." Arup j. (1968).

23
Wooden tracing boards for the first degree, hand-painted by J.Bowring. From MacNulty, W. Kirk. Freemasonry: a journey through ritual and symbol. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

24
Le Bateleur / The Juggler. Card from the Marseille (Camoin/ Jodorowsky) deck. Illustrator unknown.

25
Floor Cloth, c. 1804, on permanent loan from the Lodge of Hope, No.43310.

26
Author´s ink on coloured newsprint. 30x24cm, 2019. Image from the author

27
Soul house in the cover of the British School Of Archaeology In Egypt And Egyptian Research Account Thirteenth Year, 1907 Gizeh And Rifeh By Flinders Petrie, W. 1111. London, 1907.

28
Magic Diagram and Mirror of Ink, 1836. From "http://timea.rice.edu/"Travelers in the Middle East Archive (TIMEA). Last access: October 10, 2019."https://hdl.handle.net/1911/10095"https://hdlhandle.net/1911/10095

29
Facundus, New Jerusalem (Apoc. XXI), 1047, illuminated manuscript, 280 x 250 mm. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional. Public domain image https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:B_Facundus_253v.jpg

30
Ruined pigeon house or columbarium in Castile. Image in the public domain.

31
Page with and inscribed figurine from Feldt, Laura Monstrous figurines from Mesopotamia, in Boschung, Dietrich editor, and Jan N. editor Bremmer. The Materiality of Magic / Edited by Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer. Paderborn : Wilhelm Fink, [2015], 2015.

32
Page depicting medieval iron keys from: Rejería of the Spanish Renaissance: A Collection of Photographs and Measured Drawings, with Descriptive Text by Arthur Byne and Mildred Stapley. Hispanic Society of, America. New York: The De Vinne Press, 1914.

33
Osiris bed, 450 - 300 BC, from Upper Egypt (Gabbanat el-Gouroud), clay. Musée des Confluences. Last access: October 10, 2019 "https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Osiris_bed_Musée_des_Confluences_18102015_1.jpg"https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Osiris_bed_Mus%C3%A9e_des_Confluences_18102015_1.jpg

34
Fra Angelico, Entombment of Christ, 1438-40, pintura sobre madera, 37,9 x 46,6 cm. Sammlung Pinakotheke. Last access: October 10, 2019. "https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/en/artist/fra-angelico/grablegung-christi" https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/en/artist/fra-angelico/grablegung-christi

35
Drawing from the author after Wells Cathedral tracing floor. 2019, 24x28cm Ink on paper.

36
House in Adrada (Ribera del Duero, Spain) with circular ornamentation of difficult interpretation. From Martín Criado, Arturo. La ornamentación en la arquitectura tradicional de la Ribera del Duero Valladolid: Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2008, 1988

37
Facundus, Babylon´s Judgment (Apoc. XVIII), 1047, illuminated manuscript, 29.7 x 24.0 cm, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional. Public domain image, accessed October 10, 2019 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:B_Facundus_233vd%C3%A9t.jpg

38
Gate of church in Miñón, Burgos. From Zaragoza, Teresa. Monumentos Españoles: Catálogo De Los Declarados Histórico-Artísticos 1844-1953. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes y Archivos, 1984. Image courtesy National Monuments Library, Burgos.

39
Author´s sketch for a chimney, 2015. Image from the author.

40
Plan of the Mosque in Ib Tulum Cairo with a spiral minaret, 9th century (Abasyd period). From: Brooke, Christopher, and Joan Evans. The Flowering of the Middle Ages. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985. P125.

41
From the author. Map of the Thesis as a square courtyard, 2019. 24x28cm Ink on paper.

42
Mosque in Ib Tulum Cairo with a spiral minaret, 9th century (Abasyd period). From: Brooke, Christopher, and Joan Evans. The Flowering of the Middle Ages. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985. P125.

43
Eustasio Villanueva, Arch in Quintanilla de las Viñas Church, Burgos (Spain). Courtesy Villanueva Archive, Burgos (Spain).

