

I. ARTE

COMENTARIOS A ACOSTA, MARÍA DEL ROSARIO.
 “MEMORY AND FRAGILITY: ART’S RESISTANCE
 TO OBLIVION (THREE COLOMBIAN CASES).” *THE
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Acosta’s article focuses on three cases of Colombian art, Oscar Muñoz, Doris Salcedo, and Juan Manuel Echavarría, to propose a relation between art and memory in the context of Colombia’s history of violence. This relation, she argues, is defined by the problem and paradoxes these artists present. Even though art can be located historically and develops within a realm of world history, it can also step beyond archival objectivity. Through history’s doubling and repetition, that is, by *retelling*, *representing*, and *comprehending* history, art should be understood as doing more than simply accumulating and recounting historical facts. To achieve her objective, Acosta proposes a reading of history through art that moves away from the factual. Entering and exploring art’s scenarios involves an apprehension of what we have lived in a new light and in another way: no longer in the sphere of what is verifiable, but rather in the sphere of history’s *passing*, in its *having been*. Art intervenes, then, to interrupt the *immutability* of facts and, with that, it clears a different pathway for remembrance. Due to art’s fragile procedures, this path expresses its own way of doing another kind of justice.

Colombian art, specifically, takes this new pathway as a demand to reflect on the present. The paradoxes faced by transitional situations may lead to a confusion of concepts such as “remembrance” and “commemoration.” Precisely because of this, Colombian art leaves traces that philosophy and other disciplines should pick up, Acosta argues, to build a different approach to knowledge. From Muñoz’s installations *Proyecto para un memorial* (2004-2005) and *Aliento* (1995), Salcedo’s performance *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002) to Echavarría’s moving photographs *Novenarios en espera* (2012), art keeps, in Acosta’s words, “the

secret of an impossible *mourning*” (74). On this basis, she explores how these three works of art resist oblivion by means of their own fragility, that is, without attempting to solve a problem but rather disclosing its aporetic features. Some questions might arise from this: What exactly is art doing that can be taken as a new way of thought? How can history be apprehended through art? What can these three “Colombian cases,” their practices and techniques, tell us that not only shifts historical viewpoints but also the way of doing and/or understanding art in general?

I will be focusing on Oscar Muñoz and the way in which his proposal as an artist might help us to think this other way of doing art. Muñoz’s works *Proyecto para un memorial* and *Aliento* are two of the 70 pieces of the retrospective exhibition of his work called *Protografías*. In both pieces we can see how an image takes shape as it vanishes again, an idea that is recurrent in many of Muñoz’s works. *Proyecto para un memorial* (2004-2005) is a soundless video-loop installation where we see the artist’s hand moving while drawing with water on a cement surface. In this process, an image begins to appear, a face takes shape, and, in doing so, also vanishes: a fleeting gaze that evaporates while the sun hits the pavement. In *Aliento*, on the other hand, it is the viewer’s breath that allows an image to appear. A series of circular metallic discs measuring about 20 cm are put next to each other on an empty wall of one of the museum’s rooms. They are located at an average height for the viewer’s gaze and separated from each other. This separation allows for a singular experience to take place on each disc. An image is printed on each disc using the technique of grease photo-serigraphy. In order to make the image visible, viewers must look at the disc that initially reflects their own image, as in a mirror, and then breathe into the disc, thus blurring their own image and allowing another one to appear.

In both pieces we can see that what Acosta defines as fragility is the existence of these fleeting images that is also a signature of their anonymity. There is no trace, or the trace vanishes. We do not know to whom these faces belong. And yet, the hand, tireless, comes back, and the viewer’s breath is requested again. The five faces “condemned” to oblivion in *Proyecto para un memorial* nonetheless resist disappearing due to the artist’s persistence. In this sense, what the installation suggests, in Acosta’s words, is “that a memorial actually worthy of calling itself as such would not attempt to turn the past into an eternal, immutable, present; it would rather seek to *recreate the very experience of its loss*” (76). The demand of memory is here the impossibility of bringing the past to the present, a paradoxical demand that, in the attempt to preserve the past as a living memory, must always be carried out in the form of loss, in the form of its absencing. Similarly, with *Aliento* she argues that the artist responds to the tenacity with which time erases the past,

operating as a place where memory and oblivion meet “fortuitously” (88). This place summons our responsibility to take on the task of memory to which the work’s evocative darkness responds. She compares this work to Celan’s poetry and states that poetry for Celan is the only way of bearing witness: “a poem”, she writes, following Celan, “can only be acknowledged as such in the expectation and impossibility, urgency and incapability, of talking “in the name” of the other” (90). Muñoz’s works, in this sense, are less about confining and sealing a meaning, and more about giving shape to the experience of the “unforgettable” in Walter Benjamin’s words, that is, what must not be forgotten, even if remembering it fully remains an impossible task.

Some questions remain regarding these paradoxes and contradictions. If we conceive an installation as that which contains in its process its own collapse, I wonder if Muñoz’s works can be read not only as seeking to “recreate”, re-enact the experience of loss, but also as something that, in its tireless repetition and remaking, disarticulates loss? If we think, for example, of Muñoz’s subtle care with the materials, of the way he tries to constantly transform this materiality, we can see, perhaps, that he is never alluding to a specific event, group of people, or place, to *just* one political fact, *just* the image, *just* the element or the material, or in the case of *Aliento* and *Proyecto para un memorial*, not just to the *disappeared*. The images he uses are from newspapers obituaries, images of people who died but not necessarily due to political violence. The photographs circulate as the newspaper does, and that very same day, like the newspaper, they are left behind. Is it possible in this sense to think that this project not only follows an ongoing plan, a path, but also that this plan is the very same process of its making? A process, however, that is not in its reproduction, but rather in the repetition of its materiality made of water, ink, soot, paper, and that returns over and over again in other forms. We can think, for example, that breath in *Aliento* moves, years later, to become the water that draws the faces in *Proyecto para un memorial*, and that this water was previously the unstable surface that sustained the coal dust drawing of Muñoz’s other works, *Narciso and Narcisos*, and so on. A displacement of the very same process of repetition that could be more related to the Sisyphian myth, or to the Narciso, whose image never coincides with itself.

As Acosta writes, Muñoz’s works do not intend to resolve a memory, to close it, or to seal it, but to retain it against oblivion. His works inscribe the irrevocable (fixed) character of the past in the short interval between the image’s presence and its disappearance; an interval he wants us to heed and listen to. In this sense, I wonder what happens if we connect these intervals to the language of photography, to what is fixed forever in time and to which we cannot go back: can we think of

Muñoz's materials not only as the fleeting mark of this instant, but also as what, in fact, changes its form? That is to say, if Muñoz attends to the language of photography, to what is fixed, it does so in order to make this fixity move, to change the traditional medium of paper where the image is supposed to be printed. We might think that the link among his works is not only that the image appears and disappears as a retention against oblivion, but *how* this appearance and disappearance happen, how the materials –air, breath, vapor, dust, glass– play a role as they alter one another in their movement and relation. What makes the image live –water, chemicals, paper, ink– appears as residue to be born again. It is the threshold that makes the image live and that makes of the image itself a condensation of time. By going to breath, water, and dust, as the center of Muñoz's work, could we say that the materials in his works are what makes them live and die in between the duality of commemoration and oblivion? If the fragility in his work is a kind of absence of memory that serves as an evocation of what still claims to be remembered without however trying to recover it, could we say that his works are not only this move between remembrance and oblivion, but also a pulsation –inhale-exhale– of the living present? As in a *Proyecto "para"* but *not yet* a memorial: can we suggest another way to think these unstable and fragile surfaces or materials that are more oriented toward an open future where this future's form is still always about to change?

If there is a loss, it is not only the loss of a person behind the image, but the image itself that has to disappear, because if not, it might fall into the trap of being reproduced, duplicated, accumulated. In this sense, Muñoz's works also resort to an ensemble of methods, techniques and practices that would be at the origin of visibility, anticipating it and defining it, but without yet participating in it. As if a photograph were always something to come, something that threatens to appear and makes us wait for it. The breath of *Aliento* and the watermarks –that are not marks– of *Proyecto para un memorial*, humidity and evaporation, tell us how indefinite and infinite this "memory" and this "oblivion" are within a derailed time and a mobile space.

“RESISTING DISAPPEARANCE THROUGH THE MATERIALITY OF DISAPPEARING:” ART IN COLOMBIA AND MÉXICO, A DIALOGUE.

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The residents of Puerto Berrío, Antioquia have seen more than 350 bodies float downstream along the Río Magdalena. Due to the long history of armed conflict in Colombia, particularly in this region, the adoption of these bodies, known as NNs (no name), has become a quotidian practice for the people in this town. The visibility of the corpses caused the subsequent visibility of the need to mourn. Here, the residents started pulling out the corpses, “adopting them,” “baptizing them,” and mourning for them. In naming and placing these bodies in the cemetery, the residents of Puerto Berrío mobilize memory not as a resolution or as closure. Instead, in overlapping “nameless bodies with bodiless names” (83) the residents mobilize memory’s fragile procedure by interrupting the immutability of the acts of violence through the process of mourning.

In “Memory and Fragility,” María del Rosario Acosta follows Hegelian ruminations on art’s potentiality to build memory. Instead of relating to it as an “archival objectivity,” Acosta proposes memory as the act of “experiencing the present’s loss,” of acknowledging what has been lost, but still with the possibility of “looking forward” (72). In other words, memory is to be understood as the act of recognizing the loss, without attempting to erase the acts of violence that produced it, but also without attempting to seal the past through institutional commemorations of history. For Acosta, transition processes, such as the one taking place in Colombia today, are needed, yet, art’s cunning potential crafts memory not as resolution, but as a possibility to “revisit the past” through the loss and the pain (73). With this in mind, Acosta reads the moving images of Juan Manuel Echavarría’s *Novenarios en espera* as concrete examples of building memory by revisiting and experiencing the loss of the past. In the act of naming and mourning the bodies from the river, the people in Puerto Berrío mobilize the close relationship between memory and the act of mourning.

