

# Politicizing history of art, breaking free from the absolute origin: Two pending issues

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Diana Wechsler's curatorial essay entitled "Images between reality and utopia. Art and history in Argentina" offers a penetrating gaze into two centuries of artistic production in this southern country. In her history, Wechsler reconciles the encompassing whole with the sharpness of each episode that comprises the book of charts with which she invokes Aby Warburg's figure. Rather than a replication of her approach, the following words refer to provisional answers that —as I consider myself politically a historian— I have reached through my doctoral research of the relations between art and politics in Argentina from the 1960s until the 2001 crisis —two of the moments that Wechsler examines more closely. I do not think I am mistaken if I say that they are possible answers to shared questions. Even on the basis of a general coincidence of our viewpoints, I hope that their presentation will either arouse dialogue or else humbly complement the ideas so solidly expressed in Wechsler's text.

Which political history of (political) art?

When dealing with fragments rescued from the past, there is no doubt that any historian (of art or otherwise) with a minimal concern for the possible effects of his work on the future of the present times will experience "distress in the method" that must separate him from the outdated bases of his discipline. After the initial crisis, the researcher who aspires to historian will probably take refuge in reading the authors who, in the past century, questioned the theory of knowledge prevailing in the historiographic model inherited from the 19th century. Wechsler is the debtor of these critiques and, at the same time, a participant in the prolongation of their current impulse. In diverse passages of her essay, the author insists on denaturalizing the temporal model that is typical of the most stagnant narratives of the discipline. What Wechsler is interested in is, firstly, the way that visual and semantic contamination between images from different epochs undoes the stable conception of the past, the present, and the future as independent and successive times; secondly, how her assemblage, aside of underlining the formal influences or thematic resonances, can produce a meaning that exceeds the framework of art, leading to a reactivation of social utopias.

I share Wechsler's interest in accepting our role as historians whose relation with knowledge is not via revelation, but rather via production. For both of us, the writings of Walter Benjamin are an inevitable object of discussion, when questioning both the temporal model of historicism and the attitude of the subject who writes history. It is well known that, for Benjamin, in the general configuration that reaches its zenith with Kantian philosophy, the illustrated man increased his knowledge at the same rate as his experience decreased. Such knowledge was based on the distance between the subject who knew and the object that could be known, in an idealistic outline that avoided the affects that necessarily involved the researcher's body and the forces contrived by the images and documents of the past to which he has access [1].

In contrast to this outline, Federico Galende has recently considered the Benjaminian theory of knowledge as a phenomenology of sadness, which disposes co-membership between subject and object, in which the former term would end by fusing with and losing itself in the latter [2]. This ruinous sadness of the object would explain the ruinous state of the world. In his study of German baroque drama, Benjamin opposed the figure of the allegorist to the idealism of the symbol as the configuration of an alternative way of writing history. The German philosopher endorsed what Galende has called “melancholy knowledge” of ruin, characterized by a paradoxical intensification of the intention dissolved in the gloomy object. Benjamin upheld “intellectual profoundness” of sadness as a way to overcome a model of “affective knowledge” which, although breaking away from the guidelines of the classical subject of knowledge, it alternated the attraction exerted by the object with the affirmation of aloofness [3]. However, the latter is the subject of knowledge that, due to essential purposes I shall explain below, I wish to defend in the development of my research and writing. The incessant dialectic proposed between immersion and abstraction in the object of study has been well described by means of the concept “stance taking” by Georges Didi-Huberman in his study of images of a contemporary colleague of Benjamin, the German playwright Bertolt Brecht:

“To take a stance is to desire, it is to demand something, it is placing oneself in the present and aspiring to a future [...]. We know nothing in pure immersion, in the self, in the humus of the too-near. Nor will we know anything in pure abstraction, in the proud transcendence, in the too-far sky. But one must take a stance, which means to move and constantly assume responsibility for such movement. Such movement is both approach and separation: approach with reticence, separation with desire [4]”.

