

THE FIGURE OF THE ORDINARY MAN: RESTS AND TRACES

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Abstract The following text tries to examine a poetics of the rest in which the figure of the ordinary man is included. We will ask ourselves about the way in which absences and traces play a role in the determination of the real. How do cultural formations respond to these determinations and which are the roles played by memory and oblivion? In asking these questions we will have to have both a literary and a theoretical perspective given by this investigation of a living spectrality. The banal and the ordinary are both zones of insignificance that can haunt us by means of their unsolvable reality. How do we enter in relation to these zones of insignificance and how is the hidden real revealed in its fragmentary, unshaped memory?

Keywords Memory, forgetfulness, absence, insignificance, ordinary man.

Most ordinary

The figure of the ordinary man, in his politically, imaginary or existential dimension, is hard to grasp. Nonetheless, his presence in the historical and literary spectrum is reflected, not just as the borderline of individualization, but also as the territory where all particularities become equal. Where is this ordinary man and where can he be found from inside the abyss of forgetfulness? In the Leo Tolstoy's short-story *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, the ordinary man who only complies with his duties becomes something else when confronted with the thought of his own disappearance. Thus, the ordinary man becomes, in literature, un-ordinary, when he starts to reject his own death after a life of social conformism. We are not merely talking about the anonymity inside which life draws the story of the banal until death comes to raise an existential consciousness of giving up not only the habit of being alive, but also the right to be a piece of remembrance inside the world. This time of complete retreat inside the fear of disappearance is interestingly put into play by Leo Tolstoy in his short-story. The trace of a fugitive existence has a different dramatic tension when confronted with the consciousness of

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death as fear of the void. The moment when Ivan Ilyich accepts his death is relevant: “And suddenly it grew clear to him that what has been oppressing him and would not leave him was all dropping away from two sides, from ten sides, and from all sides. He was sorry for them, he must act so as not to hurt them: release them and free himself from these sufferings. «How hood and simple» he thought.¹” Thus, Tolstoy does not choose any kind of redemptive revelation for the death of his character, maintaining the tension between the effacement of the ordinary and the will of conservation. “Ivan Ilyich's life has been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible.”

In his last text (*Vivant jusqu'à la mort*), Paul Ricoeur starts with a meditation about the way in which secular societies are unable to deal with corpses. The place occupied by dead bodies in the imaginary, and also in the world is more and more crowded. The difference between the ways of dying and the ways of living seems to diminish. Dead people seem to be recuperated in the difference made by their own imaginary sentence and through the re-individuation created by the idea of personal sin. If suffering is unable to inscribe a difference in-between ordinary men, the idea of sin and the responsibility for it re-inscribe the lines of the separation between men. Nonetheless, the imaginary of death is usually that of *massa perdit*, about which Ricoeur talks following Saint Augustine: “*Massa perdit* devient sinistrement le mot juste dans une théologie qui retire au mal de souffrance sa différence-j'oserais dire son bon droit-retranchée par le mal de péché à travers le mal de peine.²”

The figure of the ordinary man raises a psychosis of a differentiation made by the degree of the justification of lived lives. Ivan Ilyich craves for pity from the others, whose deaths are just a little bit postponed. The need to occupy the minds of the others marks the agony in front of the idea of effacement from the lives of the others. What is lost and what is to remain is the question that addresses the economy of the distribution of recognition and attestation. Starting from here there lays an entire imaginary of empty or crowded places fed by mythologies or theology. What is interesting is that the trace of an ordinary life cannot be imagined in a collective memory, but only in a cosmic or divine one like an insertion inside another super-temporal which has already been calculated. There is still the problematic of the rest, of what is lost or wasted and which cannot be called into question by anything, like a bare trace which cannot be recognized. The modern culture deals with the imaginary of the rest and as we have seen, effacement and death are major and universal topics inside the agony of a modern culture that seems to become more and more homogenous.

¹ Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, trans. by Louise and Aylmer Maude, 1886. (http://www.lonestar.edu/departments/english/Tolstoy_Ivan.pdf)

² Paul Ricoeur, *Vivant jusqu'à la mort* (Paris: Seuil, 2007), 59.