The video installation, *Novenarios en espera* (2012), shows images of graves in the cemetery. The frame is a single take of the grave's plaque showing the different inscriptions and decorations made by the person that adopts the corpse. The temporal emphasis points to how the process of mourning builds memory on the basis of an absence that cannot be solved or accounted for in any other way. In other words, the act of mourning taking place here is the only shape memory can take, and memory's potential resides in the fragile process through which mourning "suspends death and the absence of death" (86).

As Acosta emphasizes, fragility is intrinsic to the procedures of memory. Here, it is pertinent to revisit the traditional categories of memory, forgetting, and forgiveness. In granting art the potential to create memory and to recollect history, art might not only fail to do so, but it could end up rearticulating structures of violence. That is, the fragility of memory consists of its vulnerable position in a threshold that could either successfully recognize the loss or fail by means of resolution. According to Acosta, the fragility of memory lies in the danger of falling into the traps of forgetting as a type of sealing of the past or as the eternal present of trauma, which can also be interpreted as the opposite of mourning, that is, as melancholia. Art here must maneuver its building of memory, and it is in these fragile terrains that the potential for a mourning process emerges. In *Novenarios en espera* the act of mourning nameless bodies, of baptizing them, of granting a body to a name, shows the fragile link between art, memory, and mourning. With this work, Echavarría recalls the passing of time as some NNs are moved to a permanent grave, given beautifully adorned plaques, given their adopter's last name, while others are gradually abandoned. So, what is the process of mourning here? What kind of memory emerges from the mourning of a stranger? When does this stranger's body come to embody the name of a missing relative? For Acosta, the process of mourning is in these cases the possibility of recreating the memory of an absence. Thus if "art resists oblivion by means of its own fragility" (74), here one can say that by starting out from absence itself, *Novenarios en espera* resists the oblivion of all the nameless bodies and all the bodiless names. These are memory's paradoxical workings, "to preserve the past as a living memory it must be carried out in the form of loss, that is, in the form of its absenting" (77). Similarly to Oscar Muñoz's *Proyecto para un memorial* (2004-05), Echavarría's *Novenarios en espera* builds memory while evidencing absence. Here the past can never be present and it is only revisited as an ongoing process of loss, in other words, through the mourning process, through the experience of loss. *Novenarios en espera*'s images display this experience of loss mainly through the emphasis on time and on how this passage of time speaks

of the mourning process as a transition. The images themselves become graves, and in doing so, the images are reminders of what can never be recovered or resolved.

These meditations on art's potential posit fragility as central to successfully creating memory in contexts of violence. Here, again, not as archival objectivity, but as a way to revisit history and make possible the emergence of new forms of comprehension. My research interests in Mexican literary and visual works push me to consider how the narrative of violence must also entail fragility. An ethical narrative of violence is precisely anchored in acknowledging that it must be grounded in the loss and the impossibility to "commemorate," to give an account, and to solve. In what follows, I briefly introduce the works of conceptual artist Teresa Margolles and the poet Sara Uribe to examine how the narrativity of violence is deeply imbricated in processes of memory building and mourning very similar to those Acosta speaks about in her work.

In working with the materiality of death, Teresa Margolles creates a singular relation between memory and art. Her installation, *En el aire* (2003), consists of an ethereal context: what would appear as a pristine setting, a room full of bubbles, is suddenly interrupted with the knowledge that the water in these soap bubbles comes from the morgue and has been used to clean the dead bodies prior to autopsy. Although the bubbles are an unequivocal symbol of *memento mori/vanitas*, at first, disorientation and even contemplation are the initial reactions. *En el aire* emphasizes the paradoxes of visibility; here Margolles uses the victims' organic materiality to build abstract displays where the public touches violence and ultimately death. Margolles describes her work as an encounter: "Trabajo con el polvo seco mezclado con sangre, como se lo lleva el desierto y te cubre... como nos vamos llenando de nuestros propios conciudadanos" (cit. en Delgadillo 182). Similarly, here in this room full of bubbles –not desert sand– such an encounter with fellow citizens takes place. Margolles' works demand an ethically discomforting engagement as a process and a call for collective mourning.

Sara Uribe's *Antígona González* (2012) also posits a singular relation between art and mourning. In this poem, a Mexican Antígona looks for her brother's body. The poem, as a denunciation of the violence justified as the "war on drugs," places the figure of Polynices as Tadeo, a young father, who –in contrast with the classical character– is not an enemy of the state, and more importantly, whose body is absent. This absence is what mobilizes Antígona. By means of the pastiche, Uribe puts into tension the representation or narrativity of violence. In the last section titled "Notas finales y referencias," Uribe outlines the academic, literary, and journalistic sources that build *Antígona González*. As a conceptual piece, *Antígona González* "fue escrito con, para y por

otros. Por ello, en estas notas hago un recuerdo de la otredad textual que da vida a estas escrituras” (110). The poet manifests the multiple voices narrating the absence of Tadeo-Polynices to create a harmonious collection, a community that voices Antígona, a community that materializes the absence of thousands of bodiless Tadeos across México. In a narrative that seems to be grounded in the absence of an absolute “narrative voice,” Uribe binds the process of mourning and the process of building memory. Let me conclude with a few lines from the second part titled “¿Es esto lo que queda de los nuestros?”:

Todos esos duelos que se esconden tras los rostros de las personas que nos topamos. Al escuchar el timbre entro al salón y paso lista. Fulanito de tal. Presente. Fulanito de tal. Presente. Fulanito de tal. Presente. El ritual de las jaculatorias. Lo cierto es que las más de las veces ni siquiera escucho las voces de mis alumnos respondiéndome. Por cada nombre que pronuncio, una segunda voz que no es mía, ni de nadie, que solamente está ahí, como un eco pertinaz, replica:

Tadeo González. Ausente.

Tadeo González. Ausente.

Tadeo González. Ausente (53)

By using the word “esto” in the title, Uribe acknowledges the relation between memory and an absence that is the basis for the poem. Antígona is not crafting memory as a way to commemorate or resolve her brother’s murder. Instead, she is moving along the fragile process of memory by narrating her mourning as a continued experience of the loss.

In hoping to extend Acosta’s insightful reflections, I see in both Margolles and Uribe’s pieces how art resists oblivion by creating a form of memory grounded in the acknowledgement of an absence and a will to reminiscence. Like Muñoz’s and Echevarría’s works, Margolles and Uribe’s prove that art resists oblivion by recreating loss. In their materiality, these works point to the impossibility of solving an absence. They enable an engagement that bears witness to an absence, in order to recreate the experience of the impossible task of sealing this open wound and moving on. In the case of these works, this engagement is posed in a communitarian framework. From the absence and pain emerges a community that thrives amidst the residual debris of history. Art’s potential to reconcile the subjective and the collective, the psychic structures and the communitarian notions of looking forward to a remembrance of the past, interrupts history while opening a space to mourn and to continue living the present’s loss. I resort one last time to Uribe’s *Antígona*: the last line of the poem formulates a demand in the form of a question – a demand to engage with absence: “¿Me ayudarás a

levantar el cadáver?” (101). Leaving an arduous task to the reader, Uribe posits this question that awaits our answer.

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COMENTARIOS A “TRAS LOS RASTROS DE
MACONDO: ARCHIVO, MEMORIA E HISTORIA
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En este artículo, María del Rosario Acosta se acerca a la obra *Musa paradisiaca* de José Alejandro Restrepo, obra-archivo que se exhibe y reitera desde la década de 1990. Un archivo entonces en perpetua revisión y reflexivo que modela lo que Acosta describe en otro lugar como el proceso nunca terminado de interiorización del pasado en clave hegeliana (cf. 2014). Un archivo que traza una historia nacional marcada, por un lado, por eventos violentos desde la colonización, y, por el otro lado, por la violencia del silencio institucional. Una obra, según también se sugiere, que reorganiza de manera creativa las relaciones entre pasado, experiencia y temporalidad. En su artículo, Acosta avanza piso por piso por una obra multi-espacial.

Del recorrido por el primer piso, que alberga un archivo documental, recalco la condición de este archivo –*arché* como comienzo y como ley–, gobernada por una ley que desplaza y hace imposible señalar un comienzo de la historia de la violencia a la que *Musa* se confronta. Acosta relaciona esta misma ley que hace que el comienzo siempre quede diferido con la violencia de una historia de borraduras (cf. 48). Aunque sobrevivan rastros (*traces*) de la masacre de las bananeras, estos lo hacen de forma inaudita.

Con respecto al segundo piso, Acosta se pregunta (y creo que es una de las preguntas centrales en varios de sus trabajos): ¿qué tipo de gramáticas son aquellas capaces de afinar el oído a esta ausencia (a la espera) de voz? El segundo piso sugiere, según la lectura de Acosta, que gramáticas capaces de afinar el oído a lo inaudito requieren de apertura, o al menos un rechazo a un modo de clausura radical del pasado. Leo entre líneas también: recoger, acomodar, integrar lo nunca del todo asimilado, lo nunca del todo sabido ni conocido. Gramáticas por ende porosas, espaciales, siempre provisionales. La estructura, si podemos

nombrarla así, de tal gramática encontraría su analogía en la indirección, ciclicidad y espectralidad de lo que se hace apenas latente, de lo que a falta de mejor palabra se narra en este espacio: espejos, videos en bucle, murmullos, racimos de bananos en proceso de descomposición, inclusive su progresiva fragancia y turgencia materializan lo que estructura a modo de resonancias una gramática de lo inaudito que Acosta está interesada en señalar. La descomposición orgánica desmiente una utópica recuperación. El encuentro que la obra materializa, como anticipa Acosta desde el principio de su artículo, es imposible.

