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DOI: 10.14673/IJPA202112104

The wound of intuition in the space-conscience of Lucio Fontana¹

ABSTRACT

A dream is a place where invisible happens and where what is visible and manifest hides. A wound is certainly an elective place to enter the imaginal world, at the heart of an “aesthetic of evil” that, according to Bataille, “As soon as it sets the point, the spirit is an eye (in the experience as well as in the action), it resembles the reverse of a gentle embroidery, the double exaction of truth that sprinkles every time the supplement of the Self flounders in the swamp that was pond and mirror to Narcissus. What is then the wound in a linguistic order like the one that Lucio Fontana offered in his extraordinary “cuts”? Deeper, it is image and word. Such a change in perspective opens like a fault, there is no longer time to go back and look as before the underground horizon opened up. From the unconscious, a content emerges to the Self, a content that float in vacuum with a quick jolt, that is seeding and blooming, that we call “intuition”. How this wound is a place of emergence for something that materialises to the conscience? What process the Italian artist (born Argentinian) went through to access the intuition of the famous “cut”?

RIASSUNTO

Il sogno è il luogo in cui avviene l’invisibile, e si nascondono il visibile e il manifesto. Una ferita è sicuramente un luogo elettivo per poter accedere al mondo immaginale, e al cuore di quell’ “estetica del male”, che per dirla con Bataille quando scrive: Non appena pone il punto, lo spirito è un occhio (lo diventa nell’esperienza come lo era diventato nell’azione), assomiglia al rovescio di un ricamo gentile, a quella duplice esazione di verità che si costella ogni volta che il supplemento dell’Io si ritrova ad annaspere nella palude che per Narciso fu stagno e specchio. Che cos’è, quindi, la ferita in un ordine linguistico come quello proposto da Lucio Fontana nei suoi straordinari “tagli”? Più addentro, immagine e parola. E questo cambio di prospettiva si apre come una faglia, non c’è più il tempo per tornare a guardare come prima che

KEY WORDS: *psychoanalysis, painting, intuition, psychology of art, art therapy, personality disorder.*

si spalancasse l'orizzonte sotterraneo e che dall'inconscio emergesse all'Io il contenuto che fluttua nel vuoto attraverso un guizzo rapido, che è semina e che è fioritura, che noi chiamiamo intuizione. E in che modo questa ferita è luogo di emersione per un contenuto che affiora alla coscienza, e attraverso quale processo l'artista italiano (argentino di nascita) ebbe accesso all'intuizione del famoso "taglio"?

As soon as it sets the point, the spirit is an eye
(it becomes so in experience as it had become in action).

GEORGES BATAILLE¹

Reducing the artistic works (figurative, abstract, informal but nonetheless experimental) of Lucio Fontana (Rosario, 1899 – Comabbio, 1968), founder of the Spatialist movement, to “holes” and “cuts” would be a stereotypical fall. However, we cannot consider the evidence that this is how the public and the critics often identify him. One of the reasons could be the psychodynamic relevance of the “cut”, a genuine blow struck with force to that nude image that is a canvas with no voice, with no more echo. The work of art, like a dream and a shamanic act, turns the invisible to visible (paraphrasing Paul Klee), but for the law of opposites, it must serve, although it is more difficult to discover how, to hide the visible. Perhaps, “Fontana’s cut in the space of the canvas is a blow, a wound, produced by the tension of the painter in front of a white canvas, as a result of a figurative art that has nothing more to say”.² Here Vigna (author of this description) referred to contemporary art, completely annihilated and coerced in its classical expressiveness, that goes towards performance, towards actionism, *body art*, and he leaves representation, form, significance and narration behind. Fontana is located in the

¹ From: Irene Battaglini, “La ferita sul vuoto di Lucio Fontana”, *Frontiera di pagine 2*, Aracne, Roma 2017, pp. 199-205.