The poetics of the rest

In his book, *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts*, Zygmunt Bauman uses the term “culture of waste” to talk about modern life and, we could say, the tension between the finite and the infinite opened up by the rest. The infinity of time and space makes room for all things. The only idea the infinite cannot bare and contain is that of redundancy. The liquidity of the modern world which makes of things of today the waste of tomorrow is called by Bauman “the spectre of redundancy³”. His interpretation makes a distinction between pre-modern life and its constant fear of death in tension with the Christian vision of eternity and modern life invaded by a constant fear of life⁴. For instance, the symptoms of this fear of life are the obsession of possession and the cult of progress. The entire religious imaginary used to create, in the pre-modern world, the link between mortal life and the eternity of the world by means of the correspondences between the finite and the infinite. With the dawn of modernity, no discourse can “un-speak” the silence of God, man alone being in charge of all the garbage left by the continuous flux of insignificance in the mist of eternity. This task fragments the modern culture, bringing disengagement and an imperceptible sense of loss:

“Liquid modern culture no longer feels like a culture of learning and accumulation like the culture recorded in the historians' and ethnographers' reports. It looks instead like a culture of disengagement, discontinuity and forgetting.⁵”

Inside the 17th century's conception of the world, as systematized by Leibniz, there is no room for redundancy, because “God has had regard for each part.⁶” Each monad, understood as “unity of existence,” reflects, in its finitude, the entire universe, functioning like a piece of mirror. The infinite is very well covered in each detail. How does such a conception about the world transform itself in order for us to speak about a “culture of waste?” Ronald Schleifer, in his book *Modernism and Time-The Logic of Abundance in Literature, Science and Culture 1880-1930*, starts from the idea that the crisis of the European culture can be explained by means of both the accomplishment and failure of the Enlightenment's project.

“The Quest for certitude” begun by Descartes and a certain fight for domination led in the name of an emancipatory ideal pave the way for scientific progress and the 19th century's industrialization. Analyzing this phenomenon, Schleifer conceptualizes what he calls “the logic of abundance,” meaning a considerable rise of the level of wealth and knowledge which lead to repetitions without significance and an uninterrupted chain of the contingent⁷. In contrast with this desacralised experience of the quotidian, because of its abundances, there lays the

³ Zygmunt Bauman, *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁶ Nicholas Rescher (ed.), *G. W. Leibniz's Monadology* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press), 1991, 60.

⁷ Ronald Schleifer, *Modernism and Time-The Logic of Abundance in Literature, Science and Culture 1880-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 22.

transcendental simplicity. Both dimensions give birth to their own particular aesthetics and poetics. This is how we get to Samuel Beckett and his texts marked by the silence of language or an impossibility of signifying. Even in music there is a search for the bare interval that would break the understanding of time as accumulation. We can argue that there are different types of memories associated to these different dimensions mentioned by Schleifer: memory as accumulation and memory as echo of the unregistered.

Death, in the case of Ivan Ilyich, constructed as a gradual decomposition of the legitimacy and justification of being one's self is also a measured renunciation to personal memory. The figure of the ordinary man appears in literature as a dramatization of the subject who has to learn how to die without leaving a trace, because the ordinary man only makes room for the next ordinary man. There is, though, a significance of the ordinary man's life which does not depend on its narrative or historical conservation and that is the fact of having taken place. As Ricoeur observes: "Rien n'est perdu de ce qui a été. Signification minimale: nul ne pourra faire que cet être n'ait pas existé. Mais à cette signification manque la grâce du sens préservé."⁸ We could say that in the face of this theory of disparity there is a significance that survives the effacement of all other meanings. Thus, the problematic of forgetting must not be confused with that of the void. It is more a problematic of the rest which is corroborated within or outside the world. The unjustifiable is one of the faces of forgetfulness, because that which has no justification for having been does not enter any historical or autobiographical narration. This unjustifiable functions like a spectre in relation to remembrance or to the historical past. In Ricoeur's opinion, true redemption does not mean the forgiving of sins (which would be another form of forgetfulness), but the justification of each living moment:

"Peut-on penser encore cette espérance dans la mémoire de Dieu dans le catégories du «salut»? Difficilement: au prix d'une radicale purification par rapport à l'héritage paulinien de la rédemption de péchés. Il s'agit d'un sauvetage infiniment plus radical que la justification des pécheurs: la justification de l'existence."⁹

The inner and the outer man

We could note the difference between an interior memory which man has about his own life and an exterior memory which is the waiting for that which will be kept by the other or impregnated in the sketch of a divine memory. We have to make the distinction between an inner man and an outer one with their own forms of memory and forgetfulness. This distinction will allow us to have two levels when talking about the perception of effacement or disintegration. The possessions, the reminiscences and the progressions of the inner and the outer man impress themselves differently upon the curves of time. This distinction can be first

⁸ Ricoeur, 82.