However, this affective distancing from melancholy knowledge has not dissuaded me from attempting to accept the commitment with his times of the historian’s model as defended by Benjamin. This commitment is not the same as a positive scrutiny of the facts of the past in order to come up with a reliable image of it to instruct one’s contemporaries from the objectivity of academic knowledge. Starting with the materialist statement according to which “articulating the past historically does not mean recognizing it as it really was” but “taking over a memory that flashes in the instant of danger”, the work of the historian consists in repairing and assembling the fragments rescued from the past so that it bursts into the present as “now time” (*Jetzt-zeit*), like a profane illumination that questions the normalized inscription of the past in the continuous and causal narratives of history [5].

These irruptions of the past are one of the purposes of the work of “thinking with images” undertaken by Wechsler. Her ultimate expectation is to introduce discordance in the normalized *experience* of these images, inscribed in a certain view of history. Upon reflecting about the concept of experience, Benjamin divides it into the notions of ‘*Erlebnis*’ and ‘*Erfahrung*’. The former refers to the events lived through that can be assimilated in a psychic economy by the subject’s awareness thanks to its inscription in the sphere of experience. In this case, the past is constructed as an identifiable space-time that can be voluntarily evoked by the subject. In contrast, according to Benjamin, *Erfahrung* is related to events that awaken memories without becoming integrated in the sequential chain of experience, so it is more difficult for consciousness to rationalize its effect. The category that Benjamin introduces after making this distinction is the concept of shock. *Shock*, on penetrating the filter of the conscience to leave its imprint directly on the unconscious memory, generates traumatic effects that the conscience can only defuse as *Erlebnis* [6] by repeating them. The Hispanicized verb corresponding to the concept of shock, ‘*choquear*’, is used by Wechsler to define the intentions of her discursive operation, which will only awaken what is repressed in the unconscious memory of a national identity as complex as the Argentinian [7].

In the introductory essay and the selection of works that comprise the presentation, we can see the trace of the Warburgian anachronism and the Benjaminian dialectic image, ways of reappearing and up-dating the images and events of the past. The assemblage of heterogeneous times promoted by Wechsler as a historian are driven by the very singularity of the images she invites her compatriots to gaze at, or, more accurately, by means of which she tries to make them feel gazed at -in this regard, it would be interesting for the Berlin display to have a prolongation in the Argentinian sphere. One of the indirect consequences of accepting the statements of authors like Ernst Van Alphen or Hubert Damisch, according to whom “art thinks”, is that this demands a methodological redefinition of its disciplinary approaches. The most relevant contextual basis of art is not due to its condition of being a product of the culture of an epoch, but because of how it contributes to reconfiguring not only the map of its knowledge, but, more extensively, its very meaning [8]. Assembling strategies like those developed by Leonel Luna, to the degree to which they present authentic historiographic inversions of the ethnocidal ideology that characterized the desert campaigns, shows that, in thinking of images, there is also possibility that images are thinking of us.

Wechsler thus contributes to the efforts that art historians such as Georges Didi-Huberman have recently carried out to reveal the limitations of historicist rationality. When interpreting Benjamin’s statement “there is no history of art”, the French art historian states that the defence of the dialectic image as a production of historicity leads to the positivist foundations of history of art with a two-fold demand. On the one hand, he rebuts the validity of the omnipresent dichotomies in the history of traditional art: the pairs of content and form and form and material would have been overcome by the irruption of new reproduction techniques [9]. On the other hand, he violates the causal relations that reset the chain of influence as a possible explanation of the work of art. For Didi-Huberman, the German philosopher did not deny the possibility of the existence of history of art as a discipline, rather he demanded its true beginning or re-beginning [10]. In any case, this start afresh should not return an autonomous disciplinary field to the history of art. Transferring the reflection to my experience as a doctoral researcher, this claim becomes more sterile if we take into account that, through his insistence in revealing the conventional nature of art (an aspect that, according to Hal Foster, guarantees its historicity [11]), a good part of the vanguard artistic praxes (among them those involved in the Argentinian political context of the 1960s, with an unusual intensity in the neo-vanguard latitudes) radically questioned its limits, bordering -even tracing- the field of politics. When I addressed this kind of experiences, independently of the claim I could have as a historian, I noticed that its very singularity drove me to use a transdisciplinary approach that would feed not only on those areas of knowledge focused on “the problems of time and the image” [12], but would also unfold its arguments in the diffuse epistemological territory that the relations between art and politics have drawn over the last decades.

