



**G. Paolini, *L'autore che credeva di esistere*, Milan: Johan & Levi editore, 2012.**

The "Preface" and a three-part text by the author (pp. 7-37) titled "The Importance of Being Earnest", "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Right You Are! (If You Think So)", is followed by an exhaustive series of "Notes" (pp. 39-225), consisting of over one hundred plates specially created for the occasion, alternated with short texts by Rachele Ferrario, Elena Volpato, Sabina D'Angelosante, Antonella Soldaini, Bettina Della Casa, Maddalena Disch, Mariano Boggia, Stefano Tedeschi and Rossana Silvia Pecorara. The "Notes", divided into nine sections, which correspond to the references from [1] to [9] indicated in the author's text, represent a visual context for the topics in question. The volume ends with "Livre(s) de chevet", a list of books chosen by Paolini from his personal library.

PREFACE

The issue of this book coincides, in a certain sense, with my exiting the scene. After all, I've always avoided associating my person with the author's identity in the works done in my name, visual or editorial. Who, over time, has entrusted them to exhibitions or in print is therefore someone (like myself) who in name has surely undersigned and authenticated without, however, producing the proof of a tried and true existence.

On the other hand, putting oneself out in direct contact with the world is a condition futile to verify: the author who would wish to reflect and interpret reality realizes, sooner or later, that there's an impediment due to the obvious impossibility of doing so in "real time". The first step he'll try to accomplish in the work registers the inevitable, the fatal delay regarding things, because of the insurmountable distance between the self and the world. Even the photograph's shot fails, it "dies" in the same moment that the photographer believes he has captured the scene before his eyes.

The author abdicates, renounces his name and the indecent proposals that magnify his social role (or non-role). He observes the rule that attributes primary and absolute value to the work, to the same dynasty that precedes it in time and to that directly after it.

It is therefore imperative to liberate the language of submission and the state of being operative, functional ... to understand it as transitive. The "excommunication" concerns exactly communication, the direct speech from author to spectator, the "heresy" practiced by the artist who is set in transmitting something of himself or of the world he believes in and to which he says he belongs.

Having convinced ourselves in this way, we can then pass from the actual emptiness to the absence of law, to the severe but also legitimate order of silence to turn our sights elsewhere, while waiting for the image.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

"I'm indifferent as to the point where I should begin; it's there, that I'll make my way back."

Parmenides

To those, to those few who were looking for an explanation about my prolonged silence, I'll confide – even without wanting to – that I think I sent some signals which probably got lost in the everyday buzz of things.

My state of health is, anyway, fair and this isn't the reason for a certain abstinence, which is typical of my (in)activity in this period. Beyond that, I think I've always "soldiered" on like an extra member, but not an illicit one, in the troop of Bartleby and the "authors of No". "I would prefer not to" ... I too, following the footsteps of Bartleby

the Scrivener, would rather renounce making pronouncements. Melville's phrase seems to echo discretion, the modesty of expressing oneself ... For sure, the age of seventy – reached in a non-traumatic manner, but also not unconsciously – puts a stop to chasing after the years that once were.

However, I repeat, it isn't this that has induced me to reflect and view the empty and unexpected interval among the dense and continuous succession of solo exhibitions, shows that began in 1964 and reach to 2010, but no further. It's simply that something has shifted or maybe has been upturned, if not in my habits, then in my working methods. A time of reckoning? Certainly not: it would be presumptuous to think that Time would be willing to expend even a moment of attention on us, when he's so busy examining himself ... And then how does one set a value and make distinctions for such varying evidence, whether in the active or passive form? Setting to zero, updating the date, this yes: starting again.

For a long time, already in the late Sixties, from the time when the possibility of having solo shows became more frequent and appealing, it was inevitable that the work became ever more related to spaces available for upcoming exhibitions. That is, it surely didn't influence the idea, the how and why of the works in progress, but it prefigured the presence and look in the expected situation.

The artist isn't an explorer, he doesn't aim for Eldorado, he doesn't go out of his way, searching for special effects. Instead, he's more of an archaeologist intent on excavating the subterranean, without any expectations other than being able to insist on the making and unmaking ... Now, I'm here intent on probing "behind closed doors" the eventuality of a work, or even just a mark, a sign can appear, or even disappear, at the same time and in the same place ... it doesn't take into account then, what's taken place up to this point, to extend its existence (the hypothetical eventuality of being perceived) beyond the surface of a table or of a wall, of that table or of that wall which the sign announces. So, the themes, and suggestions that actually occupy me in this phase of my work seem to wander about, without wishing to leave here, to leave my studio, to take one or another direction. Instead they tend to vanish and dissolve, even though they leave an accurate and dutiful archival account.

This time, everything seems destined to come together in a book; not a book-catalogue, as is usually the case, that documents the fulfillment of the usual trajectory (studies for/the works/on exhibition), but, to the contrary, introduces the return (without the outward journey) to the place of origin: here, among these walls of my studio. Besides, if I don't wish to leave the field, get out and go somewhere else, I don't see why I should feel myself compelled into digging on site, to delve into the profound, and lower myself into abysses of the subconscious ... Visions aligned with the surface are more numerous, and, above all, more attractive than those which hide in the subterranean areas of the conscience: maintain a steady forward gaze, without scouring the secret ways of a dark imagination. Why reveal, to just find ourselves where we started off? The past, the hidden, should stay where it is, seeing that the great (or the small) that is still desirable already shines in the well preserved and adequately protected casket of History.

One more thing to confide: immediately after crossing the threshold of a museum, one habitually has an overview, and initially the quantity of pictures on the walls prevails over quality. The frames, conveniently distributed according to the available space, are regularly placed, one next to the other.

I have to confess that it's precisely this that I see and it appeals and satisfies me before I even begin to observe the individual elements that comprise it. The existence (here or elsewhere) of those paintings (those or still others) is the wanted confirmation, effectively the statement of a parallel world, without clutter and without weight – in fact suspended – a measured and silent order in contrast with the organic and chance germination of every natural event. It doesn't matter if we don't arrive and perceive each and every single image. Rather, this is exactly the privilege, the enchantment, the vision to take in: a mental vision for sure, but which vision isn't?