⁹ Ibid., 79.

found with Saint Augustine's *On the Trinity*. Inner man posses understanding and, thus, memory, while the outer man is gifted with the senses. The tensions between the exterior and the interior is, thus, that between what is decadent and temporary and the always renewing force of man. We have here what in later theories will become the distinction between memory and perception, as understood by psychoanalysis and neuroscience. Ludvig Biswanger also makes a profound distinction between the two melted faces of the inner and the outer man. For Biswanger, the psychological and physical life of the subject must not be confused with "the transcendental ego" (term which Biswanger borrows from Husserl). There is, thus, an interior self that keeps a historical continuity and the every time self of the world:

"Tout tient maintenant au fait que l'on sépare nettement par le concepts le moi qui rend possible la continuité de l'histoire intérieur de la vie (l'Ego transcendantal) et le moi du monde de chaque fois à travers lequel l'histoire intérieure de vie passe comme à travers l'une de ses étapes."¹⁰

Ivan Ilych perceives and remembers his life at the same time, and what does nor let him die is memory, always intensified by physical decay. The death of the will of memory and its consciousness is different from corporal death in the case of Tolstoy's short-story. The inner man survives for a moment the death of the outer man, just to contemplate the "finished death." "«It is finished!» said someone near him. He heard these words and repeated them in his soul. «Death is finished,» he said to himself. «It is no more!»" Between these two states there is a large spectrum of possibilities in order to perceive or to be the witness of one's own effacement from the world. St. Augustine talks about this state of being and not being at the same time, in book 15, chapter 15:

"For with us to be is not the same as to know. For we know many things which live in some manner through our memory, and also die in some manner through forgetfulness, and, therefore, when they are no longer in our knowledge, yet we are; and when our knowledge has slipped from us and perished out of our mind, yet we live."¹¹

Thus, we are continuously the survivors of our own death by means of the forgetting, selections and representations we bury and life is reaffirmed each time in spite of "death by means of forgetfulness." "To be" becomes "to remain" autonomous in spite of all that goes away, in spite of the rest. Forgetfulness is the continuous exercise of finitude and the possibility of surviving our own effacement, replaced by a secondary, fictive body in place of the amputated one. We can argue that forgetfulness functions in the logic of the amputated member requesting a fictive substitution for a receptor function that has lost its intermediary. There are many cultures that do not have any bare space in the imaginary, no island designated to be just the island of nothingness because each space in the cultural imaginary is this amputated member in the flesh of the Real that continues to be there in spite of its absence, the populated rest of the rest of worlds.

¹⁰ Ludvig Binswanger, *Sur la fuite des idées*, trad. Michel Dupuis (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 2000), 283.

¹¹ Augustine, *On the Trinity*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trad. Stephen McKenna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 197.

The Subject without a world

The figure of the ordinary man seems placed at the cross-road between Hell and Heaven, theology being the one that re-individualizes him by means of the idea of personal sin. Philosophy, as François Laruelle observes, cannot account for this *homme ordinaire*, because he is inalienable inside the cultural discursive spectrum. We could argue that the entire occidental culture has forgotten this ordinary man, in his discrete solitude, forbidding him not only the right to history (as Michel Foucault would put it), but also the consistency of its existential trace. For Laruelle this *homme ordinaire* must be differentiated from an ideology of the victim, because he has no images projected on the humanitarian and anthropological screens. The philosophy of the ordinary man is that of having no image projected to the outside. He is not the representative of a social forgetfulness (like the victim), but of the forgetting of the residual principle of man. The ordinary man cannot be seen, because his residual form does not include him in any scheme, but, on the contrary, makes him the manifestation of an essence that overcomes all discourses.