El tercer piso de la instalación yuxtapone el mito de la expulsión del paraíso, un cuadro del banano como fruta prohibida y hongos alucinógenos. El artículo alinea en este punto mito e historia, así como amnesia y alucinación, para preguntar: ¿qué nos ofrece la lucidez de un tiempo mítico para la alucinación necesaria de una historia borrada (forzadamente amnésica)? Acosta parece aquí introducir un desdoblamiento o *mise-en-abîme* interno del tiempo histórico, en el que gracias a una ley que gobierna desplazando su comienzo, el gobierno, el tiempo histórico, la narrativa es saturada y propulsada en no menor grado también por las borraduras. Ligando el mito y la alucinación –con la pulsión de la memoria que busca reconocimiento, quizás–, Acosta propone una gramática de lo inaudito en cuanto resonancias a las que se puede afinar el oído; que de otro modo quedan silenciadas, pero que la escucha atenta que Acosta dibuja quizá podría atender.

Me gustaría formular solo dos preguntas, para seguir pensando en la dirección de estas gramáticas de lo inaudito y los modos de resonancia que estas son capaces de articular. En un primer momento, me parecía contraintuitivo pensar en gramáticas del recibir, del escuchar, del abrirse al mundo y a la realidad, y ya no del hablar, escribir, dibujar (es decir, gramáticas de lo enunciativo). Pero Acosta claramente quiere pensar la recepción y la escucha como algo que no se encuentra previamente moldeado, sino que se estructura en el proceso mismo de su recepción. ¿De qué manera opera entonces la gramática de lo audible y lo inaudito para estructurar la posición compleja del sujeto como ser abierto, receptivo, cerrado, mudo?

Por otro lado, esta escucha plástica, moldeable y maleable, podría pensarse junto a esos recursos inteligibles que nos permiten hacer creíbles nuestras vidas, de los que habla Acosta en otro lugar (cf. 2019). Sin querer colapsar estos dos conceptos, quisiera preguntar: ¿cómo se iluminan mutuamente la escucha y la credibilidad? ¿Cómo se relacionarían la actividad de la escucha con una economía de la credibilidad extra-representacional, ética? Acosta abarca una economía libidinal psico-analítica, en la que irrumpe el trauma de una manera tal que es difícil –si no imposible– la integración. Su trabajo y las obras que elige

discutir me hacen preguntar si lo que es difícil de integrar no es (“solo”) lo que ya no se puede decir (en el sentido de Nelly Richard, por ejemplo), sino lo que no se puede –y quizá quiere– creer que fue verdadero. La economía de la credibilidad, que Acosta trae a colación con García Márquez (cf. Acosta 2019), parece introducir la posibilidad de una resistencia a decires y saberes en claves psicoanalíticos. La resistencia protege, podría pensarse, quizá por su inercia y automatismo, contra la destrucción plástica que permitiría el privilegio de la violencia como principio de la realidad; que permitiría a la violencia moldear por completo un sujeto y una sociedad. ¿Podría pensarse una compulsión de la repetición que insista en una memoria que se resiste a reconocer algo que fue verdadero, pero nunca debió de llegar a serlo? ¿Una compulsión de la repetición por ende ética (en el sentido limitado de relativizar el principio de la realidad violento, de guardar memoria de otra realidad)?

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APUNTES SOBRE EL CONCEPTO DE EXPERIENCIA EN LA OBRA DE MARÍA DEL ROSARIO ACOSTA

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En este breve ensayo me dedico a comentar la sutileza de una frase que aparece en un ensayo de María del Rosario Acosta, “Tras los rastros de Macondo: archivo, memoria e historia en *Musa paradisiaca* de José Alejandro Restrepo”, publicado en la revista *Estudios de Filosofía* del Instituto de Filosofía de la Universidad de Antioquia en 2018. El encuentro estético con el pasado de Restrepo propulsa a Acosta a describir la memoria como algo que *acompaña a la experiencia*. He escrito en cursiva el giro que merece nuestra atención. Después de preparar la escena en la que se encuentra esta formulación, hago algunas observaciones con el propósito de afirmar que la escritura de Acosta complica el concepto de experiencia de Hegel. Cuento con el ensayo “El concepto de experiencia de Hegel”¹, escrito por Heidegger, para expresar esta idea. Debo admitir que puede parecer un poco extraño darle una atención tan formalista al lenguaje filosófico, en medio de la riqueza de reflexiones sobre el arte visual, la distorsión sónica y la centralidad de la escucha en los avances del pensamiento que caracterizan las investigaciones recientes de Acosta. Sin embargo, mis comentarios persiguen un objetivo sencillo. Quiero presionar la idea de que la representación de una violencia histórica sea “imposible”.

El ensayo de Acosta apuesta a que hay obras de arte que, de hecho, afirman esta imposibilidad. Lo hacen de una manera que obstaculiza ciertas lecciones de la estética. La experiencia estética que le interesa a la profesora Acosta no absorbe la historicidad de los eventos, ni la estructuralidad de fenómenos sociales, ni las prácticas de intervención política que impugnen estas estructuras. Más bien, es una experiencia que enseña ciertos *impasses* de la asimilación de la verdad histórica, de la articulación de métodos para acceder a esta verdad, y de la elaboración

1 Publicado por primera vez en alemán bajo el nombre “Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung” escrito en 1942-1943, y más tarde publicado bajo el nombre “Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung” en la colección *Holzwege*. Todas mis citas son de la traducción de Helena Cortés y Arturo Leyte en Heidegger 1996. Las citas de la versión en alemán son de Heidegger (1950 115-208).

de metodologías que proporcionen criterios bajo los cuales se pueda tasar la felicidad de la relación de cualquier concepto con cualquier realidad. En cierto sentido, la pieza de Restrepo trata de representar una masacre de bananeros a manos del Estado colombiano, en complicidad con una multinacional estadounidense. Y en cierto sentido, Acosta persigue la historia de esta posibilidad de representar en su ensayo. Pero las aseveraciones más contundentes de la filósofa sugieren que es la tarea de caracterizar “el abismo marcado por la imposibilidad del recuerdo” (Acosta 2018 9) de esta representación –esta falta de sentido, entonces– la que es su meta principal. Dada la nueva interpretación de Acosta sobre Hegel, que late al fondo de esta lectura de Restrepo, que este sea su objetivo es lo más apropiado.

Al principio de un ensayo publicado algunos años antes en la revista norteamericana *New Centennial Review*, nos encontramos frente a una lectura llamativa por parte de Acosta del idealista alemán. Al menos es sorprendente para cualquiera que pensara que su última palabra sobre el arte consiste en afirmar que es una fase intermediaria en camino a la realización del saber absoluto. Por el contrario, Acosta sostiene que el arte es el momento de la historia de la fenomenología en que aparece la memoria.

Entering and exploring art's sceneries involves the apprehension of what we have lived in another way; no longer in the sphere of what is verifiable (which is, to Hegel, the challenge taken up both by history and law), but rather in the sphere of absolute truth. History's "pastness" can only be understood by experiencing its passing by, its having been, and, consequently, only when we have gone through the paradoxical experience of remembrance: for remembering, comprehending, and interiorizing history as what has past [...] means to perceive what is no longer present from the standpoint of the present; it means to experience the present's loss and its continuous passage into the past. (Acosta 2014 72)

Así, el arte aparece como complicación que viene después de que la tarea fenomenológica se ha completado. Sirve para interrumpir la gran marcha de la dialéctica, ya que suelta otro movimiento del pensar, lo que Acosta llama “otra vía” (2013 28). Este camino diferente también conlleva la posibilidad de complicar la filosofía “desde dentro” (*id.* 13). Hay obras de arte que siguen “una propuesta latente” de Hegel de pensar la comunidad para toparse con una perspectiva histórica que no necesariamente hace política (*cf. id.* 15). Sin embargo, insiste Acosta, no albergan ninguna “responsabilidad o tarea” secreto (*cf.* 2014 74), y por eso delatan la grandeza de volver sobre los pasos del logro de la historia que Hegel esperaba encontrar en el arte en sus *Lecciones de estética*, póstuma publicación de los apuntes de cursos universitarios que dio

entre 1818 y 1829. No cabe duda de que la lectura de Acosta le parecería arriesgada, si no confusa, a cualquier lector que no hubiera logrado experimentar la miopía de no ver la contaminación de cada intento de elaborar conceptos definitivos de la política, puesto que Acosta ofrece una manera de empezar a pensar más allá de las vistas históricas con las que se nutre la filosofía política clásica. Y leer a Hegel con atención a los límites de la dialéctica –donde a lo mejor funciona de una forma, pero “puede reventar también”– en vez de leerlo como el máximo representante del pensamiento comunitario de la “conciliación y totalización”, da un fundamento no menor al proyecto en cuestión (cf. 2013 14).