44
Fired clay offering tray 'soul-house', Egypt, 12th Dynasty. British Museum Collection. Image courtesy British Museum.

45
Inscription in fresh concrete as a charm to be placed under the first step of limestone in a villa. Castille. Image from the author, 2018.

46
A diagram on watercolour and ink on canvas. 30X24cm, 2019. Image from the author

47
Diagram from the author, 2019.

48
Author´s ink on coloured newsprint. 30X24cm, 2019. Image from the author

49
Pigeon house or columbarium in Castile. Image in the public domain.

50
(Maya Deren looks at the reader from the other side of the mirror and says Farewell.) Maya Deren, Still from the experimental 1943 short film "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meshes_of_the_Afternoon"Meshes of the Afternoon. Public domain image. Last access: October 11, 2019

NOTES

ABOUT THE NATURE OF THIS NOTES.

As an extension and insight into the text, this endnotes follow the same logic of the aforementioned and insist in not fully knowing, mobilize the idea of uncertainty and, – instead of bringing certainties and answers – point to other fields and places (books, to say) where to continue searching and expanding curiosity. Hence, the lack of specificity and the multiplicity ofreferences per note.

1
Jessica Morgan and Catherine Wood, The World as a Stage (London: Tate Publishing; 2007). Alasdair Hopwood. The World as a Stage, Art Review, no. 18 (2008): 108-09.

2
The idea of a narrator embodying multiple voices as a sum of memories, times and spaces links in part with the fragmented memory in both Halbwachs and Ricoeur, which led me to arrange a sort of collective narrator. Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory (Chicag: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Paul Ricoeur, Memory, History, Forgetting (London: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Paul Ricoeur, Memory, History, Forgetting (London: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

3
Eric Partridge, Origins: a Short Etimological Dictionary of Modern English (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) p.645

4
One of the practices on early onset Dementia is through the use of baby dolls, where both patient and carer pretend a baby is visiting the patient in order to arise affects and wellbeing. However, some relatives find this troubling as they conceived this as cheating even though it probes useful for the emotions are real in any case. This could be expanded in the following readings: Anne Davis Basting, "Creative Storytelling and Self-Expression among People with Dementia", in Thinking About Dementia. Culture, Loss, and the Anthropology of Senility, (ed.) Annette Leibing and Lawrence Cohen (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 180-94.

John Killick, Dementia Positive: A Handbook Based on Lived Experiences For Everyone Wishing to Improve the Lives of Those with Dementia (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2014).

5
Mobilizing the term Dementia out of the scientific scope and using it as a creative pattern, instead of a destructive one, by inverting its term: reaching through imagination into loss and forgetfulness in order to look at pre-modern ways of looking at objects and daily crafts in relation to an art practice.

6
Frances A. Yates, The Art Of Memory (London: Pimlico, 1988)

Jonathan Dermot Spence, The Memory Palace Of Matteo Ricci (New York: Penguin Books, 1985).

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, Institutio Oratoria, (ed.) Tobias Reinhardt and Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

7
Robert Chenciner, Alex Binnie, Gabib Ismailov, and Magomedkhan Magom Edkhanov, Tattooed Mountain Women And Spoon Boxes Of Daghestan. (London: Bennett & Bloom, 2006).

8
Wim Dekkers,"Dwelling, House And Home: Towards A Home-Led Perspective On Dementia Care", in Medicine, Health Care And Philosophy, n. 4 (2016): 291-300. doi:10.1007/s11019-011-9307-2.

9
Günther Binding, Medieval Building Techniques (Stroud: Tempus, 2004).

Nigel Hiscock, The Wise Master Builder: Platonic Geometry in Plans of Medieval Abbeys and Cathedrals (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

10
I found this very accessible and detailed book on Dementia for the general public key for gaining common knowledge on the manifestations of the many-faces illness:

John Killick, Dementia Positive. For Everyone Wishing to Improve the Lives of Those with Dementia (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2014).