The artist leaves ... abandons something and in leaving everything or nearly everything surrounding him behind, he opens an horizon in the painting which seems absolute. What fascinates him more isn't to have one thing or another appear, but to discover the way in which one or another thing could descend onto the screen of the canvas. Meaning the painting is an apparatus for suggestions, predisposed illusions that create an image that

could or could not exist. Not this thing or this other thing, but a subject that can stand in for all possible subjects, or, to the contrary, anything placed on the plane.

A painting usually appears to us like a completed image, independent, often highlighted by a frame that underscores the material limits of a vision, of a unity separated from the environment where, however, it is found. The image sometimes has an underlying perspective framework which contributes to rendering the likeness of the represented scene, and yet separates it still more from the surrounding physical space.

Another perspective, this time mental or symbolic, brings us to suppose that in a painting other paintings can shine through or exist ... All the paintings of an author (all the paintings of the History of Art) make only one?

Our vision is mobile, precarious; that of the painting – if we wanted to attribute one to it – is fixed, immobile, it doesn't move and it doesn't turn off. Works of art look at us. They are the ones that look at us, and not vice versa. The work doesn't speak, but it sees, it sees us in exactly the moment we think we're seeing it.

Everything, everything that we see and which enters into being a part of the domain of vision derives its origin from "its framing", from the essential step that every object must accomplish in order to be perceived as pure representation. Reality, the physical object flows into the apparatus of perception without calling up the particular consideration that only an individual frame allows for accessing the precious catalog stored in the archives of our memory. It is, therefore, precisely an overview – as I was saying before which reveals the intimate accord between mind and thing.

We have the proof of this right under our eyes: the pages of this volume (yes, volume, writing's spatial extension) are in fact the sum, the summary, of many frames, as many as the pages that constitute it. In their turn, they frame and reproduce as many original documents.

It's precisely because of this that we don't want to enter a museum. We need, however, to be out front, even if we don't have the keys. Allow me this image: an endless crowd (the same figure repeated ad infinitum) halted, still, and quiet surrounding something that we are unable to perceive. Not inside, but at the entranceway of an imaginary museum: a place (or non-place) that can host memories of the artist's past and future. I'm talking about a personal museum (but admittedly impersonal), of the *Œuvres complètes*, of a "universal exhibition" able to focus and evoke, without necessarily being able to show, the work that we now and always are waiting to see.

It's not the first time that I find myself singing the praises of a personal museum, about the place where the works and writings of an artist are grouped almost always in the same studio where the work was carried out. In the case of the artists widely represented by important museums, the works and documents are few, and yet more *present* and evident than in the showcases of big international collections.

In front of the artist's "house" I tend to assume a "devotional" attitude, as for example with the Moreau Museum in Paris, different from the "lay" stance of museum visitor, that is both more relaxing but also less absorbing. Then, as in the case of the Morandi Museum in Bologna, when the works of the resident Artist alternate with works by a guest artist, they're inclined to dialogue with the owner of the house. A little miracle takes place: one passes – so to say – from the "separate eternity" of the Bolognese Master's still lifes to the "comparative continuity" of his works alongside those of another artist ... And if, therefore, the works insert themselves to form a coherent and composite panorama, it's the work (and it's no longer the artist) to occupy the stage and garner the applause during the performance.

If one can't dictate to the heart, memory also deserves respect and measure: we can't overburden it, suffocate it and cut off it's air with facts that, seem new and relevant, but aren't always worthy of being counted as assets ... How many things are just superfluous updates of other things that, always more at risk, would instead deserve adequate protection? What better thing than our memory can ever establish what merits the honor of a place in the catalog and that which absolutely doesn't deserve a place or, however, doesn't get a battlefield promotion?

On 20 November 1978 Giorgio de Chirico did something timely and unrepeatable, just in time to avoid the unrestrained and counterproductive forms of communication which are always more invasive. Among the many events, for example, the existence of the newly inaugurated Centre Pompidou, with finesse and discretion, in short, he did the only thing left to be done: he died.

The modest but decisive generation gap that separates me from the Master (half a century is truly very little, surely a significant difference for the minute calculations of historians, but something History would make nothing of) has impeded me from following his example to the letter. I think, however, I can vaunt the fact that I haven't yet set foot (and I hope the future won't overturn this) in those "new museums" bringers of monstrous architecture – buildings, to correct myself – which represent well that new tendency towards cultural consumerism, always more reserved for school groups, tour groups, and families. Come on, there's room! Everybody to the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, over eleven hundred shows per season, more than two million five hundred thousand visitors per year. "To Live" the art, nose around in the air of the Biennials, Triennials, Quadrennials without overlooking those whore houses or pornographic sites that are the art fairs, in search of attraction or distraction, all lined up in pavilions that are full of offerings to carefully assess. I'll say it like Camillo Langone (*Il Foglio*, 26 January 2012), "at certain exhibits defined as popularizing, ordinary people, in effect, always run en masse eager to flock in front of the obscene showing of paintings, which are denuded of context, and stripped of all meaning". But I don't want to, no, I don't want to insist, and linger on these themes and complain in other sermons and more gripes. I can't cling to the erudite and nostalgic turns of phrase of Marc Fumaroli (*Paris-New York et retour*, 2009) when these are reduced to an obvious and pathetic re-evaluation of a painter like Lucian Freud who at least "knows how to paint". And not even taking part in the funerary mass celebrated by Jean Clair in memory of Europe (*L'Hiver de la culture*, 2011).

Many of the arguments from one author or another are obviously acceptable, but it's useless to take them up again, rehashing the same arguments: the demonization of the art market, the illusion of the democratization of art ... Only de Chirico, yes him, put his own life in the arena, and not just in a book or in an interview conveniently released by the media.

The point, in my opinion, lies elsewhere and is totally different, I would say even incompatible with those kinds of issues. Complaining, protesting, accusing the hidden powers (the auction houses) is legitimate, but it does not matter. It's work in vain and, so, it doesn't matter. It's the incongruous attitude towards the subject (art) that really matters and affects us.

The furious attack against "the world of contemporary art", is justified to some extent, however, it speaks another language, totally different and opposed to the apparent silence of a timeless art which runs on a separate track. Art is not entertainment or social welfare. If anything, it's a reference area for those in voluntary exile, who want to instead avoid the *comforts* granted by law. "Free time" does not include an instruction manual.

The delicate, desired goal is therefore the *status quo*: marking time means not just surveying the frontier but protecting the terrain and above all looking across and seeing without touching, not making incursions in the field. Metaphor aside, the word of order – and of honor – is: silence.