² cit. Luca Vigna, pittore, comunicazione privata, Les Arta95, Via Cernaia 95, Torino, 1999.

liminal place, with his cuts, between figurative art and performative art. Moreover, it could be said that the wound-cut in the space represents without saying, so it metaphorizes to the utmost degree towards allegory, the silence of the modern man's last note of a magnificent work – the figurative art – whose destiny had already been prefigured as It was been in the tragic coarctation of the female body in Pablo Picasso's³ *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, in which sign, figure and canvas are a single encrypted and secret code that seals and mounds forever beauty in the classical terms of harmony, symmetry, balance, absence of disturbance. Apparently, it is a profanity, a whip on the female body, a wound of Soul, but also its right opposite. It is the denunciation of the end of modern art, of the modern era, to enter that giant world of non-sign, of passion for the negative, of the vertigo of freedom already foreseen by Kierkegaard: that "night of the world"⁴ which is the present – drowned, stuck and honoured with the stigma of the great wars.

A wound is certainly an elective place where to access the imaginal world, at the heart of that "aesthetical of evil", as Bataille said, that resembles the reverse of a polite embroidery, the double exaction of truth that is studded every time the supplement of the Ego finds itself floundering in the swamp that was pond and mirror to Narcissus. What is the wound in a linguistic order, then, like the one proposed by Lucio Fontana in his extraordinary "cuts"? Deeper, it is image and word. This change of perspective opens up as a fault, there is no time to come back to see as before the underground horizon unfolded; no time to come back to see as before the unconscious emerged to the Ego with its content, that fluctuate in the void with a dart, that is seeding and blooming and that we call intuition. How this wound is an emerging place for a content that surfaces to consciousness and through what process did the Italian artist (Argentine by birth) had access to the intuition of the famous "cut"?

³ *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* is one of the most known works from Pablo Picasso. It is an oil on canvas, made between 1906 and 1907, measuring 243.9x233.7 cm. It is kept in the MoMA in New York. The painting shows five prostitutes in a brothel on Calle Avignon, Barcelona. Picasso created over a hundred preparatory studies and sketches in preparation for this work, one of the most important in the early development of Cubism. When it was first exhibited in 1916, the painting was accused of immorality. Many critics found similarities between this work and Cézanne's *Les Grandes Baigneuses*, connections however questioned by later commentators.

⁴ Cfr. E. BORLA, E. FOPPIANI, *Naufragio nella notte del mondo*, Moretti&Vitali, Bergamo.

What is the wound, the “cut”, if language and psyche coincided? A sort of phenomenal evidence, of sign, of a specific *embodied cognition*,^{5, 6} of contempo-

⁵ **Cognizióne incarnata** locuz. sost. f. – From English *embodied cognition*, the approach to the study of cognition based on the theory of the *embodied mind* (see *embodiment*). Unlike the addresses of cognitivism of the second half of the 20th century, in which the study of cognitive processes through computational models is privileged, and unlike the philosophies of the mind based on the hypothesis of the language of thought (J. Fodor, *The language of thought*, 1975) or on that of the modular mind, the researches of the new cognitivism integrate the thesis that all cognition is embodied and that even higher cognitions, which involve a greater degree of abstraction, are the elaboration of bodily experiences. Developing, even in innovative directions, the theories of the extended mind (A. Clark, D. Chalmers, *The extended mind*, in *Analysis*, 58, 1997, pp. 10-23) focusing on the role of the environment in mental activity, studies on the e.c., the theory of the embodied mind has been privileged (F. Varela, E. Thompson, E. Rosch, *The embodied mind*, 1991), i.e. in cognitive processes in addition to connections with the brain, dependence on the physical characteristics of the body is considered constitutive agent (for a presentation of the different embodiment theories, L. Shapiro, *Embodied cognition*, 2011, pp. 51-69). In the theories of e.c., the body is believed to have both a causal and a constitutive role in cognition. The body of an agent can in fact exercise binding functions, facilitating or hindering this or some other knowledge; computational and representative load distribution functions between neural and non-neural structures; functions of regulation of cognitive activities in space and time, ensuring the coordination between cognition and action (the research directions differ precisely in giving a different weight to each of these functions). According to the embodiment perspective, some researches in neuroscience and neurophenomenology are also oriented, which consider the embodied nature of cognitive action (FJ Varela, *Neurophenomenology. A methodological remedy for the hard problem*, in *Journal of consciousness studies*, 3, 1996, pp. 33-49; trad. it. in *Neurofenomenologia. Le scienze della mente e la sfida dell'esperienza cosciente*, a cura di M. Cappuccio, 2006, pp. 65-93; also in the same volume, V. Gallese, *Corpo vivo, simulazione incarnata, intersoggettività. Una prospettiva neuro-fenomenologica*, pp. 293-326). The attention paid not only to the body but also to the surrounding environment in determining behaviors and cognitive processes is central to the study of embedded cognition, while a greater attention to the social and cultural aspects of cognition, in addition to the environmental ones, characterizes the studies on situated cognition (*situated cognition; The Cambridge handbook of situated cognition*, ed. M. Aydede, P. Robbins, 2009). ([http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cognizione-incarnata_\(Lessico-del-XXI-Secolo\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cognizione-incarnata_(Lessico-del-XXI-Secolo)/))