11
Juhani Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses (Chichester: Wiley, 2012), 29.

12
For Benjamin points at fabrics for compositional reasons when he states: Work on good prose has three steps: a musical phase when it is composed, an architectonic one when it is built, and a textile one when it is woven

Walter Benjamin, One-way street and other writings (London: Penguin, 2009), 455.

13
Dawn Ades, Simon Baker, Fiona Bradley, and Gallery Hayward, Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents (London: Haywood Gallery, 2006)

14
A sense of meandering could find a cinematic explanation on Chris Marker´s Sans Soleilwhere documentary and fiction are interwoven. Sans Soleil. Directed by Chris Marker- 1983. France: Argos Films, 1993. 35mm. Film.

15
I found the teachings of Spanish architects Tuñón and Mansilla, synthesized in an essay very interesting regarding drawing as an exploration of thought. See:

Javier Fco. Raposo Grau, Mariasun Salgado De La Rosa, and Belén Butragueño Díaz – Guerra, "Conversando Con...Emilio Tuñón (Parte I): Dibujar Para Entender. El Dibujo Como Medio De Análisis Y Conocimiento"/ "In Conversation With... Emilio Tuñón (Part 1): Drawing to Understand" , in Drawing as a Means of Analysis and Knowledge. [In spa; eng] no. 32 (2018). https://doi.org/10.4995/ega.2018.9802.

16
We preserve memories of each epoch in our lives, and these are continually reproduced; through them, as by a continual relationship, a sense of our identity is perpetuated. But precisely because these memories are repetitions, because they are successively engaged in very different system of notions, at different periods of our lives, they have lost the form and the appearance they once had. They are not intact vertebra of fossil animals which would in themselves permit reconstruction of the entities of which they were once a part. One should rather compare them to those stones one finds fitted in certain Roman houses, which have been used as materials in very ancient buildings: their antiquity cannot be established by their appearance but only by the fact that they still show the effaced vestiges of old characters… Maurice Halbwachs and Lewis A. Coser, On Collective Memory (Heritage of Sociology Series) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 47.

17
The knowledge that I refer to here is a folk knowledge, one pre-modern, anterior to the arrival of harvesting machines that threw hordes of inhabitants into cities. Only in the 50´s and almost 60s mechanization arrived to the immense cereal fields of the plateau and implied that hundred workers (meaning hundred families) became redundant per machine in the harvesting. This I know from my grandfather Felix Pardo-Pardo who was a judge of the peace back then and man of letters as well as a farmer himself. He is buried in that 18-inhabitant village.

18
Stanislas Klossowski De Rola, TheGolden Game, Alchemical Engravings of the Seventeenth Century (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988).

19
Edward William Lane, An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians written in Egypt During the Years 1833-35 (London: East-West Publications, 1), 274.

20
Adrian Wilson and Joyce Lancaster Wilson, A Medieval Mirror: Speculum Humanae Salvationis 1324-1500 (Berkley: Berkley University of California, 1985).

Ian Mackenzie, "Note on Swan, John - the Authorship of 'Speculum Mundi' and Other Works Attributed to Him", in Notes Queries, no. 2 (1994): 161-65.

Rebecca Zorach and Nina Dubin, The Virtual Tourist in Renaissance Rome: Printing and Collecting the Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae (Chicago: Joseph Regenstein Library, 2008).

21
We find the following in The Flowering of the Middles Ages: It is in fact, very likely that the disappearance of most early constructional drawings is due to their having been traced on the ground or on a floor-slab of plaster made for the purpose. After such drawings would be obliterated, though the plaster floors used for the purpose actually survive at Wells and York cathedrals, abd an important one was in use at Strasbourgh until the 18thcentury. Christopher Brooke and Joan Evans, The Flowering of the Middle Ages (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 15.

This idea is also explored in: Javier Alvarado Planas, Heráldica, Simbolismo y Usos Tradicionales De Las Corporaciones De Oficio: Las Marcas De Canteros (Madrid: Instituto Salazar y Castro, 2009).

22
W. Kirk MacNulty, Freemasonry: A Journey Through Ritual and Symbol (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 18.