I'm ever more convinced that the truth corresponds to silence: placed in front of his own new work, the artist has the impression of having arrived at knowing the truth, up until that very moment it was hidden and now it's revealed in an instant. This isn't true. He'll have again this impression (the same illusion), thinking each time of having arrived at the truth, and will continue instead to not know the truth, until not wanting to admit that the truth is not his, but belongs to the work. And not to that work, but to another.

In short, he'll continue to renew the illusion which makes him think that he, with his hand, will direct the game: until when (a "when" always destined to elude) his hand and his vision won't see the sign placed beyond the horizon line. Of the truth, therefore, there is no sign: or better yet, in looking carefully, maybe there's only a trace ... If we truly still want to say something, there's nothing left to do but listen. A voice, that of Emanuele Severino, when he affirms that "it's a dogma the idea that the truth can illumine the individual. It's not I who understands truth, but it is truth that understands itself".

The many generous and eager voices that insist on invoking, almost imposing the dialogue and sustaining its absolute necessity, seem to ignore that the sound of a note or of a word must rise from silence and only this way can one enjoy the privilege of understanding.

Everything, from the most noble acts, to the innate and spontaneous, all the signs of the fatal condition of the living

beings should announce themselves silently. The artist has lost his voice, we can no longer assist in “live” apparitions. On the other hand, it’s been a long time that the artist’s voice, even lavish in its claims and ultimately insistent in the many recent interviews, never really wanted to be heard and understood. Paradoxically, the many words said to this point were all chosen to invoke silence, or at least to moderate the excessive flow of opinions or comments about such delicate themes as art and art history.

Today the salient fact – alas – I believe it’s the transformation of the spectator’s silence (silence that only appears so, but is active and reactive exactly because it’s free not to pronounce itself) into a statistical noise, or maybe the attendees, *the audience*, the participation caused by some show or exhibition. *No comment* should be and always remain the secret and dignified answer of the spectator in front of the work. Only in this way can he find himself – and pronounce himself – in balance, if ever he would want to: because of his dual role, hovered between artist and spectator, in that “strictly impersonal” condition that allows free choice, the pure faculty of seeing and of talking.

Maybe too many misunderstandings are caused by the belief, fully shared, that the artist is the interpreter of his time. The significant time isn’t his own, but the time of the work, to which the arc of experience of the artist’s life does not correspond. To the contrary, the artist distances himself from life – his or not his – such so as to orient his vision beyond the horizon line.

Silence, shoot: what? A cinematographic sequence or more simply do we turn this page? Everything, this and that, for sure more ... The objects, the images, everything circles around without allowing the minimum possibility of a state of rest. A continual movement seems to push relentlessly and in various directions, each thing or person to animate their own image, to adapt the incessant flow of becoming.

Something however (what?) seems to stay still, there where ... or maybe it isn’t, maybe not there because it isn’t here or there that we have to see visualize it (we won’t even begin to talk about touching it). It is, in fact, a pure dimension, replete with coordinates, of data ... or better of dates: it is Time.

What time is it? I could respond in at least two ways:

- a. “It’s now, at this moment.” An affirmation, an observation that is still and unequivocal.
- b. Silence, no response to a senseless question, if Time is, as it is, an impenetrable and indeterminate area.

I’ve never paid much attention to yearly events and anniversaries, much less compiling summaries or schedules. I’ve always had an innate predilection for circular time, always slower to the point of seeming stopped ... That does not lessen the fact that there are still invocations for “warding off danger” for “art for art’s sake”, and therefore impervious to political and social themes.

*Il s’agit de faire en sorte que, tant au niveau de ses processus qu’à ceux du resultat obtenu, l’œuvre d’art dépasse le pur plaisir esthétique, qu’elle prenne des risques, ceux de la vie même, pour enfin suturer cette fine membrane jointive, trop souvent déchirée, qui tend à separer la quête de l’artiste des questions essentielles de la pensée politique et de la morale. [...] Une œuvre qui puisse prétendre jouer un role dans la négociation compliquée entre un art considéré comme singulier, quasi miraculeux, et un art pétri de ses responsabilités sociales.*

That is what Okwui Enwezor wrote in his foreword to the Alfredo Jaar exhibition catalogue at the Galerie Kamel Mennour (Paris 2011). Today’s newspapers on the Venice Biennale, proclaim: “... Return to engagement, so art rediscovers its social duty. From South America to the Middle East, performers and painters deal with the issues of rights and of coexistence”.

And *Le Monde*, in fact, sounds off on its front page with “*Quand l’art se dresse contre la tyrannie: l’art, le plus court chemin vers la politique*”, reviewing on its first page, with requisite emphasis, the show called *Big Brother, l’artiste face aux tyrans*. The only dissenting voice, that of Claude Lévêque, declares “*L’art engagé m’emmerde*”, but then he hurries to clarify, almost excusing himself, saying, “*je crois à la politique et mon engagement je le vis au quotidien*”. On the occasion of Sislej Xhafa’s solo show, it’s declared that reality is stronger than art. “I use creativity [*sic!*] to examine and challenge institutions, the economy, tourism, geographic connections, enforced legality and imposed lawlessness”.

*Réalité, réalité* ... Last minute, again *Le Monde* reports with satisfaction the verdict of Mme Christine Lagarde, Director General of the International Monetary Fund: “Nous soumettrons l’Italie au test de la réalité”. Good! The dogmas of the

Holy Roman Church have fallen into disuse, and here now are new ones, current, and this time demonstrably “real” and therefore capable of being applied correctly and immediately. A sentence without recourse to appeal?

A *réalité* more unreal and inconsistent could not possibly exist. Standard & Poor’s, Moody’s and other rating agencies are today lined up to bear witness to the revenge of Protestantism, for the late but implacable vengeance of Luther, who from the dominion of conscience has now expanded to include the control of material goods. It is the ransom price for the truth of the number against the unknown factor of the digit, against a system close to bankruptcy because of the exercise of tolerance lavished for centuries, and which in the long term should have been seen for its very weakness.

For the record, or rather for History, during the euphoric phase of the post-war period, four men of good will (including our De Gasperi) allowed themselves to contemplate the transition of Europe, from the continent’s geographical nature to the stature of a political, economic and social unity, they did not consider the old historical, cultural and especially linguistic differences that irreparably separated the past and the future of each nation, even if they were territorially contiguous.