6 Cfr. Fausto CARUANA, Anna BORGHI, *Embodied Cognition: una nuova psicologia* Article in *Giornale Italiano di Psicologia* 1, 2013:23-48 · March 2013 DOI: 10.1421/73973: «L'Embodied Cognition rappresenta la più grande novità nella psicologia cognitiva degli ultimi vent'anni. Alla base di questo programma vi è l'idea che i processi cognitivi dipendano, riflettano, o siano influenzati dai sistemi di controllo del corpo. Un'intera classe di nuove prospettive sembra essere entrata nell'agenda degli psicologi solo dopo l'affermarsi dell'EC. Nell'articolo affronteremo alcuni dei principali temi oggetti di dibattito nell'EC, dalla di-

rary conception, in the perceptive envelope of senses: consequently, remaining in the lexicon of the philosophy of the body in the 21st century, it is a metaphor and at the same time a source of signification and surfacing to consciousness. The wound is a declension, a complex sign, a morpheme able to define a linguistic act in relation to what happens, *in the way it happens*, in the perceptive world in which it happens, modifying it. It establishes an *entanglement* relation with the past and the present, with the wound as a psychic act: to make a cut, to imprint it, to request it. A caesura, the opposite of AN INTACT, since “wound” relates to an injury, and stands close to trans-verberation⁷, stabbing, sore, lesion, laceration, trauma⁸. It is therefore writing, incision, and narrative act. The wound as something that stands before the scar, which is its *raison d’être*: the scar as a place, space, opening, pas-

scussione sul ruolo della rappresentazione, al rapporto con l’enattivismo, a quello con il funzionalismo e l’idea di mente estesa. Contro una lettura che vede l’EC come una semplice evoluzione del programma cognitivista classico, ci soffermiamo sugli aspetti che ne evidenziano cruciali discontinuità, suggerendo piuttosto il recupero di tradizioni precedenti quali il pragmatismo americano, la psicologia ecologica, la fenomenologia. Nel presente articolo discuteremo alcuni dei principali traguardi dell’EC in ambiti diversi della ricerca sperimentale, dallo studio delle *affordances* e quello dell’esperienza corporea, dall’indagine sulle emozioni al linguaggio. L’intento è quello di costringere il pubblico italiano, particolarmente recalcitrante all’EC, ad una riflessione critica sulle intermittenze con le tradizioni precedenti».

⁷ **Transverberazione** s. f. [dal lat. *transverberatio -onis* «traffittura»]. - In Catholic mysticism, the piercing of the heart with a dart or a spear carried out by an angel or by Christ as a sign of the Lord’s predilection. The wound can be spiritual or bodily, in this case it is also called the *wound of love or the assault of the Seraph*, or both: la t. di santa Teresa di Gesù. (<http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/transverberazione/>)

⁸ ferita (ant. feruta) s. f. [der. di ferire]. - 1. a. Traumatic injury characterized by the continuous solution of soft tissues: making, making, producing a f.; a light f., a serious f., a bad f., worrying about the severity, the breadth or depth, the appearance, the possibility of infections or other complications; f. that bleeds; open or reopened f.; healed f.; full, covered, riddled with wounds; treat, medicate, bandage, break up a f.; heal a f.; heal from the wound. In relation to vulnerable agents, the following are distinguished in medical and forensic language: pointed, edged, firearm; in relation to the depth we have superficial f. (which do not go beyond the superior fascial plane), deep f. (going below the fascial plane) and f. penetrating into cavities; we also have: bruised f., effect of bruises, ragged f. and f. by tearing, with lacerations produced by bites, transmission belts, toothed rotating parts, etc., torn-bruised f. b. Analogously, in botany, solution of continuity in the external fabrics, covering and protection, of plants, caused by various causes (insects, atmospheric phenomena, human actions). 2. fig. Spiritual pain, laceration produced in the soul by something that afflicts or disturbs deeply: f. of love; it was a cruel f. for his own sake; have a f. open in the heart; reopen a wound. Dim. feritina, ferituccia; pegg. feritaccia, una brutta ferita. (<http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/ferita/>)