What critique, what genealogy?

The construction of a possible narrative is another of the goals shared by Wechsler’s text and the process of writing my Doctoral Thesis. When clarifying what kind of narration might be suitable to the dregs of the feelings that the prior work of documentation and reading had left in me, it was extremely productive to again take up Michel Foucault’s text entitled *Nietzsche, genealogy, history*. In it, the French thinker revindicates the inscription of the historian’s body in his genealogical work. In Foucault’s opinion, what such an inscription reveals (at the same time as it guarantees) is the historicity of the experience and the writing of whoever makes history, an attitude that radically opposes the supra-historical and apocalyptic place (in the sense of placed over the history it objectifies and at the end of time) that is

usually the basis of the metaphysical rhetoric of the positivist historian [13]. This affirmation of the body reveals the limits that define the place from which any historian inevitably speaks, as well as his position at the crossroads of the disciplinary and political tensions of his time.

From the above, it can be inferred that the historian who currently admits the Brechtian position thematized by Didi-Huberman must deal with the need to reevaluate the place of critique. In the case of my research, this question has become more problematic because, as a European researcher, I have often found it difficult to take a stance within a context crossed both by the durability of political and social tensions of one of the more convulsive periods of Argentinian history and by the progressive national and international proliferation of historiographic and curatorial discourses about the praxes analyzed. Critique has traditionally been associated with becoming aware of the apparent falseness of reality. As it was carried out from a supposedly neutral position, it involved the right distance from its object of study. In contrast to this concept of critique, Peter Sloterdijk proposed an alternative consisting of maintaining a “correct proximity” in regard to the object, which would recognize the subject’s involvement in the mesh of strengths that his writing hopes to change [14]. According to this idea of Sloterdijk, the new critique would not try to achieve that suprahistorical truth derived from objective aloofness, but would adopt a “situational point” that would allow one to cast a “micrological” glance on the phenomenon studied. [15] Instead of the ambition to reveal an unknown and unique truth, one should think about the critique, following José Luis Brea, “like a disseminating device, a machine to proliferate meaning”; one should reconcile the documental finding by writing history that generates “frictions” that make the interpretative topics reel on their “object” of study [16]. This conception of the researcher’s work is related to the thinking of Chantal Mouffe, who has defended in diverse texts the constitution of a public sphere of a kind of “agnostic pluralism”, equally removed from the epistemological dogmatism of the universalist modernity and the relativism that is typical of a part of postmodernity [17]. In my approach to the Argentinian artistic-political praxes of the past decades, this impulse could not and did not wish to avoid the implicit or explicit interpellation of the readings, published more or less recently by other authors with whom, in some cases, I have strong intellectual and affective links. The review of their approaches has not prioritized rebutting or complementing their scientific validity from the contribution of facts not taken into account till now, but rather talking with them from a critical position that would open the sphere of the visible, the thinkable, and the feasible from the study of some praxes whose relevance established an epistemological field in which the common and the polemic are the two sides of the same coin [18].