After all, and always parenthetically, on a much larger scale, even universal, it is the entire history of man that is rife with mistakes, where a real comedy of errors has played out. First of all, and perhaps the oldest, is the original sin common to all religions of having given a male identity to a single god and creator of the universe to which we belong. There are few females to identify with, always grouped or subordinated, they comply with the uncontested will of an absolute and dominating king. We did not realize that redundant gestural expressiveness is often clumsily used by one, as opposed to the “facticity” or “proactivity” of the serene and generous other ones ...

To retrace my steps, I intend to persist in being firmly uncooperative, if not openly hostile, in regard to the media eager to capture and disseminate cheap curiosities. Even recently Poussin “was obliged to” accept the authority of the choice made by Louis XIV when he chose the mediocre Le Brun for the post of court artist. Today it is Christie’s or Sotheby’s that are charged with drawing up the rankings (perpetuating other errors) and not ministries, institutions, or indeed newspapers that only write about an artist to make headlines. I would like to hope that Art, if not in person, given that is impeded by the splendor of its unruffled beauty, takes a true and just libel action to protect its truest identity. Also because it is commonly and increasingly thought that art should be accessible to anyone and that a “public” work should be available for dialogue with citizens. Thus commissions are meted out for the work of contemporary artists in venues, just *to meet* the public. Of course, art is made for everyone, but it has no ability to execute “social transformations”. A work of art does not meet anyone, even its author, who has the sole privilege of being the first eyewitness of its appearance.

Similarly, I confess my degree of saturation with respect to appeals and pleas addressed to reintroduce “reality” in the foreground, ready to invade and darken the light of the canvas and of the blank page. Even in philosophy we talk of “new realism”, an expression, which, for modesty’s sake, we will just say in English, so as not to awaken the sad memory which it has in Italian.

But art is set in the absolute, a sovereign distance from “reality” and from every clue that tends to regard the world as primary data. And it is precisely within itself that it can find the greatest latitude and openness to the possibility of some “truth”. Just the opposite of cinema and video art, arts that are still young but already prematurely aged because of their inalienable imitation of the “real”, due to the photo-documentary nature of their language. They seem to continue to develop even today the role of arts that are called “minor” or “applied”, discursive and directed precisely to make a comment on our existence. Minor in relation to greater beauty, “impassible” as Winckelmann says, apparently motionless and silent and represented by poetry and painting.

How to approach, remedy the fall of the “great illusion” fated and inevitable as it is, each time it is brought up for reckoning? How not to lose the reckoning, if everything is now dictated by a vertiginously large number, the unassailable and enduring plebiscite of opinion polls? How to defend against the “dictatorship” (or “superstition”, the word of Borges) of democracy, against the penumbra which obscures that little bit left to the discretion of each one of us?

Sometimes it makes me think of politics as the lesser evil, as a precaution as necessary as it is useless; in politics as in an art– so to speak – ready to provide solutions to the highest bidder. As Duchamp would say, get used to giving up solutions since problems do not exist.

Democracy has its roots in the arena, it lives in the square (of the people). Art is accepted (and does not go out) within the confines of a secret location, sometimes called a place of exile or a retreat. The first enjoys the guarantee of a number (a great number), the second communicates in code and its signals are encrypted. Democracy sees the world as a governed or governable territory, from a stated or desired harmony, which usually springs from a blind and dogmatic cult of Nature. Art instead looks at the world from a safe distance, and it has long understood that it should not even think to correct it.

## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

“It’s wrong to imagine the exiled as someone who abdicates, who retires and keeps to the sidelines. [...] If we look, we find in him an ambitious, deluded aggressive person, embittered, and a conqueror all together [...] He agrees to abandon everything, except his *name*. [...] In whatever form it appears, regardless of its cause, exile, at the beginning, is a school of vertigo.”

E.M. Cioran

At the age of seventy, I find I’ve already made some first steps in an area where the diagram of forces in the field has changed significantly: I say “significantly” because the change concerns the sensation you feel in being in the world, in standing on two feet, without being firmly planted to the ground, but nonetheless being properly balanced. Every morning, as soon as I’m up, I go out through the doorway-window overlooking the square, the rapid trajectories of those who walk or drive in cars pursuing their goals with determination, each day fully confident and convinced of their daily mission. In short, I look in disbelief at people similar to me (and also myself) all of us directed to consume the standard of “being alive” with the certainty of our belonging on a common and practicable path. But the scene that appears thus is also rash and even fatal, dictated by the blind becoming we accept as right and unrenounceable not to have to oppose useless objections, adding more blindness to that which already is imposed on us and we must endure. Too many of us seem animated by our addiction for acceleration ... there are even those who go running, and to increase agility wear athletic clothes. Even in our daily clothing, expressions of comfort and convenience have reduced us to the role of grotesque and uncertain athletes, limping along in jeans and sneakers stretching the limits of age. Already Ennio Flaiano, long ago, highlighted the ease with which the “average” Italian, wearing a jacket with two conspicuous side slits, wasn’t setting forth to go on horseback, but got to the office on time. But then add “without his extraordinary flaws the Italian would not exist today and this would be a great shame. Nature or, if you will, Civilization, has given a great task to the Italian: to survive. He has been fulfilling this for centuries in a committed way”.

Like language, today so seedy and impoverished, dress also suffers the same decline, an inclination to not exist. The tie is at the center of the general inattention: the U.S. President Barack Obama, the owner of the most beautiful repertoire of ties in the political world (plus knowing how to tie with impeccable dexterity a classic Windsor knot), must give up the prized accessory (I think on the advice of his devotees spin doctors) in some television appearances due to some emergency (terrorist attacks, earthquakes ...). So he must lower the flag and appear “tieless”.

Too many, in short, believe in interpreting the condition of living as normally as possible, forgetting that life is not something “normal” but only “natural”.

There are those people who get a taste and end up devouring the “life” of the great capitals in a kind of empty and frantic excitement. Yesterday in New York (Warhol and Basquiat, pop and rock music, fashion and design ... pale fires of a social life about to go out); in Berlin today (lots of creativity, noisy and unwarranted ...); tomorrow in Shanghai (even further, but still on this side). And there are those who still whisper with an insatiable and illusory hunger for knowledge: “I love to travel” ...