sage. It is therefore a historicized, narrated inscription, it is a flap, a “loophole” (to quote a now rhetorical figure by Aldo Carotenuto), a hole, a well, a door, an access road, it is a point in a map, a path to follow to make a journey, parched land, burnt skin. It is also close to ferocity⁹, which stands for brutality and cruelty.

An act of extreme freedom, which hurts and allows us to see, to cross, to access a new space, in which the formal and imaginative tension suffers from the repercussions of the journey, of the painful experience: a space that is a new annexation **in favour of conscience**, a new question. Francesco Poli about the *Spatial Concepts*:

Commonly defined as *Cuts*, the “*Spatial Concepts*, expected” are the artist’s most famous works. These are works that bring into play, in the most essential and substantial way, the very nature of the identity of the pictorial space. Through a direct action that takes place in a moment, the artist, cutting the canvas with a sharp blade, traces on the surface one or more signs that literally open the way to the third dimension (the real depth), a space “beyond” which puts in motion a charge of aesthetic energy, in sense of formal and imaginative tension. [...] Fontana produced numerous cutted canvases with varied characteristics: with multiple cuts in rhythmic sequences; on smooth monochrome surfaces or with material thicknesses (even with coloured glass fragments); in groups of differently shaped canvases arranged on the wall (*I quanta*); with measures on polished brass plates. Perhaps, for their memorable and essential visual impact, the paintings with only a central cut on a monochrome background, in particular white, are the most fascinating. He himself declared: «The idea counts. One cut is enough». This artistic operation has been interpreted in the most diverse ways. For example: as a purely provocative scar; as a gestural performance (a somewhat more “incisive” action painting); as a sexual metaphor; also, with some reason, as a gesture that has certain Zen values (Zen archers say: «One shot. One life»¹⁰).

A cut lends itself to infinite interpretations, one could argue. The problem could be reversed with a view of renunciation. What is “good” to cut a canvas, if not to “say” something that is otherwise unspeakable? In fact, this is the *logos* of every painting, the syntax of an otherwise useless grammar exercise. Here we

⁹ ferità (ant. feritate, feritade) s. f. [dal lat. feritas -atis, der. di ferus «fiero, crudele»], letter. – Ferocity, cruelty: *e poi si rode Tardi pentito di sua feritate* (Petrarca); *spogliare gli uomini della loro ferità* (Pascoli). More rarely, disdainful pride: *quel vostro orgoglio pieno di feritate* (T. Tasso) http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/ferita_res-3078064b-001c-11de-9d89-0016357eee51/

¹⁰ F. POLI, *Fontana. Spazio e libertà*, in “Arte”, mensile di arte, cultura, informazione, aprile 2014, pp. 70-76.

can also say the Cut is a vanishing point and hermetic passage between body and space.

According to Fontana:

In our opinion, the focus of the thought must be the request for “overcoming” all genres, forms, materials and traditional procedures in the name of a new art, an art with all-encompassing intentions that includes matter, sound, movement, colour in units of time and space.¹¹

An overcoming hoped by Fontana through the *Manifiesto Blanco* (Buenos Aires, 1946) and summarized in the integration into a “physical-psychic unity” of the manifestations of art, and in the 1951 *Technical Manifiesto of Spatialism*, written only by Fontana. What is a “physical-psychic unity” if not also an embodied intuition, an embodied cognition?