“La différence anthro-po-logique interdit que l'on commence par l'homme et sa solitude. [...] Elle ne peut se contenter de l'homme ordinaire: elle ne le voit même pas. Elle l'aura déjà doublé, à la fois excédé et dévalorisé de ces fantoches philosophique: le grégaire, le vulgaire, le quotidien, l'exotérique, l'entendement sain ou la conscience commune; et par leurs symétriques ou leurs complémentaires: le surhomme, le philosophe, l'homme authentique, le sujet réfléchissant, l'Esprit, etc.¹²”

The ordinary man is not just the man without characteristics (Robert Musil) which we perceive daily in its worldly fitted anonymity or the victim projected by the intellectual discourse, but, as Laruelle observes, he is deprived of any socio-politico-psychological attribute that would predispose him in constituting a world or having one as a basis¹³. The transparency of the ordinary man makes no room for any political game of power to get hold of his image. By defining the essence of minority which is that which cannot be negotiated, nor appropriated, Laruelle wants to pass from a philosophy oriented towards the Other to a philosophy which remembers that unnamed and unconsidered One (*l'Un*). Wanting to overcome the metaphysics of the Other, Laruelle talks about the One as a criterion of absolute reality¹⁴, which does not define itself through the difference it creates, but through the determination it generates. Laruelle does not search for the man behind the world, but for the one that is there before the world, the individual before individuation¹⁵. This individual from

¹² François Laruelle, *Une biographie de l'homme ordinaire-Des Autorités et des Minorités* (Paris: Ed. Aubier Montaigne, 1985), 11.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 48

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 51

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 53

before the world draws around himself a margin and a beyond, representing a unitary force (the One) from which all games of relational differences derive. This One, as the essence of minority, cannot be reflected and refuses to enter in any totality or becoming. The ordinary man is the unreflected and unmediated man about which we know that he exists separately from the World, Language or Philosophy. We could name this distinction the separation of ordinary man from the World, marked by its own finitude and its bordered alliances with the World and Language. In Laruelle's conception, the ordinary man is not only the effect of an entire Philosophy which has forgotten the One, but also the "subject without a world," who finds one only by substituting it completely¹⁶. The ordinary man has got no world around him and in order to have one he has to substitute it with his own dimension. That is why we argue that the ordinary man is a figure of forgetfulness, the subject without world, who has nothing to construct around himself, except for a substitution of the world.

Laruelle takes a large distance from the sociology of the victim and wants to make from the concept of the residual a new ground for metaphysics:

«La méthode transcendantale ne commence ni par Dieu, ni par le choses, ni par l'homme, elle commence par «rien» - avant l'Etre et le Néant – c'est-à-dire par une coupure, le réel tel que antérieur à l'idealité même en général. [...] La loi de résidu absolu est d'être résidu-(de)-résidu, l'apriori est division mais pré-réflexive ou irréflechie en un sens absolu de ces termes.¹⁷»

Facts and phenomena become, thus, the development of the cuttings operated by a poetics of the residual. We could argue that the residual is one of the functions of forgetfulness in the cultural configurations of today whose trace is the *incomplete* or the cut inside the Real. This trace formulated as a cultural lack is either sacralized or mystified or it can be desacralized (for instance the unaccounted flux of the quotidian).

Let us keep in mind the figure of the ordinary man not as the forgotten victim, but as the transcendental status of the unlocalized victim. For Laruelle, each man is this unlocalized victim, because the human subject is not completely identified with his own identity. The "victimology" of Laruelle is founded on that "having disappeared" which man experiences in his evanescence in relation to all forms of representation. Man has this quality of having already disappeared in the face of all encountered thing. We could argue that this state of the disappeared makes the subject generate an entire collective memory and an imaginary through which he could localize and reanimate himself as victim.

For Laruelle, the generic man is *without-memory*, meaning that the trace of the real is not inscribed in any narrative, fictional or autobiographical frame. Memory is part of the spectral dimension of man, while the *non-memorial* retains and imposes the reality of man. This a priori *non-memorial* of the real is non-representable, and this vision proposes Life before History. The *non-memorial* is the defence in the face of spectrality, the resistance of life before its entrance into the circuit of language and cultural memory.

¹⁶ Ibid., 85

¹⁷ François Laruelle, *Principe de minorité* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1981), 53-54.