“The sheer vulgarity of *savoir vivre*: a snobbish life and certainly not that of a dandy, that is, someone who, though

supremely alive, can afford not to exist" (Stefano Lanuzza, *Vita da dandy*). There is another phrase that I always like to recall, "Robinson, which of the lakes do I prefer?". The preference in not to say it becomes, in the question that George Brummell poses to his *valet de chambre*, a forgotten preference, unspoken and, above all, unwritten. The dandy is thus the creator but not the author of an overwhelming, heroic distance from the world, of a writing on so high a plane that it is not to be deposited on the sheet, renouncing its space on the page in favor of hovering in the void of time.

I'm not here, nor anywhere else ... I just do not have, or rather, I'm not capable of belonging even to myself, nor to any of those circumstances where all or nearly all of us are obliged to show what we think we are. If not here, not so much by choice, but for real, essential need, the urgent need to observe a "full work day" but not put into practice, a calculated distancing from the words and gestures dictated by the world's stage.

The artist does not know and does not say, does not possess a civil status, but cannot avoid remembering and at the same time imagining, or referring, the coming of vision that is about to take place. [1]

I have said on other occasions that the artist is not the author of "his" work, which in certain ways has already been announced, prefigured, and pre-exists, but is only an actor of that work, and therefore "bearer" of its representation.

And reality, where is it? Of the conflict of the art-world, I have already said enough: everything lies in asking oneself what is meant by the one and then the other. More than face reality, I think artists try to find elegant ways to ignore it. Today nothing remains of reality but its image, and this is the only thing we can observe.

*La réalité ne peut exister en peinture, car en général elle n'existe pas sur la terre. L'univers est uniquement notre représentation.* It's Giorgio de Chirico in *Monsieur Dudron* (Paris, 1945) who shows us a labyrinth with no entrance and no exit, an area where everything can remain as it is, given that traces and memories are hidden there. The guest, on the threshold, does not enter and does not exit, and stops to observe, stops to watch ... Will he be able to see?

The artist has been waiting forever for beauty ... Extraneous to every definition, beauty is a close relative of the infinite, of the vertigo of interpretation, but is not placed beyond an indecipherable perspective, in the extreme, unattainable distance. Always changing, even though still, beauty appears backlit on the threshold. [2] We attribute to them the outline that our eyes have been educated to see *from life*, and which instead do not belong, are not sufficient to configurate it, to portray it. Like truth, beauty takes great care not to show itself, to reveal itself. The enigma that produces, also colors itself with the illusions that systematically fall into time.

Woe to the artist ... Let me correct myself: woe to those who, believing themselves artists, want to make explicit judgments (in words) or implicit (in the works) of an ideological nature. But woe even to he (the artist) prisoner, hemmed in by his own theory, unable to grasp the secret code underlying the body of the work: theory that should not be construed as a doctrine or knowledge, but as an open area and turned towards *infinitum*.

Exile is not to be confused, nor wasted like a salubrious and boring holiday. [3]

The artist, even though faithful to himself, would almost like to renounce his name, his civil rights, and the obscene calls for the social glorification of the role (or non-role). Instead, he gives central primacy to the work of art, in as much as it originates from the same dynasty which precedes it in time, and from which it descends in a direct line. When, on the Thursday of 14 January, in the by now distant year of 1971, I thought of (my) exhibition titled "Un quadro" [A Painting], I already understood the vanity of referring to my name in relation to the exhibited works: all of them replicas of one single work attributed, however, to several imaginary artists. The "heresy" practiced by the artist intending to impart something of himself or of the world of which he declares to be part of, deserves to be roundly condemned.

Why demonstrate, why demonstrate one's self? Why should one ever entrust oneself to events? Approve of them or disapprove of them (which is exactly the same) would confront us with a false perspective, where we would consider ourselves in a "before" or an "after". Or rather, without a present, without a fixed point or point of view. And it doesn't have to do with gathering and arranging the different aspects of a problem, given that (as Marcel

Duchamp said) “*Il n’y a pas de solution parce qu’il n’y a pas de problème*” (there are no solutions because there are no problems). So, it’s useless to get going and roll up our sleeves because in the end you only find yourself in a later time, inevitably complete with the same expectations as before ...

Time passes and it presents us with the bill. To the old and dignified proletariat, aware of the limits imposed by the civil community to which all of us belong, there’s a new successor, an eager and loud mob, “a barking multitude of vices” (as Giorgio Agamben said). Invasive and crosscutting it also involves, above all “intellectuals”, ensconced at the mass-market newspapers, on widely followed television programs, and/or active in constantly updating their blogs.

Therefore, having nothing to say, except for the right of being able to say this, to observe the silence without having to justify it.

I’m remembering the words of Carla Lonzi, conveniently conjured up by Michele Dantini (*alfalibri*2, June 2011), who, regarding this, warned of the precariousness of the figure of the artist who emits signs and judgments so as to call attention to himself and to his shows, thereby sanctifying him as a star of the cultural scene.

Better to leave the stage and transfer oneself to the wings and live behind the scenes; a short move, a kind of enclosure that is valid above all for detaching ourselves from the so called “world of information”. A veritable asphyxiation is underway, caused by the vast system. It has now reached the saturation point, and being based on an ersatz value, at once emphatic and illusory, it is what is called “communications”.

“Can a work survive, and escape the scandal of communication?” I wrote some time ago in *Idem* (Einaudi, 1975). I did not know that the work itself was and always would be safe, safe from any possible contagion from the things of the world ... I could not have realized, however, the high percentage of risk it has to defend itself from, just because of a communications network that’s increasingly intrusive and degenerative, which comes close to threatening the pure soul of those who continue to insist on turning away from it.

The artist is not “outside the world”, nor is he “inside the world”. At first we look around us, we are all spectators. Some people like the world, some like it less, and believe they can go elsewhere, that they’re able to create a new and different world by entering into the “sphere” of art.

As would seem obvious, conceiving an artwork, is not something that can claim to assert itself, being carried out in the present, but is something which turns from the past to the future, which engages the memory of an afterwards. [4] The artist does not want to talk, or communicate directly, in real-time. He does not want to impose his voice, but wants to listen, and gather the echoes ... And this isn’t a sound so new and different, that it would confound our understanding. To the contrary, it is about evidence so ancient, hidden or forgotten, however able to emerge from the most remote deposits of our memory.

I think I have to repeat this: I never wanted to express myself in the work. I always left (I always claimed) the work to express itself, to declare, to clearly say what it is and where it comes from.