En el lugar donde muchas veces se anticipa registrar *Aufhebung* –y esto el artista colombiano lo deja muy claro, según Acosta–, hay cierta presencia de la deficiencia de un desorden deficiente. Restrepo da privilegio temático a fragmentos que no pueden volver a ser ensamblados, esquivarlas que revelan que acaso nunca llegarán a ser, cuando la historia oficial se pone a leer el pasado. *Musa paradisiaca* se ocupa del desafío de recoger recuentos de un “evento ‘mítico’” en la historia de Colombia. Es mítico tanto porque su historia no se ha contado, como por ser conocida por muchos de maneras que padecen la debilidad experiencial de no tener mucha evidencia que aducir. O, mejor dicho y más conforme al espíritu del análisis de Acosta, porque es una historia que ningún colombiano puede olvidar, porque “habita los intersticios del olvido” (2018 53). Una masacre tuvo lugar en la noche del 5 de diciembre de 1928. La *United Fruit Company* reprimió con fuerza letal una huelga realizada por sus empleados. Bajo el mando del General Cortés Vargas, soldados del Ejército Nacional eliminaron la supuesta “tendencia subversiva” de estos trabajadores, así calificada en parte por Frank B. Kellogg, el Secretario de Estado de Estados Unidos en aquel entonces (cf. Gray). “La matanza es una de las mayores masacres indocumentadas en la historia de Colombia”, nos dice Acosta (2018 42). Fue un episodio del olvido del que nadie se puede olvidar. Quizá merece aventurar, por tanto, que este olvido forma parte esencial de la experiencia colombiana. Acaso sea la masacre aquello de lo que una búsqueda de la justicia no puede proveer. No está claro lo que es. Ni qué es lo que Acosta haya conjurado.

¿Qué tipo de hito discursivo está en juego en la capacidad de hacer taquigrafía de un evento como tal, de darle las coordenadas verbales, conceptuales, citacionales que son necesarias, si no suficientes, para recordarlo? El artículo detalla un itinerario que pasa de piso a piso por la exhibición de Restrepo. Una escena de *Cien años de soledad* de Gabriel García Márquez que nos enseña la diferencia entre mito e historia oficial, una diferencia que al final colapsa, y sirve como hilo conductor ensartado a través del recorrido de tres plantas. A esta escena el multiplex

multimedial de la obra, y sin duda los viajes descriptivos de Acosta a través de este entorno sensorial aportan no solo un intento de localizar prácticas historiográficas que oscilan entre la legitimidad y el deseo de ser creíble, sino también una respuesta, un modo de representar. Acosta apunta: “la búsqueda incansable por una respuesta que esté a la altura del reto planteado por tantos años de olvido” (2018 45), junto con la multitud de veces en la estela de la fecha concreta de 1928 en las que ha vuelto a ocurrir, o antes había ocurrido, una masacre similar. Cabe notar que Acosta no evita la dificultad de interpretación que aflige a la recepción de Restrepo y a la obra de arte en sí.

Esta complejidad de interpretación, que de todos modos parece estar destinada a pulsionar el potente esfuerzo de interpretación tanto de Acosta como de Restrepo, nos lleva al meollo de la cuestión. Una serie de preguntas queda por contestar. ¿Están estos dos intérpretes conscientes de la búsqueda en que se encuentran? ¿Están presentes en la presencia de la trayectoria que esta implica? Y si lo están, ¿no conlleva esta conciencia una representación violenta de la violencia histórica que está promulgada-ensayada en el ensayo mismo, sobre todo en su recreación de una visita serpenteante de la obra artística? ¿No implica entonces el ensayo mismo algún tipo de violencia de la representación? ¿No constituye la narrativa de Acosta un bloqueo de la posibilidad de la escucha? ¿No se balancea en el precipicio de abogar por la in-afectabilidad, por no poder ser atravesada sino por la materialidad de la realidad conceptual que tanto le encanta a Hegel, a pesar sus mejores esfuerzos para derrocar esta clausura de antemano? ¿No es este el mismo rumbo de recepción y conmoción que Acosta tan hábilmente despliega? En su trabajo anterior sobre Hegel y la comunidad, Acosta sostiene que no tenemos por qué acoger a Hegel como un pensador cautivo, preso de la metafísica del sujeto. Pero su ensayo más tarde contiene frases que dan a entender que “la inquebrantable certeza de lo pensado”² (Heidegger 1996 100) está dentro de la interrupción del entendimiento filosófico del pasado. O ¿es más bien una falta de certeza anunciada en la misma pérdida? O ¿es la autoconciencia deficiente que se intuye por, en, o a través de, la frágil materialidad –la obra de arte como búsqueda– que resulta? “Es imposible no preguntarse así [...]” (Acosta 2018 44); “a cualquier espectador que entre a la galería” (Acosta 2018 42) se le ocurre semejante interrogante. El ensayo está repleto de gestos de este estilo que tienden a tentar. ¿No son estos los mismos tics retóricos que señalan la subsunción del arte por la verdad absoluta?

2 En la versión alemana, “*der unerschütterlichen Gewißheit seines Gedachten*” (Heidegger 1950 118).

Si seguimos a Heidegger en su lectura de Hegel, aparecen algunas maneras de lidiar con estas preguntas. En primer lugar, nos explica, hay que recordar que el saber absoluto que le interesa a Hegel forma parte de la definición de la filosofía. Cumple con una condición necesaria. Filosofar es saber de manera absoluta. Pero no es suficiente: un escollo que Heidegger destaca. El saber absoluto tiene que estar acompañado por un principio previo que rige lo que es saber.³ Este principio es una pista importante para la destrucción de la filosofía que le interesa a Heidegger, ya que confirma para Hegel la diferencia óntico-ontológica entre la conciencia natural y la conciencia absoluta. Este principio acompaña al concepto de conciencia para que la segunda no caiga en el problema de una subjetividad abstracta o concreta que no cumple el movimiento dialéctico. Garantiza que el impulso de trazar el camino que siguen las formaciones de conciencia sea susceptible a la conceptualización. Asimismo, confirma que el pensar sigue un patrón. Además, convalida la llegada de la reflexión sobre esta ruta con el concepto de la experiencia. En cambio, receloso de la diferencia que se gana por medio de este principio –esto es, desconfiado de que lo que está en juego sea un concepto–, Heidegger pretende indicar cómo el término “experiencia” interviene para asegurar que es de hecho el pensamiento que corre sin fricción–.

¿Por qué el esfuerzo por poner en relieve esta percha terminológica que respalda la principalidad? Porque es justo aquí donde la diferencia óntico-ontológica tiene que ver con la posibilidad de aislar al “*ego cogito* que se representa aisladamente a sí mismo” (Heidegger 1996 118). A Heidegger le interesa agrandar el drama de escenas en las que parece estar en juego un dilema, donde los intereses “epocales” parecen requerir o que la filosofía formule su tarea histórica de nuevo o que caiga en desuso. Le gusta seguir la manera en que la imposibilidad de la segunda opción deviene tema. En este caso, le fascina el hecho de que este desuso que Hegel no puede soportar engendre una vuelta de tuerca de sus principios. A saber, se trata de que la conciencia tiene que someter su propia esencia de estar en movimiento constante al escrutinio. Y, según

3 “El conocimiento efectivamente real de lo ente en tanto que ente, es ahora el conocimiento absoluto de lo Absoluto en su absolutéz. Ahora bien, esa misma filosofía moderna que habita en la tierra de la autoconciencia exige, de acuerdo con el clima del lugar, tener la certeza previa de su propio principio. Quiere primero ponerse de acuerdo acerca del conocimiento por medio del que ella conoce de modo absoluto. Sin quererlo, el conocimiento aparece aquí como un medio acerca de cuyo buen uso debe preocuparse el conocimiento [...] en cuanto se toma el conocimiento entendido como medio para apoderarse de lo absoluto como una preocupación, debe surgir el convencimiento de que en relación con lo absoluto todo medio, que en su calidad de medio es relativo será inapropiado para lo absoluto y necesariamente fracasará ante él” (Heidegger 1996 101).

Heidegger, este escrutinio no muestra nada más que la evasión de la pregunta por el ser.

Hacia el final de su ensayo, Heidegger deja desplegar el sendero que permite que Hegel piense lo que es un ser que piensa por medio del término “experiencia”. Hasta este momento, Heidegger ha llevado a cabo una exégesis cuidadosa del prefacio de la edición original de *La fenomenología del espíritu*. Pero ahora se dirige a reflexionar sobre su título anterior.

¿Por qué abandona Hegel el título escogido en primer lugar, “Ciencia de la experiencia de la conciencia”? No lo sabemos. Pero podemos suponerlo. ¿Se asustó de la palabra destacada por él mismo en el centro del título, “experiencia”? ¿Es que parecía demasiado atrevido darle una nueva sonoridad a la resonancia que ya tenía el significado originario de la palabra “experimentar”, y que seguramente vibraba todavía en el pensamiento de Hegel, esto es, entender experiencia como ese alcanzar que sale ansioso en pos y dicho alcanzar como el modo de la presencia, del *eänai*, del ser? (Heidegger 1996 150)

Justo después de exponer las maneras en las que la experiencia entra en los comentarios iniciales de Hegel, para mostrar que esta palabra, “experiencia”, apoya la confirmación de que la conciencia sí puede ser conceptualizada, parece a su vez que la experiencia se saca para opacar la envergadura de mantener una diferencia óntico-ontológica. Es decir, Heidegger cree haber encontrado el principio más importante que defiende Hegel para enfrentarse al miedo de ir al fondo de lo que podría implicar no saber manejar de manera conceptual lo que es experiencial.

