



André Masson—Massacres. Repr. *Le Minotaure*. Breton. Skira. 1933. The moments in dance where it is both fight and embrace: interminably indeterminate.

Metalepsis can be characteristically defined as the equivalent of the *pun* in imagery. That is, something happening from imagery that intervenes and chases a linguistic content onwards, till it becomes entangled with the development of a situation. The dedication to a situation in progress may work a shift in its performance; not seeking visibility—because we are absorbed—it cloaks a special class of invisibility, allied with forces of events outside our reach. Becoming the centre of everything happening, from a position of marginality: transparency as a form of darkness.

We know this from Žižek's observation from Metzinger in the *Parallax view* (2006): that transparency is a special class of darkness, because we see *through* it. If we apply this to dance-movement it is clear that only *part* of dance is about exposure: the visibility on stage before an audience is not what it is all about. Seeking to move and behave as though invisible to an the audience, is a significant part of traditional stage-work. But when we transport this kind of transparency to into a situation *without* a stage—and a regular audience—other aspects emerge. For instance, entering un/wittingly in league with the 3rd mover (overstepping its precincts).



Marlene in front wearing Emilie on her T-shirt. Emilie at the back wearing Marlene on her T-shirt. They are each other's "stowaway" and "captains". Caught in the act. Photo: Fie Dam Mygind.

07.06.2023

We may have the idea that we are alone in nature. But everything around us is alerted to our presence: though it may not come up with original ideas, it reads *us happening*. The more we think ourselves inconspicuous the more we enter in league with the per-formative reader, or 3rd mover. At times we can overstep an invisible barrier, past which we blend in with the 3rd mover: we partake of the situation from behind the scenes. Not as a spectator, but a stowaway *en route* to be spotted and caught by the captain.

The proliferation of *puns* in this between-space is typical of the kind of reversibility of which Henri Bergson's approach to *déjà vu* is a case in point. In the essay *Memory of the present and false recognition* he has sufficient research to propose a theory of *déjà vu* based on the existence of two

image-reels that are at work in human beings at all times. The reel of *actual* images (the kind that link one moment to the next). The reel of *virtual* images (they float up after the fact). Though the latter are recorded in parallel to the actual images, they do not appear in the present tense, but with a load of the past but also lacking closure and completion: yet to come. *Never* in sync.

Under conditions of e.g. *fatigue* it happens that the virtual image-reel acquires precedent *over* the actual image-reel, and appears on the *forefront* of real time: this is how Bergson explains *déjà vu*. The sense that an ongoing situation has happened *before*. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine if it has (for hours). At that time, in the future/past it would have almost happened. It is *virtual*. Crossing onto the precincts of the 3rd mover, follows a similar principle: what is normally at the back is *now* at the front (or just about to): i.e. without catching fully up with the present.

The 3rd mover is organised in such a way that it both searches *and* escapes itself: which is why it also can be called a *performative reader*. And why the production of puns in the *virtual meanwhile* will be in lateral drift, and often quite generative. Here the body is not so much a vehicle as it is under friendly attack. It is assailed by the profusion of emergent/drifted puns. And is perplexed by it, because it normally does not happen. Like *déjà vu*, but different from it because it *less* mental and *more* physical. If a trick, it is not played on the mind but on the *body*. It is above all *fictional*.

It will be told. But it does *not* start as a story: it starts with a *causal chain* in which we become *communicatively* involved (with/out our consent). But at first we are unable to respond. Because it starts with bafflement. We are as struck with lightning. [It wants to be told, however](#). And when we through considerable labour manage to do so, this in itself an act of *naming*. The relation between a communicative chain of this type and the narrative is *not* the same as between a *thing* and a *word*. Because it has never before been told. It also will typically involve names of *people*.

People remember, renamed, redeemed. What is interesting from the vantage point of *semiotics*, is that the *communicative chain* will invent signs *before* language: at first we have *no* language for it. Because metalepsis is the *sign* of something *becoming*, and of *something* becoming *sign*. Which is why it is reasonable to assume that the 3rd mover is a pre-semiotic entity: a *fulcrum* where events, actions and their intermedia become *intra-active*, *superposed* and *entangled*. That is *quantum mechanics* formulated in the physical/bodily realm: perhaps it is the essence of dance.

Because if it is the fulcrum of the becoming sign/sign of becoming what we are dealing with is a form of *assignment*. Nothing can be assumed. Everything is assigned. This is the nature of the communicative chain as it manifests itself generally. Assignments of this kind are *never* fully solved, they are *always* anticipated and postponed: the solution of an assignment will produce a *new* assignment, and the problem under query will be one set on a *journey*. In some ways, it is a testimony that the universe is alive. When the story is ready to be told—after the initial labour—most people will agree that it is a real story. Not made up. Children can spot them immediately.



Henri Bergson. Author of the essay *Memory of the presence and false recognition* (1908). It was published in English translation by Bloomsbury academic in 2002.

Communicative chains therefore are spontaneous rites of passage, initiating us on the relation between *the world as it is* and *story*. This is specifically why fiction cannot be conflated with illusion. Illusion is a world onto itself that contains its own reality. While fiction sets in motion in which we will be marked by the world. The fictional process will reveal to us things of which we were previously ignorant. It will not stop at coincidence, but will go beyond to the recesses of the unconscious and history. A striking example of this approach was Surrealism (cf, the print by André Masson).

The inability to separate the embrace and the kill, transports human being unto a different realm. From the comfort zone to the contact zone. From conscious voluntary action to being chased up by the world. Metalepsis is *political* because it is the trope of mobilisation. It is not about imagination. Because it goes beyond our wildest imagination. And, as we learn to tell, we will learn to keep our countenance in a new way. Simply because reality surpasses our imagination. It is not pleasant. But it is compelling in that we are here for this reason: to endure it and tell it, mobilising.