Also:
Isabel Cooper-Oakley, Masonry and Medieval Mysticism: Traces of a Hidden Tradition (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1977).

23
I could point here to Bachelard but I find Jung's castle as a more appealing building in growth and materic as a physical explanation rather than Bachelard's a bit nostalgic ruminations, but anyway here are hints to both: Vaughan Hart, "Carl Jung's Alchemical Tower at Bollingen", in RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics, no. 25 (1994): 36-50.
Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994).

Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics Of Reverie, ed. Daniel Russell (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010)

24
Mary Carruthers, The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
Mary Carruthers, The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

25
Growth in a sense of progression, of the development of a compartmentalized theory as in the branches and trunk and leaves of a tree, sustained by also compartmentalized roots.

26
I explored this idea on a previous essay On Distraction in which by means of navigation, proximity and looking at one thing as a time, one could set a parallelism between those three (memory diagrams, alchemical emblems and tarot cards) and exhibitions, which at least the ones with installations were navigated with the body in order to extract a meaning not necessarily implied, hosted in there but elsewhere.
De las Heras-Pardo, Diego, On Distraction., MA Painting Dissertation. Royal College of Art, London.2014

27
Roger Kahn, "The Fragile Genius of a Virtuoso", in LIFE, 25 August (New York, 1972): 49-56.

28
Joseph Horowitz, Conversazioni con Arrau, (ed.) Claudio Arrau (Milano: Mondadori, 1984), 54..

29
James Putnam, Art and Artifact: The Museum as Medium (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 114.

30
Les Blank and Jamen Bogan, Burden of dreams: screenplay, journals, reviews, photographs (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1984), 112- 114.

31
Eric Partridge, Origins: a Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 715.

32
The Celestial Jerusalem as an ideal of Medieval Christianity was rather usually depicted in the centre of the world as in: René Huyghe, "Art and Mankind", in Larousse Encyclopedia of Byzantine and Medieval Art (Feltham: Hamlyn, 1968).

33
Aldo Rossi, The Architecture of the City (Cambridge: MIT, 1982)

34
A further explanation on the idea of the loci and the memory of a place can be found in: Sébastien Marot, Sub-Urbanism and the Art of Memory (London: Architectural Association, 2003), 32.

35
Joan Didion, The White Album (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979).

36
Medieval constructions. Also, vernacular buildings. Also, some Spanish book on construction.
Ronald W. Brunskill, Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture (London: Faber and Faber, 1987)
Binding, Günther, Medieval Building Techniques (Stroud: Tempus, 2004).

37
Rammed earth and adobe constructions in Castille: once the roof collapses water makes its way erasing and washing away mud walls

38
Alexander Girard, Doris Francis and Art Museum of International Folk, Faith and Transformation: Votive Offerings and Amulets from the Alexander Girard Collection (New Mexico: Museum of New Mexico, 2007), 131.

39
Ralph Merrifield, The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic (London: Batsford, 1987), 128-131.

40
Alexandra Sofroniew, Household Gods: Private Devotion in Ancient Greece and Rome (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015).

41
Annies van den Hoek, Denis Feissel and John Herrmann, "The Magic of Portable Inscriptions", in The Materiality of Magic, Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer (ed.) (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015).

42
Jean Genet, Un Chant D'amour (London : British Film Institute, 2003). Video-recording.

43
Laura Feldt, "Monstrous figurines from Mesopotamia: textuality, spatiality and materiality in rituals and incantations for the protection of houses in first-millennium As s ur," in The Materiality of Magic, Dietrich Boschung and Jan Bremmer (ed)(Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015), 79-89.

44
A comprehensive survey on amulets including many talismans, amulets and baby items for protection against evil eye can be accessed now online: Carmen Baroja, Trabajos y materiales del Museo del Pueblo Español (Catálogo de la colección de amuletos) (Madrid: Museo del Pueblo Español, 1945), digital edition, 2011. https://en.calameo.com/read/001044456d1e208778a89

45
Christopher A. Faraone, "Inscribed Greek Thunderstones as House- and Body-Amulets in Roman Imperial Times", in Kernos, no. 27 (2014): 257-84. Accessed 11 May 2019. https://doi.org/10.4000kernos.2283.