Mientras tanto, Acosta prácticamente abraza el término. De hecho, este le sirve como un núcleo importante en su explicación de las consecuencias estéticas de lo “inabarcable del archivo” (Acosta 2018 50). “No es, pues, a una memoria como recuerdo, ni como archivo, que la obra da forma en este segundo piso de su instalación. *Se trata más bien de una memoria capaz de acompañar la experiencia misma de la pérdida*” (Acosta 2018 52; énfasis agregado). La frase llega después de que nos ha guiado por el paciente trabajo archivístico de Restrepo que les acoge a visitantes de la exhibición solo para burlarse de su deseo de detener un índice exhaustivo a unos pasos de la entrada. Hemos atravesado un recuerdo de la primera visita de Acosta y su “desorientación” temporal frente a racimos de bananas que condensan más de cien años de olvido por medio de la representación de muertos, “incontados”, que a su vez, según Acosta, representan la insuficiencia de esta (cf. 2018 49). Hemos pasado del primero al segundo piso de la instalación. Si el primero insiste en la naturaleza inarchivable del evento, el segundo quiere cuestionar la memoria de lo que nunca puede ser almacenado por la historia. Este

desplazamiento dentro de “la búsqueda incansable” es importante. De intentos de aferrarse al pasado a esfuerzos de establecer cómo el arte comunica que el pasado siempre se nos escapará de las manos: Acosta quiere arrastrarnos hacia otro registro de desafío para el pensar.

Es importante resaltar que el proyecto de Acosta quiere destronar a la filosofía. No es un objetivo menor, aunque no sea su principal, ya que lo quiere hacer mediante la fuerza indeleble con que el pensador se arma al pasar por, pensar con, los retos conceptuales que genera el arte. “art neither resolves nor leaves what has happened behind; it does, however, clear a different pathway for remembrance by revisiting the past, by accompanying its loss, and by mourning it” (Acosta 2014 73). En cuatro años pasamos de un arte que es en sí una forma de acompañar a una memoria “capaz de acompañar” a la experiencia. En la versión anterior el arte abre camino para la memoria y en la más reciente el arte le da forma. ¿Hay algo en juego en la diferencia entre abrir caminos y generar formas? Quizá la apertura acopla bien con la estructura más programática del escrito al que pertenece, mientras las formas dramatizan el juego de desorientación del ensayo posterior. Acosta comienza el artículo de 2014 con una exposición de la postura de Hegel frente a lo estético. Sigue una lectura de tres piezas de arte contemporáneo colombiano que, según Acosta, aportan distintas lecciones sobre la destrucción violenta de la memoria:

I believe Colombian art has plenty to clarify, inquire about, and propose on this matter. Moreover, as I would like to show herein, it has already been doing this: it is leaving traces that philosophy, among other disciplines, should be able to pick up and learn from. (2014 74)

Pero cabe preguntarnos ¿qué significa “dejar huellas” en este contexto? ¿Son acaso huellas que se dejan en la filosofía, pistas que operan de manera subterránea, o quizás en el plano más básico o bajo ella? O ¿son huellas que sigue la filosofía, huellas que le sacan de su entorno cómodo hasta conseguir que se le haga el buen detective que persigue sus pistas por donde lleven para resolver algún misterio, o se dé muestra de haber estado empeñado en semejante actividad desde el principio? ¿Cómo cambia su modo de operar: o se abre vistas sobre logros distintos que ofrezca la operación de siempre, o deja de operar filosóficamente de manera estricta cuando estas huellas sean sonsacadas? ¿Qué significa desafiar a la filosofía, preguntar sobre su capacidad de pensar de manera histórica?

¿Constituyen estos “silencios de la historia del presente” que se supone que este arte lleva a “inscribir” (Acosta 2018 56) una forma de autoconciencia, una certeza inquebrantable que aparece en el acto mismo de hacerse visible o antes? O ¿es que su aportación a la redistribución de

“los espacios pre-asignados de lo político, de la historia” (Acosta 2018 45) destruye el sentido epocal? ¿Acaso es que el concepto de memoria señala que está en declive lo que aporta el sujeto a lo absoluto que el movimiento de su pensamiento se esfuerza en todo momento por narrar? Y ¿qué pensar de un movimiento de búsqueda constante que parece dar por sentado que está compartido siempre también? ¿A qué se debe su carácter colectivo? O ¿son todas estas búsquedas singulares? Y, por fin, ¿cómo se registra esta colectividad en su carácter nacional, colombiano, o en relación alguna con lo que se llama la historia de Colombia, o la experiencia colombiana de lo histórico?

Esta última pregunta es clave para la interrupción –otra manera de relacionarse con el pasado– sobre la que Acosta quiere echar luz. El sendero que ella comparte con Restrepo, la búsqueda, ejerce presión sobre el objetivo de la dialéctica de Hegel. Porque Hegel quiere que este trayecto siga una dinámica dialéctica; asimismo, quiere que el concepto de la experiencia le ayude a pensar, por fin, lo que el ser que piensa realmente es. Sin “experiencia” no solo no consigue una manera de hacer taquigrafía del recorrido de la conciencia, sino también se empieza a tambalear el hecho de que ha sido el sujeto que está en cuestión en todo movimiento fenomenológico. En concreto, Hegel no obtiene el principio que tanto deseaba, el principio que asegura el control de la autorrepresentación del pensamiento. Como nos cuenta Heidegger, este deseo se revela como problema y empieza a funcionar como otro tipo de representación. La experiencia, *Erfahrung*, no muestra ningún “*Bestandstück innerhalb*” (Heidegger 1950 187), ninguna reserva, ningún recurso vigente, ninguna parte constituyente interior; la experiencia no se muestra “dentro de lo ente como parte integrante suya”, como traducen Helena Cortés y Arturo Leyte (Heidegger 1996 141), cuando se suponía que ofrecía una idea de la conciencia natural. La investigación histórica-estética de Acosta comparte la desconfianza de la lectura de Heidegger con respecto al deseo principal que da lugar a la ilusión de conseguir para la absolutez algún poder exposicional infalible. No hay movimiento sin obstáculo con respecto al acercamiento a un suceso que ha pasado cuyos efectos de cierto modo siguen en vigor. Pero Acosta le da un giro más a la preocupación de Heidegger por el ingrediente secreto del sujeto, el “*unserer Zusatz*” del sujeto, el hecho de que para Hegel siempre volvemos a darnos con la importancia de “nuestra aportación” (Heidegger 1996 143).

Acosta matiza la aportación compensatoria de la filosofía, la sorpresa de certeza absoluta que acompaña toda autoconciencia. Mientras Heidegger cree haberse topado con una crítica del principio de la diferencia onto-ontológica que da pauta para nunca dejar el blanco del sujeto absoluto, Acosta cuestiona si realmente este blanco está tan asentado en

el corazón del drama de la fenomenología como se suele creer. En vez de principios le interesa la memoria, y así no le perturba tanto que alguna herencia de la subjetividad se vaya a arrastrar siempre que se aproxime a lo histórico. Como consecuencia, la preocupación por cambios en la función representativa del concepto de la experiencia está fundada en nimiedades. Lo que parece ser una investigación, la de Heidegger, de maneras de gestionar, si no limitar, el deseo de que la filosofía siempre juegue el papel protagonista, se vuelve una resistencia sintomática bajo la maniobra discursiva de Acosta. Es la resistencia ante la mera posibilidad de que la filosofía se atreva a ir más allá de pensar sobre si sigue siendo o no un discurso heroico.

Con respecto tanto a Hegel como a Heidegger, la apuesta de Acosta es a la vez más parca y más extravagante. Por un lado, su discurso aboga por una modestia de demostración no tanto terminológica como expositiva. Por el otro, la extravagancia de esta labor sobre la experiencia histórica es la de “negarse a hacer de la conciencia la forma de su movimiento” (Derrida, Dutoit y Derrida 2013 224, traducción propia). Pero igual su despreocupación interviene para romper con los intereses “propios” de la filosofía. Su manera de escribir busca constituir otros intereses por constituir en sí “una dura prueba” (Derrida 1987 22, traducción propia). Me pregunto si es posible que el entendimiento filosófico se haya realizado siempre por medio de habitar lo que Acosta describe como “el presente en un estado de ‘alucinada lucidez’” (2018 54), el cual se nutre justamente de este tipo de prueba.

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COMENTARIOS A “TO FORGE PAIN INTO
STRENGTH: ON DORIS SALCEDO’S *FRAGMENTOS*
(REFLECTIONS ON ART AS MEMORIALIZATION).”

KEYNOTE AT UC IRVINE, APRIL 25, 2019.

THEORY, PRACTICE AND LISTENING IN MARÍA DEL
ROSARIO ACOSTA

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I would like to start with a small gesture María del Rosario Acosta makes when she expands on a brief quotation by Hannah Arendt. A gesture which, I believe, will help us get at some crucial implications of her project in today’s talk, but also in her work at large.

Thinking about the possibilities of listening to traumatic experiences, she quotes from Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism*: “Only the fearful imagination can afford to keep thinking about horrors” (441). What Arendt is advocating here, as Acosta explains, is the restlessness of the imagination – even if afraid – and its creative role in articulating spaces in which stories of traumatic violence can be told without being re-contained by a linear or stable chronology. But let us go back to Arendt’s passage, this time looking at Acosta’s brief interruption, or friendly sabotage of it. Arendt’s phrase goes: “Only the fearful imagination can afford to keep thinking –and Acosta says, but also hearing– about horrors”.

This makes sense, of course, since both Arendt and Acosta are talking about how to listen to these stories in a way that does not replicate or reenact the violence that produced them in the first place, on the one hand, or that does not silence what needs to be repeated, what exceeds experience and cannot be forgotten, on the other. But what is remarkable for me, is the gesture of putting thinking and listening side by side. With her friendly sabotage of Arendt, by stating that to keep thinking is un-dissociable from continuing to listen, Acosta is taking the philosophical tradition to the limit and indexing the difficulties of making sense of what is illegible, or in better words, inaudible to some philosophical categories.