The developments undergone by the Argentinian vanguard in the 1960s, which are mentioned in Wechsler’s text, are a shared point of interest with these studies. With regard to this, it is difficult to ignore the opinion of Adrián Gorelik, for whom “any reflection on the vanguards, art, and politics [in Argentina] must go back to the 1960s, the primordial scenario in which these diverse dimensions met at their point of maximal revolutionary intensity” [19]. However, it is important to be cautious about the risks involved in considering that scenario the gravitational center around which must spin (mimetically or dialectically) the artistic praxes that have subsequently redefined their link to politics. Contrasting the *cartography* with the *transfer*, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari warned about the way that the genetic models associated with the latter tend to establish pivotal units that reproduce conventional patterns of knowledge production [20]. Instead of this model, it is possible to develop an approach that, from the critique of the experience of the 1960s, leads to a comprehension that is not subordinate to subsequent praxes. Awareness of the discontinuity noted by Tzvetan Todorov between the recovery of the past and its use in the present frees future praxes from the command of lending continuity to the supposedly foundational political impulse of the 1960s scenario—and at this point, the purpose Wechsler grants to the operation of connecting the present and the past as a possibility of “recovering utopias and achieving unfulfilled projects” becomes

more problematic [21].

In this sense, it is necessary to include a critique of the absolute origin in the genealogical task, an issue to which contributes Wechsler's proposed dialogue between the scenes of the Argentinian art of the 1930s and 1960s (a not very common glance into the interpretations of the latter period). In the above-mentioned text, Michel Foucault questioned the totalizing conception of the origin (*Ursprung*), which, in its supposedly essential, perfect, and true definition, prevents access to its knowledge [22]. The French philosopher proposes as an alternative to this concept of origin the terms *Herkunft* and *Entstehung*, respectively translated in the Spanish version as "provenance and emergence" [23]. From the former, he emphasized that genealogy does not attempt to go back to historical time to recompose a continuity that oblivion has blurred, but instead it considers that such time is a splintered time, in which accidents, deviations, and changes of direction constantly disperse and smash the first linear projection of meaning and truth [24]. The two concepts evoked by Foucault are related to the alternative notion of origin that Benjamin rescued with regard to German baroque drama. An origin that has nothing to do with absolute sources or with primordial geneses, but with the hidden futures that, proceeding from the past, can emerge to the surface of history at the most unsuspecting time and manner [25].

To conclude, the 'deserved' critique of the absolute origin not only prevents its veneration as a past whose meaning has been fixed forever, but instead, it questions the entire evolutionist conception of historical time. This critique should not pursue an unscrupulous -and even moralist- reproof of the past -in the case of my research, the 1960s and 1970s- from the celebration of the present. What I wish is to undo the mythologization of that past as an essential condition to deal with the strangeness provoked (insofar as it looks at us) by a ruinous epoch whose current assessment must remain unresolved in absolute terms. Following Foucault, the genealogical work of the historian must emphasize the discontinuities and differences that prevent including the future of time in a linear and teleological narration. Indicating these faults or fissures allows one to think of events as disruptive emergencies in the coordinates of a complex time. This does not imply denying the existence of bridges -positively evident or unobservable, laid or cancelled [26]- between experiences from different epochs, but rather dealing with their relation in a different way. Transferred to the artistic-political praxes on which my research has focused, the following words of Pilar Calveiro about the ways of understanding politics in the Argentinian context in the 1960-70s and currently, summarize -at the same time as they open towards the future- what I am trying to say. For Calveiro, the historiographic critique tries to "illuminate one [epoch] with the other, to decipher the past from glances renewed by a more ample experience but also to decode the present based on distinction, which leads to claiming it as a different one, while recognizing the possible connections [...]. It involves [...] remembering political experience from the viewpoint of politics; connecting [...] the identities of the past with those of the present to place both under tension and challenge and to recover, or perhaps to learn, hope" [27].