Yearly recurrences and birthdays invariably celebrate and honor something that was, but which won’t always be ... We can therefore think that in the coming hypothetical hereafter, in meeting some unexpected and still unknown person, in exchanging our respective credentials, we’ll immediately let them know—without leaving them in suspense—our death date, totally ignoring all traces of that which involved us in life. And we’ll hear the live voice of Saverio (Vertone), dead only yesterday, saying the same words, left inscribed. Being said and heard in the moment, we’ll receive them as even more authentic—so to speak—than in how we had perceived them.

“It’s highly probable that the human psyche and the modality of living together, answers to models a bit less ephemeral and fluctuating in time than what sociologists, admen, and pollsters would have us think. In short, I don’t think that the long duration of anthropology and of great poetry proceeds as they would pretend from us. Also because for each of us, whether young or old, it is true what George Steiner had us remember with brusque exactness, ‘The great classics continue to read us more than we read them’”, as Vittorio Sermonti reminds us in a recent interview.

The artist, by his very nature (or statute, as I think it more correct to say, not counting in fact on a nature of his own) lives and resides – as we just saw – in exile. His identity is vacant, entrusted to times and places that are only presumed, even if they are certified by the coordinates of History.

The writer is no (longer) Giulio Paolini, but the certified copy of the person corresponding to that name: a person which is not what himself/herself seems, but is reduced, indeed, to correspond to that specific face and that specific name. Here I am, but where? [5]

Certainly not here. No, thank you. Not where we try to tear down the frontiers that separate art from the world by brute force and with always greater measures, gigantic, “environmental” and engrossing ... Two are the obligatory parameters one should entrust oneself to: the macroscopic and the clamorous. Two examples of the one and of the other are the series of exhibitions called *Monumenta* (Grand Palais, Paris) among them being the famous “Serra Effect” of a few years ago; and the performance of Marina Abramović, *The Artist is Present* at MoMA, New York, where the silence exhibited by the artist becomes sound, the din alludes to an emphasized and expanding expressivity, just because being reduced to a visceral muteness. From Social Realism to Intimatist Realism?

Where am I, and who? I’m not a “revolutionist” as the almost namesake writer, save with an additional “s”, who never held back in calling for radical change at every opportunity ... Famous and verbose enough to prompt a scholar, however attentive and careful as Rosalind Krauss, to include Pier Paolo Paolini among the protagonists of Arte Povera.

And even less, obviously enough, do I agree with the late homages aimed at revitalizing the figure of the semi washed out director-writer by many of today’s historians and intellectuals.

I’ve never been a Marxist, but not an individualist either. Daniel Barenboim, director of La Scala in Milan and the Berlin Opera, as well as the greatest authority on the contemporary music world, helps me understand what I am not, if nothing else: “Far more important than fame and money is independence, the independence of thought”. So to defend independence ... But independence from what? Maybe to cede to the enemy number one, that is “be yourself”? Nowadays, the idea of liberty seems to have a big (too much so) place in the hearts of those involved in the practice of the artistic experience – so much so that it’s been degraded, from an essential good to a consumer commodity. Judgments and comparisons proliferate, however rash they may be, “Art must stay out of the museums. Artists too. Given that we’re all potentially artists, the greatest thing about a museum is ‘free space’. [...] Art should find a new space [...] Pistoletto is even more free than Duchamp”, the words of an authoritative and combative rockstar.

Liberty, which isn’t independence from everything and everyone: Ina Praetorius is right (Hanna Arendt was right) in correcting, in turning inside out the role, habitually given to Penelope, in respect to the idea of liberty, which certainly isn’t just the realization of self, but is vocation, the need to set to work. Or, as Gadda writes in *Eros and Priapus*, quoting Bergson in *L’Évolution créatrice*, “if the male is ‘form’, it holds the momentary ‘form’, the female seems to be the elaborated and elaborating ‘matter’ of the species”.

Let me say this: the perfect man is an ill-mannered person, to whom intrigues and conspiracies are due, very far away indeed from the “good manners” or statute of good living that should keep us safe from the incursions of men (and some women) of every order and species.

Still, the last wishes of an artist (a man) such as upright Antoni Tàpies, recently dead, invites us to “find an art that stimulates profound view, which brings us close to authentic reality, to the true nature of man”.

Force of Nature? Every man for himself.

Never been a Marxist, like the thick and seasoned team united under the heading of the “October Revolution”, of the New York school, which continues to show itself.

It’s curious to note, as in Anglo-Saxon intellectual common thinking, the spread of that conviction which sees us as poor, and a bit primitive subjects of an ancient society, oppressive and authoritarian: we cannot not be exponents of a revolutionary spirit, even today repressed (and unexpressed). So that, for example, to Mario Merz, whose

pure and innocent naturalism and his devotion to the eternal fluctuation of the seasons, and not the relativism of ideology, there is attributed a fiery political commitment which surely was not his most authentic facet. And, so, ignoring what an authentic artist would want, that is to get beyond and leave behind an adherence to a cultural supremacy of the late and pseudo-revolutionary sort, both hegemonic and suffocating, at least in Italy.

Whomever would wish to get an idea, perhaps summary but still accurate, of what underlies my artistic activity over the past forty years, can have a look at the catalogue entry on my work *Tableau vivant* (1985), put up for sale by an important auction house in Munich. Don't "shake before use" but handle carefully and turn upside down the brief text accompanying it. If you reverse its meaning, you'll read and obtain, as I said, a reliable version of the facts, but exactly the contrary. To make myself understood: the ceremonial outfit discarded on the threshold often appears in my works and alludes to the figure of the author, impersonal as an actor/conjurer who *leaves*, who abandons the area and scene before – in his absence – the work can take shape. That outfit is here interpreted as a "rejection of the bourgeois world"; and the canvas (placed on a base which shows, in photographic transparency, images of my earlier works or exhibitions superimposed on the flow of time) is described as a gray surface, blind and no longer worthy of being shown because it is residue of the past which needs to be overcome in favor of a new vision of reality.

But the series of "miscarriages of justice" is long and uninterrupted: this time it's an authoritative French review of contemporary art which upon seeing fragments that often appear in my works and evoke the allure of ancient ruins, they define me as someone who "mocks the permanence represented by ancient statuary and so alludes to human frailty". Me, even me, the devout visitor to archaeological sites and plaster-cast museums!

For my part, anchored to the ancient principles of not-living communally (instinctively opposed, capricious, seemingly unmotivated, negligent student, inconsistent, poorly performing in practical matters, last of his class at the school of Democritus), I tend to conquer space rarefied by ataraxy, away from the polis and the reason of the many.