The solipsism of these utterances, their anger of grandiose rejection of all the codes previously used by artists, seems to be the extreme voice of a need to cross the ford and annihilate the mirroring function. It highlights an impossibility of accessing some identification in previous masters: the irreversible “fall of the Gods”, prophesied by Nietzsche at the beginning of the twentieth century. If, always with Nietzsche, “All that is deep needs a mask”, what is the implicit beyond the canvas, what identity arrives in that space coveted with furious and biting vehemence? Perhaps a sickening emptiness, dizzying and nullifying, *Sartrian*. It is the mask, the canvas, the “wounded thing”, which acquires identity in the place of the desired space: the desiring controls the object by appropriating it, integrating it in a place inseparable from the ego, just as happens in the classic psychodynamic narcissistic formulation.

María Zambrano offers, in the writing about painting “The destruction of forms”, an enchanting examination:

In the mask, the ambiguous, the demonic, the sacred in short, with that ambivalence that is characteristic of the sacred, stands before the man. Forging a face in the art it is a consequence of having already forged it in the mind, it is the mirror and the result of the decision to be men and the fact of having by now found a notion, a prior knowledge, around the consistency of man. In the absence of this, how would the clear image have been possible, the simplicity obtained from Phidias, from a sculpture that is all a definition? A plastic image that is a consequence of Philosophy, a tool that man forged when he decided to be such. In our time, however, there is a strange event, in front of which people were still frivolously scandalized, “taking

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

for granted ...". The instant in which European art from any source presents itself in the chilling aspect of the destruction of forms. [...] It was the mask again. [...] It was the eclipse of the "natural". The natural one that the whim of some - this is the opinion of most - banned. The human face, the face of men and the face with which the human looked at himself, contemplating himself in his reassuring mirror, disappeared. The art, that of the figure and that of the word, ceased to fulfil this function of balance and pacification that had been tacitly entrusted to it for so many centuries; it gave up being the medicine, the remedy and the comforting stimulus. For the first time it was disturbing to an extreme degree, depressing in some cases. Things that humanity did not remember came back to show themselves; a distant past left behind was revived. Very old gods had to smile, and thousands of defeated powers had to rush, read, to the call. What appeared at first glance, thus, was a disintegration evocative of death: the experience we have of life is that death is what destroys and disintegrates only, and that only it is capable of reversing the divine process by which something alive is generated. Death is the genesis in reverse.¹²

What estrangement can pervade the artist, therefore the man, who practices such a clear dissolution of form in favour of a turning point that marks the entire history of twentieth century art, leading it to its aesthetic destiny? To video art, to performance, to installation, to the rarefaction of matter? An estrangement that is similar to the awakening perpetrated on the path of delirium, of the ghost, of illusion. The aggressiveness of the gesture expressed by Fontana is not unlike the aggressiveness of a life that tries to get out of the ecstatic magma of a uniquely narcissistic condition. It is an attempt that pursues the aesthetic path, in a heroic dynamic, which we can "re-read" by overturning the canvas, examining it from the inside, from the same side from which Bacon observes the bodies of the men he portrays. About Francis Bacon, Gilles Deleuze writes:

[...] There are two ways of overcoming figuration (that are, the illustrative and narrative together): towards the abstract form, or towards the Figure. This direction towards the figure, Cézanne calls it very simply: sensation. The Figure is the sensitive form referred to the sensation; the sensation acts directly on the nervous system, which is flesh. The abstract form instead addresses the brain, acts through the brain, which is closest to the bones. Of course, it was not Cézanne who invented this path of sensation in painting, but he was the one who gave it an unprecedented status. The sensation is not only the opposite of the easy, the defined, the cliché, but also the "sensational", the spontaneous etc. The sensation has a face turned towards the subject (the nervous system, the vital movement, "the instinct", the

¹² M. Zambrano (1945), *La distruzione delle forme*, in *Dire Luce. Scritti sulla pittura*, a cura di Carmen Del Valle, Bur, Milano 2013, pp. 49-64.