## Footnotes

[1] In contrast to this model, Benjamin claimed a future epistemology consisting in "finding a sphere of total neutrality of knowledge regarding the concepts of object and subject", in "finding one's primordially own sphere of knowledge, so that this concept will no longer indicate the relation between two metaphysical entities", W. Benjamin, "Sobre el programa de la filosofía venidera" [About the future program of philosophy], *Iluminaciones VI. For a critique of violence and other essays*. Madrid, Taurus, 1998, p. 80. In his recent analysis of the concept of experience in Benjamin, Federico Galende has indicated that, for the German author, the classic subject of knowledge and experience are mutually exclusive

notions. For Benjamin, the “paradox of experience” consists of the fact that, in experience, the subject is absent, resigning himself to precede or to follow it, F. Galende, *Walter Benjamin and destruction*. Santiago de Chile, Metales Pesados, 2009, p. 40.

[2] “[Sadness] is not a subjective property, nor does it refer [...] to a particular psychological trait, but instead the name of co-belonging between a feeling that has become disconnected from the subject and has fused with the object until it loses its way [...]. Far from an affectivity of the subject causally determined by an object, sadness is like a co-belonging that cannot be established in terms of a hierarchical relation”. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[3] For Benjamin, the representation of the laws of the German baroque drama “is not dedicated either to the state of the poet’s feelings or to that of the public, but perhaps to a feeling that is separate from the empirical subject while it is internally linked to the fullness of an object [...] whereas, in the sphere of affectivity, it is not surprising that attraction alternates with aloofness, in the relation of an intention with the object, mourning is shown to be capable of a particular intensification, of a continuous deepening of its intention. Thus, intellectual deepness is, above all, typical of the sad person”. Walter Benjamin, “El origen del *Trauerspiel* alemán” [The origin of the German *Trauerspiel*], *Obras, libro I*, vol. 1. Madrid, Abada, 2006, pp. 352-353.

[4] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Cuando las imágenes toman posición*. Madrid, Antonio Machado Libros, 2008, pp. 11-12.

[5] Cfr. W. Benjamin, “Sobre el concepto de historia” [About the concept of history], *Obras, libro I*, vol. 2. Madrid, Abada, 2008, pp. 303- 318. Theses VI (partially cited here), XVI, and Thesis A of the Appendix deserve special attention.

[6] Benjamin articulates this distinction in a dialogue with Bergson from *Materia y memoria* (1896) [Matter and memory] with Proust from *En busca del tiempo perdido* [In search of lost time] (1913-1927) and with Freud from *Más allá del principio de placer* [Beyond the principle of pleasure] (1921). Cfr. W. Benjamin, “Sobre algunos motivos en Baudelaire” [About some motives in Baudelaire], *Obras, libro II*, vol. 2. Madrid, Abada, pp. 207-217. A much more detailed description of feelings, sometimes contradictory, that the terms *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* have had in German modern philosophy can be found in Martin Jay, “La crisis de la experiencia en la era pos-subjetiva” [The crisis of experience in the post-subjective era], *Prismas, Revista de historia de historia intelectual*, 6, 2002, pp. 9-20. Faced with the “poverty of experience” diagnosed by Benjamin in contemporary life, Jay makes an effort to clarify first its concept, which, due to the proliferation of uses, would have become unintelligible.

[7] As known, Benjamin wondered what experience could promote lyrical poetry when the shock had become a norm. This recurrence of shock is no doubt a characteristic of the current world, whose experience is guided by the paralyzing effects of the mediatic universe on subjectivity. It is impossible to determine the extent to which the estrangement proposed by Wechsler’s assembling of images can return us to Benjamin’s longed-for sphere of experience. One could, in any event, ask how much of its possible success is due to its appearance in a context with a presumably differential perceptive impermanence like the one provided by the space of the museum.