This is not to say that the philosophical tradition has not pointed at this problem before. Arendt herself, but also Benjamin, are some of the thinkers Acosta resorts to, in order to think with them about this. But we could also go to Heidegger and the importance of hearing the call of Being, or even of touching, as another displacement of the centrality of sight and vision in the works of Nancy, Derrida, and Deleuze. So, the crucial idea here is not to abandon the usual suspects; I think that what Acosta does is more productive, namely, her invitation is to read and hear the philosophical tradition differently, to always be ready to intervene their thought with ours, to re-signify, to move from one place to another, paradoxically, perhaps, but relentlessly. Ultimately, to see where thinkers offer points of entry to inhabit them uncomfortably, and thematize such discomfort, introducing listening into thought itself.

With this simple modification, Acosta opens up a critical reflection about our dealings with the (Western) philosophical tradition and of what it means to think from or about Latin America, and from and about Colombia specifically. I will leave that there for now as one of my reactions to her work.

But yet another issue that unfolds by putting thinking and listening side by side is the question of theory and practice, something which Acosta also analyzes critically throughout her texts, in my view. Listening entails an implication that is absent in seeing. It requires us to implicate ourselves in the story being told to us in a radically distinct and less distant, or less mediated, way. Her work with survivors of violence brought to her attention the question of listening, and not only in the practical sense of the kinds of difficulties survivors have in order to put their experiences into words, but also in connection with the absence of a framework according to which we can understand such experiences – the need of what she calls grammars of listening. Practice and theory merge in listening, not because their opposition is overcome, but rather because it was never there from the get-go. This inaugurates: “a distinct structure of temporality that demands a disarticulation not only of our modes of aesthetic perception, but also of our conceptions of experience, of the very structure of experience and, therefore, of the mechanisms for its representation” (Acosta 2018 161-2, my translation). We can start seeing how the question of putting listening beside thinking in Acosta’s work unfolds and becomes the questioning of the opposition between theory and practice, and, ultimately, the re-configuration of the notions of representation and experience at large. And all this comes to the fore by reading her comment of one sentence of Arendt. Dangerous thinker.

But I’ll say more on theory and practice. Rather than hiding it, she thematizes where she is coming from: that is, her work with victims

of violence in Colombia and Chicago. And, as I have mentioned, by marking her trajectory, what we tend to see as an opposition, becomes two parallel un-dissociable attributes of experience. The acknowledgment of her position as a thinker, because it is an unstable one, allows her to access a register of thought which would be otherwise occult. She is not alone in this, of course. One of the most notable examples, as perhaps notable examples should be, is a rather unknown one. The reflections of Venezuelan thinker Alejandro Moreno and his reformulation of what practice means can help us situate Acosta in a lineage of scholars that continuously try to displace philosophical categories and inhabit them from the inside, in order to let an everchanging Latin American thought emerge from it.

For Moreno, whose work arises out of his attempts to understand life in the slum of Caracas where he lives, praxis and theory are too static as terms. The act of living as carried out by a community in a particular historical period, and which is previous to any knowledge, is called *practicación* (practication). For him, to understand this neologism, *practicación*, means to move away from the separation of thought and praxis made by the eye, and hear and touch experiences instead (cf. 69).

We will not be precise if we believe *practicación* is praxis with another name, that it is just a simple renaming that creates an illusion of a foundational moment in a field of study. *Practicación* is a way of understanding theory and practice as emerging from an unstable position *vis-à-vis* the philosophical tradition. In other words, thinking as listening is always the productive conflation of theory and practice, and for Moreno and Acosta this is locatable in the gaps of our philosophical tradition, but we forget that.

But even if we forget, there are unforgettable things and experiences. And again, thinking is hearing those experiences in their unforgettable character. But also imagining the frames, even if tentative ones, that will be able to receive them.

Walter Benjamin states that just as there are unforgettable things or moments, even if all humanity has forgotten them, there is also a translatability of linguistic creation, even if we have been unable to translate it (cf. 70). This idea is key here to understand how the articulation of grammars of listening offers a possibility of translating what is inaudible in certain experiences. This possibility, however, would not appear as possible at all if our position as thinkers did not require us to reframe the way we consider theory and practice as different activities involved in a hierarchic relation.

Acosta, then, reminds us that philosophy does not automatically mean thought, or listening. And when she thinks and listens in the

gaps of the tradition, she re-inscribes them in it. This is the thinking/feeling ear of philosophy.

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It has been absolutely incredible to have the chance to get to know María del Rosario and to discuss her work. Thinking about her reading of *Fragmentos*, its fragmentary aesthetic being part of Salcedo's claim to a counter-monument, I wanted to trace just a couple of questions between yesterday's workshop and today's lecture. One of the things which struck me from the first time I read Acosta's texts as I mentioned yesterday,⁴ is an economy of credibility which she opens up alongside a crisis of intelligibility thanks to her readings of García Márquez and Arendt (cf. Acosta 2019, forthcoming). With Arendt, Acosta's grammar of listening displaces the burden of proof onto the listener. With García Márquez, the close association between the *inaudito* and the *incredible* recalls the necessarily fictitious nature, I might also say the leap of faith or literary studies' commonplace, the suspension of disbelief, to make sense out of experience. Indeed, with García Márquez' quote, "we have to ask little of imagination", perhaps alluding to the potentially abominable and original hallucinatory nature of reality, I sense that Acosta casts an interesting tension between credibility/believability and intelligibility/imagination (between originality in Arendt and the psychic need *and* resistance to believe, present perhaps in García Márquez). A grammar of listening is thus and needs to be open to the unknown and unthinkable which must nonetheless be believed. A grammar of listening attends to the tension between the hearable and the unheard of: between the sayable and the unbelievable real. Without guarantee of verifiability, this grammar must be capable of holding or keeping company with what it cannot entirely assimilate.

Second, Acosta's reading of Arendt's *abominable originality* opens the possibility of a pragmatics in her work *vis-à-vis* the destructive plasticity of the decades-long conflict in which she is able to trace the absences and erasures performed by violence. Acosta's work seems here to resist a tendency in contemporary violence to be perceived and performed as natural catastrophe (Malabou), to exploit precisely the catastrophe of

4 Véase comentario más arriba al texto de Acosta sobre José Alejandro Restrepo.

meaning which Richard diagnosed in Chile's dictatorship. Acosta insists here on language and the work of art. Between the artwork and a society of survivors, her reading of *Fragmentos* foregrounds the transformation and creativity of those surviving the catastrophe. How much abominable originality are you willing to trace in the production of *Fragmentos*? To which extent can what Arendt also calls fearful imagination emancipate itself from, arguably, its abominable origin?

To me, the *mise-en-scène* of the *fundición*, the melting, of arms as a *fundación*, foundation of a different future, poses fascinating questions. Of course, *Fragmentos* could be a counter-foundation as much as it declares itself to be a counter-monument. Rather than scrutinize Salcedo's decision to think the difficult question of re-founding a different society, one of my questions could be phrased around the *fundición* of the process of the artwork and the *quiebre*, break of meaning. Do you think the break consists precisely in the amorphous de-figuration of the *fundición*? Is the catastrophe precisely the amorphic *fundición*? Or - perhaps - do you think it is conceivable that the *fundición* allows paths out of, through, beyond, across the catastrophic break by presenting a space which is contiguous, an opaque surface, yet minutely molded and lacerated by countless touches of the hammer? At the end of the day, the floor could be thought of, not only as a foundation or monument, but also as a stage. This stage monumentalizes what Lacan and Butler theorize, namely, that the stage is always set before we enter it. Perhaps the counter-monument, and Salcedo's willingness to engage the difficulties of memorialization, acknowledge the pragmatics of setting foundations while leaving them open to future revisions. But the counter-monument perhaps *also* - none of this is simple - gives the space, precisely the three dimensions, in which the reverberations and indirections of a grammar of listening can assume centre-ground.

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TOWARDS A MINOR ART

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In the context of the Colombian armed conflict, Professor María del Rosario Acosta asks herself about the difficulties we face when talking about memory in Colombia and the manner in which memory, as a place of listening, makes our lives and the lives of others believable. How is this possible when violence has institutionalized silence? In this sense, the construction of memory, as Acosta suggests, is important precisely because Colombia “has to face the fact that the reality that is waiting and demanding to be told surpasses in each case the mechanisms with which we usually represent and account for the world”.

Salcedo’s proposal of *Fragmentos* as a counter-monument, as opposed to an obelisk or a triumphal arc, and Acosta’s questions and reading of the artwork, constitute an important gesture to rethink memory and history in the Colombian context of the peace agreement that, at the same time, opens a space for art to happen. Following the discussion of yesterday’s workshop, we could ask how art –*Fragmentos*, in this case– can be a space for listening, for an encounter of “real” listening, as Acosta says, when we are no longer in the space of what is verifiable. From this, my first question is, what is the “real” in this listening? And I would add, what are the risks of thinking and making *Fragmentos* a work and a space of pain and memorialization?

From their solidity to their melting, the weapons and the victims’ pain somehow alter their form, making us remember that every floor that is built and that we walk on is always already an act of barbarism. However, or precisely because of this, it strikes me that the floor is very solid, very stable, and will be for the next 53 years. The temporality that the artwork seems to equate, not only marks a past but a future, that, although uncertain, is somehow already prescribed by this floor. There are no holes to be or not to be filled and the floor, although textured, is always *present*. With this in mind, if we think of *Fragmentos* as a sculptural/architectonic space whose foundation is the floor made of weapons, we might think that the space is not really empty, but full, and not only full but grounded. What then are the risks and challenges of affirming a conflict’s finality as a foundation and to equate it with its futurity?