The "imperfect crime" is that perpetrated by valuing quantity over the appeal of quality, something which is unknown but which can divert attention from the figures, precisely quantitative, which refer to aspects incompatible with the issues of taste and intellect (an exhibition is valued by its square meters, like visitor turnout for museums, a catalog by the number of its pages, a work by its price and so on ...).

*"Avec plus de 500.000 visiteurs l'exposition rétrospective de Pierre Soulages à Beaubourg a battu tous les records, preuve s'il en fallait que le chantre de l'outre-noir est bien le plus important peintre français vivant"*. Black on white, it's appropriate to say ...

There's a term, above all others, that baffles me: "growth" (natural heir or degenerate daughter of "trust" and "hope"), a word used and abused by the political and financial press, but which has spread well beyond them, and represents the blindness of proceeding with one's head down, in pursuit of a goal that does not exist, but is taken for granted as being at your fingertips. It's enough to just give it a name.

Among the many sheets of paper left to fall on the table, the past and future dates interject themselves into a mosaic of times and places that do not interconnect to a coordinate that is immediately comprehensible. But it's all true, even what was hidden [in the Italian text there is a pun: CIO eRA Nascosto, that is "Cioran"] in the meanderings of our conscience.

1923: the discovery of America. Almost a century ago, the Englishman Chesterton, in a trip to the United States noted that, "America is the only nation in the world that is founded on a creed. That creed is set forth in the Declaration of Independence; perhaps the only piece of practical politics that is also theory of politics and great literature. [...] America invites all men to become citizens, but that implicates the dogma that there is such a thing as citizenship" (E. Rialti, from *Il Foglio*, 15 February 2011).

Words that today seem to find an (in)adequate and indignant comparison with the desperate belief that one needs to "disable the figure of the citizen because there might emerge a strong and anonymous force which is within all of us [...]. This force which is indomitable because it is the force of the will to live. Exiting from everything to construct a world among us. Exiting from all without getting killed. Exiting even from the very idea of disabling that this manifesto proposes. [...] Stopping being citizens means drawing a line of demarcation between that which one

wants to live with and that which one doesn't want to live with. [...] The objective has to remain the same: puncturing reality so as to be able to breathe. And for this one needs to start opening up no man's land" (S. López Petit, *alfabeta2*, May 2011).

So much impulse, such effort, I don't think would convince Manoel de Oliveira, one hundred and two years happily celebrated and still active, a dignified survivor of the trampled and sell out that is cinema today, when he says: *L'amour est abstrait et absolu. C'est-à-dire, la vraie passion entre deux êtres est si violente qu'elle ne les laisse même pas avoir d'enfants. Ceux-ci représenteraient une distraction face à l'amour absolu. L'amour absolu est le désir de l'androgynie, l'envie de deux êtres de s'unir en un seul.*

A curious premonition, that allows a glimpse of how, sooner or later, there could take shape a new era ruled by a just and linear evolution with parthenogenesis. A sociality (and a society) of women that removes the embarrassment of the tired and unmotivated procreators of the male gender.

The most suggestive voice and also the most convincing (quoted recently by Ruggero Guarini too) bears the oldest date and is that of Jacob Burckhardt, who on 28 February 1846, from Rome, wrote to his friend Karl Hermann Schauenburg: "I'm sitting in silence. I'm vanishing into the beautiful south, alien to history, wonderful and peaceful memorial, which will hearten me, tired as I am of modernity. Yes, I want to escape from everything: from the radicals, the communists, the industrialists, the philosophers, the sophists, the idealists. [...] The idea of the goodness of human nature has in the meantime been overturned by that of progress. It's worth saying: earnings at any cost; as well as comforts; as for philanthropy, its use is to calm the conscience".

But the gloomiest forecast and the most dispiriting, even if they seem positive and promising, are spread throughout a long piece in the *Corriere della Sera*, written by Tony Blair, among the most discerning politicians, and therefore worth listening to. In short, it will be the field of culture where nations will compete in the future for world primacy. But wouldn't it be the end, a politically correct end, but also without remedy? The escape route, the latest outlet for the miasma of a life which is increasingly coordinated, multi-functional and interconnected, will seize up, saturated with the same antibodies produced to keep it active. Hurray!

#### RIGHT YOU ARE! (IF YOU THINK SO)

"The ancient (archaic), the high style (Phydias), the beautiful (Praxiteles ...), the decadence at the end: the sublime, the grace, the *impassible* beauty of Italian art."

J.J. Winckelmann

From the Heraclitean that I was (nothing is, everything has been or will be, the present is annihilated by the incessant dynamic of becoming) here I am now a Parmenidean: everything has been there forever, circumscribed by that eternity of being which Parmenides, in fact, noted as preexisting and immutable, replicated constantly without being repeated, because what always is, always and forever will be.

Basic. Essential ... This must be important and nothing else, HE (His Excellency), The Work of Art. But while at the same time cryptic, oracular, and against nature ... Untranslatable; immediate, but not improvised; no double meanings or humanitarian allusions; nothing reductive or summary-like. The Work "concerns us", but it does not communicate anything intelligible. It is an imperceptible form (maybe it's just a point) suspended in the space of time: we have no possibility of reaching it, or identifying it so as to understand the circumscribed direction. About the Work, we can guess the coordinates without guessing its distance and thereby assess the possibility, or the non-possibility of catching its image.

The exact opposite, in fact, of what we have to see today, invited to "an experience in the measure of man, to get involved, come and get yourself a ride, too" reads the invitation to the MACRO in Rome, where we would be encouraged to take advantage of "a new work by Carsten Höller, two merry-go-rounds that move in opposite directions and allow visitors to perceive in a new way the energy and surrounding space".

Instead, the artist – in my opinion – is concerned with another dimension, virtual and impracticable. Nothing can distract him from his work to discover, but at the same time he does not intend to create it, touch it, own it ... It is not his, nor does it belong to the spectator who looks at it. It is rather a “sponsorship”, no blood ties, a conscious and exclusive correspondence: he writes (but doesn’t speak) to it, no waiting around for answers (because he thinks he knows it) while continuing to ask for data (and dates) without any expectation of receiving any feedback. It may be that something real, like a hidden pattern, crosses the dense and uninterrupted sequence of “distinguishing marks” that populate the biography of an artist. In truth, the succession of different episodes confirms only the immobility, the pre-existence of that which seems to flow and to be renewed. I’m seventy, but at nineteen I painted for the first and last time a picture ... A picture that would in some sense not have left room for other paintings that were not replicas or variants of that first instant. This is because that first picture was also the last to be granted a signature and date, as mine.