[8] Cfr. Ernst Van Alphen, “¿Qué historia, la historia de quién, historia con qué propósito? Nociones de historia en historia del arte y estudios de cultura visual” [What history, whose history, history with what purpose? Notions of History in History of Art and Studies of Visual Culture], <http://www.estudiosvisuales.net/revista/index.htm>

[9] This issue is central in two of the most well-known of Benjamin's essays: "El autor como productor" [The author as producer] and "La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica" [The work of art in the epoch of its technical reproducibility] (1936). In the former, he stated that "the concept of technique provides a dialectic starting point from which to overcome the sterile antithesis of form and content". Cfr. W. Benjamin, "El autor como productor" [The author as producer], B. Wallis, *Arte después de la modernidad* [Art after modernity]. Madrid, Akal, 2001, p. 299.

[10] G. Didi-Huberman, *Ante el tiempo. Historia del arte y anacronismo de las imágenes* [In the face of time. History of art and anachronism of images]. Buenos Aires, Adriana Hidalgo, 2008, pp. 139-140.

[11] Hal Foster, "Contra el pluralismo" [Against pluralism], *Episteme, Eutopías, Documentos de trabajo* [Epistema, Utopias, Work Documents], Valencia, vol. 186, 1998, p. 3.

[12] G. Didi-Huberman, *Ante el tiempo. Historia del arte y anacronismo de las imágenes* [In the face of time. History of art and anachronism of images]. Op. cit., p. 73.

[13] Cfr. M. Foucault, *Nietzsche, la genealogía, la historia* [Nietzsche, genealogy, history]. Valencia, Pre-Textos, 2000.

[14] Sloterdijk remembers the critique of the critique carried out by Benjamin: "Critique is a question of the correct distance. It is at home in a world in which everything depends on the perspectives and the set and in which it is still possible to adopt a viewpoint. Meanwhile things have caustically approached human society", to add: "If things have come close enough to scorch us, a critique will have to emerge that expresses that scorching. It is not so much a question of correct distance as of correct proximity. The success of the word 'involvement' grows on this ground; it is the seed of the Critical Theory that emerges under new forms" P. Sloterdijk, *Crítica de la razón cínica* [Critique of cynical reasoning]. Madrid, p. 23.

[15] "I think the Critical Theory has found [...] a "situation point" that provides perspectives of a really incisive critique; a situation point that the traditional theory of knowledge did not have [...]. It is not the base of an elevated and distanced critique that achieves great general perspectives, but an attitude of the most extreme approach: micrology". Ibid., p. 23.

[16] "The object of the critique is never the truth. Not even the interpretation, the good interpretation; this does not exist. Any critique misinterprets or -what amounts to the same thing[-] disperses the meaning. We should think of critique only as a disseminating device, a machine to proliferate meaning. As such, its work is to generate abrasions, frictions, the stormy encounter of the strange with the strange that originates the counter-inductive finding. Its task is to always say the opposite of a firm conviction, of any implicit convention. Thus, its presence should always be uncomfortable: its speech is contra-diction, the agon, stating the contrary". [www.joseluisbrea.net/articulos/criticaeck.pdf](http://www.joseluisbrea.net/articulos/criticaeck.pdf). Retrieved on December 23, 2009. The author presented "The critique in the era of cultural capitalism", as a conference in the *Encuentros sobre crítica de arte*, organized by the Associació Catalana de Crítics d'Art at the MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona) in November 2005.

[17] Cfr. C. Mouffe, *Prácticas artísticas y democracia agonística*. Barcelona, MACBA, 2007, pp. 11-23.

[18] Cfr. M. Garcés, “¿Qué podemos? De la conciencia a la encarnación en el pensamiento crítico actual” [What can we do? From awareness to the incarnation in current critical thinking], <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0808/garces/es>. Retrieved on December 13, 2009. This dialogue has borne fruit in the publications like the dossier published by the journal *ramona* under the title “Vanguardias polémicas: la herencia de los sesenta” [Polemic vanguards: the inheritance of the sixties], cfr. *ramona. revista de artes visuales*, Buenos Aires, 82, July 2008. In it, we find texts by Ana Longoni, Fernando Davis, Miguel López, and Jaime Vindel.