How does art function when the victims and their pain are explicitly put at the center and somehow resolved in a material?

The process of the work is present and visible, multiple, but still guided by one author and one plan and, perhaps, one form of pain. I wonder if in what it seems to me an extreme form of visibility and transparency, there is something that, in fact, we fail to see? If the “work” is a work of pain, how could this pain avoid being homogenized, flattened, resolved, in what melts to what is, again, solidified? What is the status of the victim and the status of Salcedo as an author when the narrative becomes, again, molded in order to be stable? What happens to the grammar and singularity of voices now under *one* floor? Because to melt and spread pain is a sort of assumption that pain could be fusible and molded in the same way that weapons are.

I understand that the floor can work to open a new moment in the history of the conflict that might allow the conflict to think itself anew in this inaugural moment of a peace agreement, and that now the victims, as Salcedo’s opening speech says, “take charge and can dominate their pain.” If some answers are given by the artist as an author, by her controlling and guiding the material in order for the victims to materialize their pain, how can we make the space of *Fragmentos* less monumental? If Salcedo wants to build a counter-monument that is more horizontal rather than vertical, the way I think horizontality is something more suspended between a floor and a ceiling, as something in the middle, or that floats, that keeps both sides in tension.

In a certain sense, art can be horizontal when it is more authorless, and when complexities are in constant tension with its materials. On this basis, is it possible to conceive another kind of floor that is more habitable, rather than walkable, visitable, a space not only to walk on, as if dominating it, but that slides and shifts as we walk on it? A floor perhaps more raw, unstable, that puts at stake the relations among materials, surfaces, and supports? Is it possible to think a multiplicity, perhaps, that evades its reduction, the anonymity that resists the equivalence of a name, a concept, or a time?

We might think then, that, as walkers and spectators (we also see the video at the entrance of the memorial, crafted by Salcedo and her team to explain the details of the process and the ideas behind the floor), what brings us close to the victims is not only the fact that we all share the same catastrophe, the same floor, but that we can inhale and exhale in the particles of its ruins. A speck of dust, a grain of sand, a disturbing grain, that could create a stranger zone of inexperience. Can we approach an art that is not purer, but more minor, or an art with some sort of disappointment, in distance and proximity, without mistaking the other’s flesh for one’s own? An art, perhaps, less interested in using pain, and

more directed towards a raw, disjointed, relation with surfaces and floors, to textures that change recognizable forms in order to avoid romantic glamorization. How can we avoid the commodification of victims to critically discuss the will to “rehistorize” the past by means of preserving, mending, and repairing pain and its fractured continuities? How can *Fragmentos* expose the absences of these holes without filling the empty spaces of identity with words of comfort? Can we listen and move through an art closer to the tensions of an everydayness, not marked by an author’s floor, and that does not attempt to equate a past with a very elongated future that already has an expiration date?

RESPONSE

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Let me first start by saying that it has been an honor and a pleasure to listen again, this time in the exercise of reading them slowly, to the commentaries that were so generously written and read by the participants of the workshop devoted to my work that took place at UC Irvine in April of this year. To have such brilliant and detailed comments to one's work is perhaps the best gift an academic could ask for. And to have them shared in such a generous space was not only a pleasure, but a privilege. I do not have the space here to do justice to all the questions, suggestions, and criticisms that came up during the workshop, and that have been recorded in the texts compiled above. I will try, however, to address what I think are the main challenges to my work, and those places that invite and force me to think further, more carefully, or even more forcefully, in relation to my work on memory and resistance to oblivion in contemporary Colombian art.

I would like to begin by addressing Carlos Colmenares' comments to my lecture on Doris Salcedo's *Fragmentos*. If I decide to start here, it is because I think Colmenares has done a wonderful job reminding me of what my work in philosophy is about, and the ways in which I have tried to navigate the tradition while also attempting to be faithful –if such a thing is possible at all– to the place and experiences that have made me rethink and rearticulate the way I do, and want to do, philosophy. I think it is Colmenares' generous and incisive ear that allows him to understand the important difference between seeing and listening; between thinking with an eye directed to an object of study, and thinking with an ear implicated in the story that is being told to us, and for which we do not have (yet) available frameworks of meaning. It is Colmenares then, and not me (or Colmenares much better than me), who understands and points out that what is at stake here is a fruitful disruption of the duality between theory and practice that plays such an important role in the history of philosophy. I appreciate –and feel honored– by the suggestion that this disruption may be doing a job similar to the one performed by the idea of *practicación* in Alejandro Moreno's work. As in the case of Moreno, what is at stake is more than

a mere questioning of traditional philosophical categories and the dualities or divisions that come with them. Colmenares understands that inserting listening into thinking means disrupting the ways in which we conceive experience and the mechanisms that we produce to make sense of it. In my work, this goes hand in hand with an attempt to re-signify the very notion of experience (as Williston Chase also suggests in his commentary), and with it the notions of memory (as pointed out by Martha Torres and Gwendolen Pare), of history, and of the very idea of representation –as well as the materiality and ethics involved in this operation, as Isabella Vergara critically invites me to revise. It is in embarking on this path towards re-signification, from within and from without the tradition, as Colmenares rightly points out, that the translatability of what otherwise remains inaudible turns into a possible task: for thinking, for philosophy, but mostly for the sharp and attentive ear that is willing to turn both into an activity of true and imaginative listening.⁵

Let me then go through all the previous commentaries one by one and address some of the questions that each one of them has posed to my work.

In her commentary to my article on “Memory and Fragility,” Martha Torres appropriates in a very productive way the notion I have advanced there of art’s form of remembrance as a reproduction of the experience of loss. Furthermore, she brings forth two examples from Mexican artists, the plastic work of Teresa Margolles and Sara Uribe’s written lyrics, to suggest other instantiations of art’s singular capacity to name the absence, and, in naming it, keeping it company, denouncing it, and resisting its unavoidable passing. The loudly silent name of the disappeared body of Tadeo, in Uribe’s poem, that resonates every time a present body’s name is spoken, reminds me of that encounter between bodiless names and nameless bodies that Juan Manuel Echavarría’s work is able to embody in such a powerful way. The misty bubbles of Margolles’ installation, which put us in touch with –and literally make us encounter– the bodily remains of the deceased, points to a very interesting dialogue with the works of Colombian artists such as María José Arjona. In her performance *Recuerda recordar*, she uses red ink bubbles to penetrate the pristine white space of the gallery with the trace of an absence that is nonetheless never named. This absence can only be witnessed in the encounter between the ephemeral life of the bubble and the trace it leaves on the wall at the moment it ceases to

5 I also have to thank Colmenares for reminding me that Benjamin’s notion of *translatability* –and not only his notion of the unforgettable– are at the center of my project.

exist.⁶ There is something very singular about the difficulty of naming the kind of mourning that is required when all we have is either the absence of a corpse or the unfathomable – and not yet nameable – materiality of violence. Latin American art has been confronted with this question time and again, and to be able to listen to the grammars it has found in order to deal with this unresolvable experience is one of the paths philosophy can take towards a more responsible understanding of the task of mourning or, better said, of the task of bearing witness to the impossibility of mourning and the kind of demands this impossibility poses on us.

One of these demands is connected to what Gwendolen Pare finds in her commentary to my reading of José Alejandro Restrepo's work. And I say "what she finds" rather than "what I have argued" in my reading, because I believe she has very creatively and lucidly articulated something I had not entirely understood until she brought it forth in her generous interpretation, namely, the ethical demand to reclaim a possibility of memory that is no longer of what has happened and has been silenced, erased, obliterated, but rather of *what should not have ever happened* (hence, the ethical component here has its strongest sense). Pare relates this imperative ("what should not have happened", "lo que no debió llegar a ser verdadero" (235) to my insistence, in other places, on the difference between memory understood as an archival recollection of facts that depends on a certain notion of truth as verifiable, –and remembrance as the act of rendering believable what otherwise remains completely inaudible given its unintelligibility and the radical challenge it poses to our criteria for believability. Pare takes this, however, a step further. One should not understand memory as a form of resistance only in terms of a resistance to oblivion as I have proposed so far in my work. One should perhaps also think of resistance, drawing from a psychoanalytical register, as a defiance to admit the world as it is, to admit violence as such and its radical forms of destructiveness, and thus, as the capacity to imagine and produce an otherwise, to build and "keep a memory of another reality" ("guardar memoria de otra realidad" (235)).

Thus, when Pare asks about the connection between my work on listening and audibility and my work on the question of believability, I hear a very powerful suggestion: to think of the ways in which the act of listening is and can be the act of producing that world that should have been and was not. I have insisted in my work on the need to understand the act of listening as one that, as Pare also puts it, is not yet predetermined or pre-structured, but is rather given shape to in the

6 For a detailed reading of this work by Arjona, see Duarte (2019).

very act of its production, “in the very process of its reception” (“en el proceso mismo de su recepción” *cf.* 234). But I had never thought about putting this together with the hallucinatory character of mythic time that Restrepo – and García Márquez as an important antecedent – recover in their work, and presenting and mobilizing it as the potentiality to dream reality otherwise. Pare asks: “¿Qué nos ofrece la lucidez de un tiempo mítico para la alucinación necesaria de una historia borrada (forzadamente amnésica)?” (234) I have to thank her for this beautiful insight, and for the way in which these connections reveal links among my writings that I had not seen before.