I cannot help to refer once again – and I apologize to those who had already heard at other times my old “lesson” – a *Disegno geometrico* [*Geometric Drawing*] (1960), that first (and last) painting that, although devoid of a real image, however, was to inspire many observations and comments. Similarly, long before the young Rimbaud, who also at nineteen bid farewell to writing, and so instantly exhausted all that he could only have repeated.

So, the “truth” of the artist is not that of the author: it’s – it already was – of the work. The truth of the work is the pre-existing, hidden (data not shared) that the artist has to recognize and disclose to the expectation of our glance. A painting announces itself but doesn’t come to its end. The image that a work gives us is not something formulated and defined forever, but always something that returns to us. [6]

But I don’t discover anything at all ... In fact, better to say, I find that nothing has already been because everything is still and always equal to itself. Everything floats as on the sea of eternity in the first moment. That’s how I became convinced of the “primacy of the before”, source of truth placed in its natural place – at the beginning and not at the end of the experience. [7]

Nothing is more distant, alien to the attitude of an artist by what we generally mean by “research”. Also, and above all, because the object of research is the knowledge of something that is recognizable as a message of truth. But the (only) truth we cannot reach because it transcends and thus already preceded us.

We are many who have dug the pit for the word “inspiration”, determined to replace it with terms such as “investigation” or “research”. However, an investigation (always vaguely police-like) or research (always vaguely scientific) can at most provide a target, and aspire to a result. Science knows (or at least should know) that research can only end in a dead end, and then start over, of course, to travel on new paths that always start with the prospect of an end, but after numerous other attempts, will in the end bear nothing, or almost nothing.

Instead, the attitude of the artist seems to retrace the same parameters that characterize a vocation, something inscrutable and mysterious like a *raptus*, or more realistically, an obsession. The truly authentic author, who is original, acknowledges his state of grace in the innocent vocation, that is disinterested and hides everything else that is not of his own condition as a participant, but as a distracted spectator, absent from the events taking place on the stage.

Coming to mind is the “new word” coined in 1512 by the author of *The Courtier*, Baldassare Castiglione. The *sprezzatura*, a term that since then alludes to something one is able to do that is unspoken, undeclared, much less performed, yet capable of a surprise for its unexpected perfection. Or on the other hand, I’m reminded of the contrast between the prose of the vulgar storyteller Tolstoy in comparison to the acrobatic and daring literary performance of Dostoyevsky.

My eyes no longer see any difference between an ink stain that spreads out on a sheet of drawing paper (*La Sainte Vierge* by Francis Picabia) and a view, a work that’s constructed, accomplished as well, and seems to have drawn itself, as if it guided the hand of the artist almost without him realizing it (*La Montagne Sainte Victoire* by Paul Cézanne).

In short, the artist is always ready to copy something, to trace the same design every time, to track down and follow again the visible lines that signal the fate of building a work of art of his (what he believes to be his) or – better to say – that work of which, even without knowing it, he’s trying to grasp the secret cipher. The work to

be done and how to sign it as his, will be nothing more than a copy, as perfect as it is perfectly useless, from an original, untitled and undated, which we cannot recognize.

Here then is a work *Senza più titolo* [*No longer Titled*], meaning stripped of its significance. [8]

It is its own opportunity to exist and show itself as having doubt cast upon it and constitutes the only possible reason for its coming into play, for facing the measure of time, exile or the eclipse of the idea.

It is as if the work, left alone in the middle of the exhibition space, asks itself why it is being exhibited and interrogates itself about its lost memory and about its identity, an identity which can only be recovered with much difficulty, or that has been totally lost. An empty space, outside and inside, but placed in plain sight and endowed with a glorious and authoritative past.

Little or nothing is now glimpsed: an unstable vision, penumbra and dazzling light, providing no help in distinguishing the objects on view. Everything seems to subtract itself from direct, immediate or retinal perception ... and to turn instead to something that is hidden, silenced or forgotten. The change of scene takes place behind the curtain of Time, almost without the knowledge of its presumed maker, that is the author. An author who, like myself, does not hesitate to assert that he is no longer the author, recognising himself in the role of spectator.

I see myself more and more intent in dedicating myself to that "other" dimension that is not dictated by the measures of an exhibition space. On the contrary, I completely ignore those measures and entities, the size, to limit myself to a minimum, to something always less obvious or even hidden, so imperceptible that it disappears, and recovers an original signal, the first note, or the pure memory of something fleeting and incomprehensible ...

The artist maintains himself in an unstable equilibrium between affirmation and negation, truth and untruth, remembering and forgetting in a suspended, boundless limbo which is the sphere of Art (yes, sphere, impenetrable volume, original light and dazzling), seen for a moment – an eternity – before the big bang of History, which, from that inscrutable sphere, develops a line that is more or less visible, and is in fact that we call Art History.

End of the story: "the end"? Three letters arranged in a succession so ultimate, definitive, in fact, as to leave a vacuum around itself without admitting any kind of objections or hesitations. Letters in front of which would be useless and vain to devise an anagram or any other verbal artifice. A word that even before its lexical meaning is announced, as a logo or an emblem, we learn as pure visual perception when we see it emerge from the last frame fading-out in the final sequence of a film, a story that we would prefer if it did not end there, but which concludes there. The screen gradually loses its brightness, profundity, and we are implicitly invited to leave our seat.

I confess to being unprepared for a moment so challenging, as a student a few days off from defending his thesis is not able to condense, to synthesize that particular idea that has motivated his research.

I confess that I've lost every time, in every work, all expectations, all thoughts and energies which revolve, side by side around a central idea, although not always explicitly so. In short, I find it difficult to draw conclusions.

Always and forever more I am convinced that the beginning is the end (or vice versa). End? What end? A sudden end, unexpected ... The end is neither one nor many: to get to the end something had to have started ... when? And why, if this is really the end, should we come to know it? Why not instead believe it, pretend to not have realized it?

Who can ever convince us that something (everything) has changed and we cannot continue to ignore it? But knowing it does not concern us: History is this and its end could only be announced by itself. [9]

So, let's not delude ourselves, we were wrong.

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