[19] A. Gorelik, “Preguntas sobre la eficacia: vanguardias, arte y política” [Questions about efficacy: vanguards, art, and politics], *Punto de vista. Revista de cultura*. 82, August 2005, p. 9.

[20] ‘Map’ and ‘transfer’ correspond, respectively, to the figures of the ‘rhizome’ and the ‘root’. The rhizome is “foreign to any idea of genetic axis. A genetic axis is like an objective pivotal unit about which successive stages are organized [...]. Thus, we maintain the representative model of the tree of the pivotal or fasciculate root [...]. It is only a variation of the outmoded way of thinking [...]. The logic of the tree is the logic of transfer and of reproduction [...]. Very different is the rhizome, map and not transfer [...]. If map opposes transfer, it is precisely because it is completely oriented towards an experimentation that acts upon what is real [...]. The map is open, connectible in all its dimensions, detachable, alterable, able to receive constant modifications. A map is a question of *performance*, whereas the transfer always refers to a supposed *competence*. G. Deleuze & F. Guattari, *Mil Mesetas: capitalismo y esquizofrenia* [One thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia]. Valencia, Pre-Textos, 1994, pp. 17 & 18.

[21] “no automatism links both gestures: the demand of recovering the past [...] still does not tell us what use will be made of it”. T. Todorov, *Los abusos de la memoria* [The abuses of memory]. Barcelona, Paidós, 2000, p. 17.

[22] The origin will be that “completely distanced point, prior to any positive knowledge, that would lead to knowledge that, nevertheless, overlies it, and does not cease, in its idle patten, to disown it; it is in this inevitably lost articulation in which the truth of things is inseparable from the truth of the discourse that immediately obscures and loses it”. Michel Foucault, *Nietzsche, la genealogía, la historia* [Nietzsche, genealogy, history]. Op. cit., p. 21.

[23] *Ibid*, pp. 24-42.

[24] “[Genealogy] cannot expect to go back in time to reestablish a great continuity beyond the dispersion of oblivion; its task is not to show that the past is still there, quite alive in the present, still encouraging it secretly, after having imposed a form traced from the start on all the obstacles in the pathway [...]. To follow the complex thread of provenance is, in contrast, to conserve what occurred in its own dispersion: to locate the accidents, the minimum deviations -or, to the contrary, the complete turns-, the errors, the lack of appreciation, the poor calculations that have given birth to what is and what is valid for us; it is to discover that, at the root of what we know and of what we are, there is neither being nor truth, but instead the outward appearance of the accident”. *Ibid*, pp. 27-28.

[25] About this particular, see Didi-Huberman’s reflections on the concept of origin-whirlpool taken from Benjamin in contrast to the historicism of the source origin. G. Didi-Huberman, *Ante el tiempo. Historia del arte y anacronismo de las imágenes* [In the face of time. History of art and anachronism of images]. Op. cit., pp. 101-129. It is feasible to establish a parallelism between this conception of the origin and the one that Didi-Huberman tracks down in Aby Warburg. Cfr. G.



Didi-Huberman, *La imagen superviviente. Historia del arte y tiempo de los fantasmas* [The surviving image. History of art and time of the phantoms]. Madrid, Abada, 2009, pp. 284-301.

[26] Here, I echo the fortunate expression of Ana Longoni in her study of the experimental vanguard in Chile. Cfr. A. Longoni, "Puentes cancelados: lecturas acerca de los inicios de la experimentación visual en Chile" [Cancelled bridges: readings on the beginnings of visual experimentation in Chile], Nelly Richard & Alberto Moreiras (Eds.), *Pensar en/ la postdictadura* [Thinking about the post-dictatorship]. Santiago de Chile, Cuarto Propio, 2001, pp. 223-238.

[27] P. Calveiro, "Antiguos y nuevos sentidos de la política y la violencia"[Ancient and new meanings of politics and violence]. *Lucha armada en la Argentina* [Armed fighting in Argentina], September-November 2005, I, 4, pp. 6-7.