46
Apotropaic appears defined as: Having or reputed to have the power of averting evil influence or ill luck. From: Oxford English Dictionary, Department. OED news (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

47

Vernacular as well as non-pedigreed and anonymously made, indigenous, locally sourced and collectively erected, looked after. Bernard Rudofsky, Architecture without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture, (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 226.

48
The main book on vernacular ornamentation in Castile that I have been consulting is the very proficient Arturo Martín Criado, La ornamentación en la arquitectura tradicional de la Ribera del Duero (Valladolid: Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2008).

49
Young Le Corbusier interest in Ornamentation and the vernacular house could be explored further in Alina Alexandra Payne, From Ornament to Object: Genealogies of Architectural Modernism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 18.

50
Sergio Moya, "Casa, Hogar y Objetos Relacionais: Resistencias al Objeto como Mercancía en la Obra de Lygia Clark", in Cuadernos de Literatura , no. 43 (2018): 54. https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.cl22-43.caho.

Lygia Clark and Yve-Alain Bois, "Nostalgia of the Body", in October, 69 (1994): 85.

Lygia Clark, Cornelia H. Butler, Luis Pérez Oramas, Antonio Sergio Bessa, Frederico Oliveira Coelho, Eleonora Fabião, Briony Fer (et al), Lygia Clark: The Abandonment of Art, 1948-1988 (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2014).

51
On Contagion Magic (Definition) see also: Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer, The Materiality of Magic (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015).

Mary C. Beaudry and Dan Hicks, The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199218714.001.0001.

52
That is the list of things I would see if I would revisit my grandparents' house, now non-existent in Quintanilla Somuñó, Burgos, where my mother comes from.

53
Juhani Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses (Chichester: Wiley, 2012), 19.

"Architecture is our primary instrument in relating as with space and time, and giving these dimensions of human nature. It domesticated limitless space and endless time to be tolerated, inhabited and understood by humankind. As a consequence of this interdependence of space and time, the dialectics of external and internal space, physical and spiritual, material and mental, unconscious and conscious priorities concerning the senses as well as their relative roles and interactions, have an essential impact on the nature of the art and architecture."

54
John Taylor and George Washington, The Bible. Early American Imprints. First Series, no. 33410 (Philadelphia: Printed for W. Jones, no. 30, N. Fourth St., 1798).

55
Craft and tangibility in Psalm 139 could find a contemporary counterpart in Sennett's the Craftsman Richard Sennett, The Craftsman, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008). Ps. 139: 13-16, The Bible (New Revised Standard Edition, 1989)

56
Alberto Giacometti Project of a Passageway, 1930 plaster 6 5/16 x 49 5/8 x 16 9/16 in. Laurie Wilson, Alberto Giacometti: Myth, Magic, and the Man (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). David Sylvester, Looking at Giacometti (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994).

57
mid 17th century: from Latin incubat- 'lain on', from the verb incubare, from in-'upon' + cubare'to lie'.

58
Allen Ginsberg, Howl, Kaddish and Other Poems (London: Penguin, 2009).

59
Jean Genet, Un Chant D'amour (London : British Film Institute, 2003). Video-recording.

60
Arthur Byne and Mildred Stapley (ed.), Rejería of the Spanish Renaissance: A Collection of Photographs and Measured Drawings, (New York: The De Vinne Press, 1914).

61
Ray Loriga, Tokyo Doesn´t Love Us Anymore, translated from the Spanish by John King (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2003).

62
Rationality and communication in dementia care.John Killick, Dementia Positive. A Handbook Based on Lived Experiences: For Everyone Wishing to Improve the Lives of Those with Dementia, (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2014).

Annette Leibing and Lawrence Cohen, Thinking About Dementia Culture, Loss, and the Anthropology of Senility (Rutgers University Press, 2006). doi:10.2307/j.ctt5hjbhp. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5hjbhp.