The same goes for Pare’s commentary to my lecture on Doris Salcedo’s *Fragmentos*. What I hear in some of her questions is also connected to the idea that the turn from verifiability to believability – a turn Pare traces in my work via Arendt and García Márquez – goes together with a very strong connection – and nonetheless tension – that I want to propose and work through between intelligibility and imagination. Here what Pare calls the necessary ‘fictitious’ character of experience can be articulated precisely as the need to create the fiction that will allow for the abominable and unbelievable real to be rendered believable. “To which extent”, however, Pare asks, “can what Arendt also calls fearful imagination emancipate itself from, arguably, its abominable origin?” (251). To what extent, therefore, can we differentiate between the creative side of violence – its capacity, as Arendt recalls in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, to introduce something radically new, unprecedented, unheard of and thus not yet categorizable – and the creative power of the fearful imagination to confront this horrific originality? I hear in Pare’s question a very interesting challenge to what I have been calling “grammars of listening,” and the suggestion that I should never forget, in working with these questions, that one (the creative power of imagination) is always contaminated by the other (violence’s horrific originality) – namely, that, as she puts it, Salcedo’s creative act of giving a new *foundation* to Colombia’s histories is necessarily entangled with the violence of the “amorphous de-figuration of the *fundición*” (251) that takes place in her artwork.

In this same line of thought, and also challenging my thought in ways that I could not have anticipated, Isabella Vergara’s beautiful reading of Oscar Muñoz’s works pushes my interpretation of art as resistance. By attending to the materiality of Muñoz’s work, she seems to be able to do justice to it in a way that my own reading does not, reminding me that perhaps, in trying to understand how the work resists oblivion, I have already fixated its experience in a way that is foreign, and escapes its deferred time and its fluid space. By attending to the photographic character of the works, and the belatedness proper to that space that

Muñoz's works inhabits, "at the origin of visibility, anticipating and defining it, but without yet participating in it" (see above 227), Vergara brings into the reading of these works something that remains even more properly connected to the *unforgettable* –the notion I was using, borrowed from Walter Benjamin, to understand the kind of memory that Muñoz's work is capable of embodying and evoking for us.

It is not, therefore, a resistance to oblivion, but rather a deferral of the very same possibility of resistance that takes form in the work. A deferral that nonetheless opens, time and again, a different conception of historicity –or that at least, in Vergara's words, pushes us to understand that history is not only about the past, the past that resists its disappearance and that stubbornly comes back to haunt us in the present, but also about a future to come. A form of memory, perhaps, that more than a fixation into a past that has not yet been produced, is connected to what Eduard Glissant may have conceived under the image of a *prophetic vision of the past*: a past to come, which in its deferral, is –to quote Vergara's beautiful words again– "a pulsation of the present" (see above 227). Vergara goes back to my reading of Muñoz's work and re-signifies it in very powerful ways: what is going on here is indeed, she emphasizes, "a recreation of the very experience of the loss" (Acosta 2014 76), but the loss here is not (only) the loss of what is being represented, but rather, and more radically, the loss of the image itself. By recreating the very experience of the loss of the image, what Muñoz's works are claiming, perhaps, in Vergara's view, is not a *site for remembrance* –as fragile as we might conceive it– but rather a profound experience of deferral and disarticulation of loss itself. This seems to be indeed a much more powerful way of understanding where Muñoz wants to take us with his work.

The same seems to be the case, I think, with her questions to my reading of Doris Salcedo's *Fragmentos*, which continue some of the challenges Pare had already posed. In this case, it is not to the work's disarticulated and disarticulating materiality that Vergara is inviting me to direct my attention to, as she did in her commentary to my reading of Muñoz's work, but rather to the artwork's imposing and perhaps deafening presence. The radical challenge to a fixated meaning that Vergara finds in Muñoz's work is in profound contrast with the excess and overdetermination of meaning that she sees in Salcedo's counter-memorial. There is indeed here, in Salcedo's *Fragmentos*, a danger of aestheticization. There are also risks entailed in the symbolism of *melting* the pain and turning it into a homogeneous structure, so full in its own way of displaying that it does not leave space for anything else. The weightiness, the solidity, the ultimate monumentality of the tiles almost rising up from the floor, might not be enough to resist the idea of a monumental form of memory.

The voice of the artist, speaking to us through the video that welcomes every visitor, may be there indeed to make sure we all understand who has designed, envisioned and given shape to this space. Authorship and an abundance of presence are in fact two elements – two temptations, two involuntary gestures – that characterize Salcedo's work overall, and that can indeed be found once again in *Fragmentos*. As Vergara puts it:

Can we approach an art that is not purer, but more minor, or an art with some sort of dis-appointment, in distance and proximity, without mistaking the other's flesh for one's own? An art, perhaps, less interested in using pain, and more about a raw, disjointed, relation with surfaces and floors, to textures that change recognizable forms in order to avoid romantic glamorization. How can we avoid the commodification of victims to challenge the will to "rehistorize" the past by means of preserving, mending and repairing pain and its fractured continuities? How can *Fragmentos* expose the absences of these holes without filling the empty spaces of identity with words of comfort? (254)

I understand the challenges of these questions, and the risks that Salcedo has taken in insisting on producing a work like *Fragmentos* as a site for a memorial. I can see also how what I have described as an almost self-effacing floor can be perceived nonetheless as an excess of a presence that, too grounded, too stable, too certain of its own strength, might obliterate the very sense of fragmentation that, as I have argued elsewhere, a true act of listening requires. Disorientation is indeed not the first word that would come to mind after visiting *Fragmentos*. It is also not resolution and closure that the counter-memorial leaves us with. It is however an invitation to enter into what I have described in my work as a site of believability (*cf.* Acosta 2019) where truth is not something to be proven, but the possibility and opening of the very act of its communication, with all the interruptions, subversions, and contradictions that may come together with that voice that, speaking from the threshold between life and death, has yet to find the appropriate grammars to be truly listened to. It is such an invitation that I think *Fragmentos* is capable of posing, with all the risks that are entailed in any decision that, instead of being perpetually consecrated to its own unworking,⁷ has

7 This expression is Nancy's, and it refers to the way in which he distances himself from Blanchot's work (see Nancy 2016 72). Rather than a perpetual commitment to the unworking of the Work, one has to commit, at some point, to the living. Nancy's work in my opinion places this commitment in his unstoppable insistence on being in common, not too different from what I see as Salcedo's decision in *Fragmentos* to displace her usual emphasis on the "unbearability" of mourning towards the strength and the hope that come with resistance and survival.

chosen to commit to the living and to give materiality to the difficult, full of controversies, and contested work of memory.

Finally, Williston Chase decides to address my work on Colombian art from a different perspective. Rather than attending to my reading of the works, he proposes to go to the Hegelian background of my pre-suppositions. He does so both to rescue and question my own use of the concept of 'experience' *vis-à-vis* Hegel's. At the beginning of my 2014 article, I suggest that Hegel's conception of memory – particularly as he rethinks it in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*– may give us important tools to conceive art otherwise, outside a traditional notion of representation, and within a different conception of experience–absolute experience, namely, the experience that the absolute has of itself and through itself as art. With the help of Heidegger, Chase wonders whether my reading of Hegel is, like Heidegger's, a critical reading that wants to point to the limits of Hegel's thought (connected to his metaphysics of the subject) and carry his suggestions somewhere else, or if it might be something already embedded in Hegel's conception of experience as he formulates it in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, and which may also be a critical conception of his own previous notions of experience as developed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

I do not have the space here to address such a difficult topic, and I appreciate the fact that Chase has brought to light and made explicit something I merely suggest and presuppose in my analysis of art as memory. Memory here, as he points out, is no longer an operation connected to archiving, historicizing, or recollecting, but rather, as I use it in my texts, as a production of the past that requires the reproduction of the fundamental experience entailed by this production, namely, the very experience of passing, the experience of loss. As Angelica Nuzzo has also pointed out in her work on memory and history in Hegel, there is something very singular about the way in which memory becomes, for Hegel, the fundamental operation attached to the passage from history to art, and thus, from objective to absolute Spirit. The opposite of forgetfulness for Hegel, Nuzzo points out, is not remembrance but *justice* (cf. 15). What this means in the case of the *Lectures on Aesthetics*, and in connection to the place Hegel decides to give to art in his system, I believe following Nuzzo (cf. particularly the last chapter of her 2012 book), is that in and through art, Spirit is capable of retracing its steps, offer living and plural representations of the past, and articulate in a higher form the irresolvable contradictions of history – higher, in a way, because it does not need to *resolve* these contradictions, but can rather gather them as irresolvable, convey them and present them as such, and find forms that are able to sustain them and reflect on them for the sake of the (historical) present. Thus, art may be always too late

to change or undo what history has brought about, but it can point to another realm; one that, by retracing history's steps and narrating them in a different kind of language, can introduce into the historical present the possibility of new, alternative beginnings.⁸

In this sense, Chase may be right that, with the help of Hegel, and in focusing on his use of the operation of memory in connection to art, I am attempting to work with a different conception of experience altogether. One that allows me to address the specificity of the kind of work art does when no longer conceived as representation, but as the production of a past that has not yet been addressed, produced, historicized, and remembered. This creative side of what it means to remember is, Chase shows, a Hegelian way of addressing what both Pare and Vergara insist on: that my way of articulating what I call grammars of listening –and precisely when I connect them to the experience of the artwork– needs to be conceived further and more deeply in connection to forms of temporality that challenge a traditional conception of presence, that disarticulate the very conception of experience at stake in my approaches to memory, and that inaugurate an ethical conception of remembrance, namely, again in Pare's words, one capable of reclaiming *what should not have ever happened*. Perhaps this is the ultimate way of turning memory, *à la* Hegel, into justice, and of turning thought, following Colmenares' suggestion, into a true act of listening.

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8 See also my review of Nuzzo's book in *Hegel Bulletin* (2016).