“temperament”, a whole vocabulary common to Naturalism and Cézanne), and a face turned towards the object (“the fact”, the place, the event). Or maybe it has no face, because the two things are indissolubly, as phenomenologists say, being-in-the-world: I become in sensation and, at the same time, something happens through sensation, one for the each other, in each other. Moreover, in the limit, the body itself gives and receives the sensation to be both object and subject. I, the spectator, do not experience the sensation except by entering the picture, accessing the unity of the sentient and the felt [...]”¹³

The Gestalt quality of the artistic act was also explored by the psychologist of art, with a cognitive orientation, Rudolf Arnheim, in an essay entirely dedicated to the relationship between cognition and intuition, entitled “Intuition and intellect. New essays on the psychology of art”.¹⁴ Franzini writes about it:¹⁵

«Percept and concept, observation and idea, poetic intuition and scientific investigation - Arnheim observes - form a whole», which is organized in an adverbial balance by virtue of which «what we call parts of a living being is so inseparable from the whole THING that the same parts can be understood only in and with the whole THING». In this way the system is, at the same time, dynamic, that is metamorphic, but also capable of finding in itself, in its own movement, a system of self-regulation, which is articulated in constant confrontation with perceptual material and perceptive acts, which in turn are the recent and current phase of countless similar acts carried out in the past and temporally surviving in memory, recognized and adapted to the situation. [...]The whole process is therefore aimed at showing how art, in its visible form, is «a symbolic statement about the human condition», which communicates through the perceptual form. The artist, however, does not limit himself to identifying things and events, but must «convey the vivid experience of the forces that make a phenomenon expressive» forces that act essentially through the senses. Arnheim thus shows, once again, how the psychology of art should be understood in that “aesthetic” trace that goes from Diderot to Lessing, from Kant to Goethe: the ability of modern man to «think according to theoretical concepts» does not replace at all his tireless search, which art concretizes, of perceptual models «that allow him to treat universals in the tangible form of a concrete application»

¹³ Cfr.: Deleuze, G. (1981). *Francis Bacon. Logica della sensazione*.

¹⁴ Trad. it. di A. Serra, Feltrinelli, Milano 1987 (ediz. orig.: *New Essays on the Psychology of Art*, 1981).

¹⁵ E. Franzini, *La rivelazione della realtà: espressione e simbolo in Rudolf Arnheim*. In (a cura di) L. Pizzorusso, *Rudolf Arnheim. Arte e percezione visiva., Supplementa*, Centro Internazionale Studi di Estetica ad integrazione del periodico *Aesthetica Preprint*©, 14, Aprile 2005, pp. 129-133.

Giovanni Cucci and Andrea Monda, in the essay “The inverted tapestry. The enigma of evil”, enunciate the characteristics of the hero, who somehow seems to trace the model of this painter with an unequivocal, unique gesture, who detaches the net, crosses the border, breaks down the wall to say that the world was identified with the wall:

Perception of what is happening in terms of ethical gravity; recognition of an available power; urgency of an intervention to be implemented; the courage to implement the need for justice. Furthermore, the hero will have self-transcendence as the ability to understand the event as a whole, making awareness possible; and finally the capacity to be «present in the present», the psychological translation of an evangelical vigilance.¹⁶

In this system of differentiating signs between past and future, which prelude at the end to decree the beginning of the non-figurative, to impose on us an eternal present dominated by the dark emptiness that encompasses everything within itself like the titanic Cronus, the cut of Lucio Fontana is certainly the result of a great creative intuition. Intuition opens the horizon to a whole series of discussions that refer to Borgesian paths. Jung states that “... seen from the inside, constructive understanding means liberation. ‘Create: this is the greatest liberation from suffering; making life light’...”¹⁷, and furthermore:

The peculiarity of intuition is that it is neither sensory perception, nor feeling, nor logical deduction, although it can also occur in these forms. ... Its contents, like those of sensation, have the character of the fact, in contrast to the character of “derivative, of “product” that the contents of sentiment and thought have. Intuitive knowledge therefore has its own character of security and certainty, which led Spinoza to consider intuitive Scientia as the highest form of knowledge. (Similarly Bergson).¹⁸

Intuition is undivided continuity; it is a-logic logic and not just pre-logic or proto-verbal form, or even a short circuit of cognition within a powerful emotion, like lightning. Intuition hurts, because it is a whole object in itself that enters and penetrates the flesh of consciousness. Benedetto Croce in the historical essay of

¹⁶ G. Cucci, A. Monda, *L'arazzo rovesciato. L'enigma del male*, Cittadella Ed., Assisi 2010, pp. 135-136.