63
Arnold Van Gennep, The Rites of Passage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960).

64
Maya Deren, An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film (New York: Alicat Book Shop Press, 1946).

65
Emma R. Wood, Paul A. Dudchenko and Thomas Wolbers, Spatial Memory- a Unique Window into Healthy and Pathological Ageing (Frontiers Media SA, 2015), 96.

66
The Shackler Library in Oxford as an Annex into the Ashmolean Museum and certainly hosting a good portion of Art Books from the Museum Collection

67
I might have dreamed this and noted that down. Uncertain again.

68
I am drawing here from experience, not sure how heavy any of the aforementioned are, just guessing.

69
For the term fabrication, sees: Eric Partridge, Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), 195.

70
Good many examples of early Christian ground level excavated baptismal piles can be found again in The Flowering of the Middle ages. Christopher Brooke and Joan Evans, The Flowering of the Middle Ages (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985).

Also the configuration of courtyards, patios and water in courtyards: Stephen Kite, The Courtyard and the Square (London: Emap Limited, 2014).

Arthur Byne and Mildred Stapley, afterwards Byne, Provincial Houses in Spain. (New York: William Helburn, 1925)
.
Koji Kuwakino, The Italian 16th Century Garden as a site for Researching Natural History: A study on the ideal garden project of Agostino del Riccio (1541-98), Journal of Architecture and Planning, February 04, 2017, online. https://doi.org/10.3130/aija.66.301_1, ttps://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/aija/66/540/66_KJ00004226067/_article/-char/en,

71
Rudofsky´s point at the inseparability of landscape, weather and construction in: Bernard Rudofsky, The Prodigious Builders: Notes toward a Natural History of Architecture with Special Regard to Those Species That Are Traditionally Neglected or Downright Ignored (London: Secker and Warburg, 1977). Also in Mar Loren Méndez and Daniel Pinzón Ayala, "Proceso De Ideación De La Casa Rudofsky, Frigiliana, El Dibujo En La Dimensión Patrimonial De La Obra Arquitectónica", in Frigiliana Heritage Value of Its Graphic Documentation, 19, no. 23 (2014). HYPERLINK "https://doi.org/10.4995/ega.2014.2182"https://doi.org/10.4995/ega.2014.2182.

72
This publication explores in depth the impact of Dementia and ageing on spatial orientation and navigation: Emma R. Wood, Paul A. Dudchenko and Thomas Wolbers, Spatial Memory- a Unique Window into Healthy and Pathological Ageing (Frontiers Media SA, 2015), 96.

73
Italo Calvino, The Castle of Crossed Destinies, ed. William Weaver (London: Secker and Warburg, 1977), 95.

74
Georges Bataille, On Nietzsche , translated and with an introduction by Stuart Kendall (Albany: SUNY Press, 2015).

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Angelova, Lidiya. *Phenomenology of Home.* Scholar Commons, 2010.

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Artaud, Antonin. *Antonin Artaud: Dessins Et Portraits.* Edited by Paule Thévenin and Jacques Derrida. Paris: Gallimard, 1986.
——— *50 Drawings to Murder Magic.* Edited with a Preface by Évelyne Grossman; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. In *Fifty Drawings to Murder Magic.* Edited by Evelyne Grossman and Donald Nicholson-Smith. London: Seagull Books, 2008.

Arzy, S., S. Collette, S. Ionta, E. Fornari, and O. Blanke. "Subjective Mental Time: The Functional Architecture of Projecting the Self to Past and Future". *The European journal of neuroscience.* 30, no. 10 (2009): 2009-17.

Aylmer, G. E., and Reginald Cant. *A History of York Minster.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.

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This publication presents a set of reflections in object and textual form on some questions of dwelling, memory and the experience of movement within architectural space. The research builds upon an older tradition of investigation into the phenomena of remembering and forgetting in the pre-enlightenment world.

The piece is structured around the three figures of *the escutcheon*, *the floor-cloth*, and *the hearth*. Each of these figures opens up particular ways of moving between and around elements of a dwelling.