¹⁷ C.G. Jung, 1908, p. 191. In: *Il contenuto della psicosi*. In *Psicogenesi delle malattie mentali*, Opere complete, vol 3, Boringhieri, Torino, 1971.

¹⁸ C.G. Jung, 1920, p. 467. In *Tipi Psicologici*, Opere complete, vol. 6°, Boringhieri, Torino, 1969.

1902 “Aesthetics as a science of expression and general linguistics” wants to free the field of art from any naturalistic or intellectualistic conception. Art, as an expression of individual intuition, cannot be traced back to other disciplines, but it is a human activity that develops freely and independently. In the writing *L'intuizione pura e il carattere lirico dell'arte*,¹⁹ read at the Heidelberg Conference in 1908 and then included in *Problemi di Estetica* (1910), (and here, as Fontana, is lapidary, incontrovertible. Croce's thought here is a fact, an act, an obstinate gesture, which determines the foundation of art in intuition, and in art as an innovative, fully creative act, the foundation of all knowledge), he argues:

Art is based solely on fantasy: its only wealth are images. [...] Art, as it creates the first representations and, in this way, inaugurates the life of knowledge, it continually refreshes before our spirit the aspects of things, which thought has submitted to reflection and the intellect to abstraction; and makes us, perpetually, becoming poets again. Without it, the thought would lack the stimulus, and the matter itself, for its hermeneutic and critical work. It is the root of our whole theoretical life; and in being a root, and not a flower or fruit, it is his duty; nor, without root, are the flower and fruit given. - Such is, in its fundamental concept, the theory of art as pure intuition.

It is Croce, in the same writing, the one who raises the hypothetical criticisms of his own thought. In this sense, a good part of the value of originality and novelty in the work of art is to be referred to the artist's personality. At the same time he lays the foundations of a modern art that goes towards the one-all, the identity of form and content, the passion for an aesthetic that discusses things, for an art that subverts classical codes of reading, not only of writing, foreseeing the issue of knowledge through a “*crossing*”, not simply an “*observing*”. At the same time, he feeds the reflection of the psychology of art, with art, a psychology that is knowledge of man in man. The philosopher from Abruzzo writes:²⁰

¹⁹ B. Croce (1908). *L'intuizione pura e il carattere lirico dell'arte*. In “La Critica, Rivista di Letteratura, Storia, e Filosofia diretta da B. Croce”, 6, 1908; p. 329 e segg. Conference held on September 2, 1908 at the second general meeting of the Third International Congress of Philosophy in Heidelberg. Heidelberg (in German Alemannic Heidelbärg, in German Palatine Heidelberg) is a German suburban city of 160 601 inhabitants (2015), located in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg on the banks of the Neckar River. It is an important industrial center for the numerous tobacco, mechanical, paper and electrical engineering industries; but above all university, as it hosts **the oldest university in Germany**, founded in 1386 by Robert I, as well as other important and prestigious cultural and scientific centers worldwide (Max-Planck-Institut, l'Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, l'European Molecular Biology Laboratory).

²⁰ *Ivi*.

Thus, it is beyond doubt that, if pure intuition (and the pure expression that is one with it) is indispensable to the work of art, the artist's personality is no less essential. [...] Moreover, if the first moment, that is the representative one, is called epic, and the second, the sentimental, passionate and personal one is called lyric; poetry and art must be both epic and lyric, or, if you like better, dramatic. [...] It will be said that the feeling is the content, and the intuitiveness is the form; but content and form do not constitute, in philosophy, a duality, as if to say water and the container of water; the content is the form, and the form is the content ... [...] well, the truth is precisely this: that pure intuition is essentially lyricism.

That space "beyond the line" is the land of an aesthetic promise in which the artist, who feels a strong responsibility for the task he has been assigned, arrives: to deny the masters in order to arrive at a completely renewed vitality, in an idealizing desire to unity and uniqueness. The passion with which he works is equal only to the control he needs to exercise in order not to be enveloped by his own nature, which is matter like that mother-earth that he must deface, of that rough canvas on which he organized the first ancestral signs of his art. The weapon is sharp, the edge bloody, the gaze sharp and petrified, saturated with an otherwise unspeakable wound.

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