Laruelle passes briefly upon the problem of remembrance to underline the necessity of a remembrance that does not come from the universality of the event, but a remembrance generated by what has been lived and not by that which is recordable:

“«Les hommes se souviendront de nous». Voilà un impératif de compassion, pas un appel à la pitié, il doit venir de la généralité du vécu et de ses actes plutôt que de l'universalité de la «vie» et de la charge de mémoire qui l'habite.¹⁸”

We also need to underline this need of deriving the cultural representations not only from what is memorable, but from what is non-memorable, from the figure of the ordinary man, forgotten inside the story of the universal. Time is inhabited by a multitude of memories, from which most of them will remain outside humanity's force of gathering, but, just because they do not haunt anybody they remain more real than memory itself. How do these unrecalled stories function and what kind of space do they open up? The place of an emptiness, the trace of an absence? No. They suggest the flux of a superabundance of existence and, thus, the reality without monument of each life in its singularity. Let us begin to think about man starting from his disappearance, not from his death, as Foucault would suggest, but from his continuous disappearance in the face of a world or an ideological mechanism which cannot account for its reality. We could argue that the figure of the ordinary man is lost in collective memory's exercise of eternity while opposing it by means of the theft of time in the face of narrative forms of registering the past.

The nocturnal face

The absents of history do not appear only where there is a lack of documentation or traces, but also where there is evidence that historical narratives were unable to inscribe the unknown, for example the excess of the sacral that surpasses the positivist understanding of the world. In other words there is, in written history, a tendency of excluding the unknown and an impossibility of giving shaped memory to a foreign voice.

In Michel de Certeau's conception there is a literature of loss for those historiographical absences, giving shape to the empty spaces in collective memory:

“A partir d'empreintes définitivement muettes (ce qui a passé ne reviendra plus, et la voix est à jamais perdue), se fabrique une littérature : elle construit une mise en scène de l'opération qui confronte l'intelligible à cette perte. Ainsi se produit le discours qu'organise une présence manquante.¹⁹”

Michel de Certeau dedicates an entire chapter to investigate the witches whose memory does not exist because we have access only to the way in which they were seen, by means of the registers and the texts of magistrates in which they are entrapped just as they were actually imprisoned. The frontiers between “magical thinking” and an empire of the natural define the

¹⁸ Ibid., 165.

¹⁹ Michel de Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire* (Paris: Repères-Mame, 1973), 9.

organization between the possible and the impossible²⁰. When there is a displacement between these frontiers, a new place of non-knowledge opens up. We could argue that the places of non-knowledge and not those of knowledge are the synaptic points in formulating collective memory. Memory is not written by knowledge's mimetic will, but by the regained forces of non-knowledge.

Foucault observes the multiple substrates of the links between things and words, between language and the world, which are the result of an entire history of the metamorphoses of significances which today seem implicit. Following Foucault, Michel de Certeau talks about a nocturnal face of reality²¹ which exists in the crossroads between words and things that entrap inside them the secret of a continuous negation of that link or that road of direct associations of significance. That is why, each period, with its mentality, bears in itself the nocturnal face of the representations with which it functions and with which it elaborates the real. This is how we will be able to talk about Michel de Certeau's concept (that of mark) which describes the traces of non-knowledge inside memory as the traces of a foreigner whose story we do not know, but whose vestige we bear: "De la sorte, l'écriture met en scène le «vestige» d'un pied nu sur le sable. [...] Cette «manière de mémoire» articule sans les clore les traces de l'autre."²²

Socrates' humanism means for Jan Patoča the founding of man upon his nature which is that of imperfection. The human being is imperfect because it has not yet received its final form²³. Beyond each moment there is another and each condition formulates another, which makes Patoča seize the fact that the historical being is a being for which becoming is the most significant characteristic. The historical essence is, in fact, a structure of absence, because what is given in history is always under a negative form: a necessity, an intention, a hidden lack. We are not talking about the historical text as a road through the woods filled with empty spaces and blind spots as the narrative text defined by Umberto Eco. In our case we have to deal with the defining of each moment as dissatisfaction, as lack which projects a realization in time. We are not dealing anymore with Plato's world of Ideas, which are separable and final. Finalities are in a continuous counter-game of their realization inside time and history is the story of the inscription or un-inscription of becoming. This idea of time and history founded on a constitutive lack from which we evade by means of the forms of future and the forms of memory available brings us back to the theme of forgetfulness. Patoča, following Heidegger, draws the attention upon forgetfulness or the misunderstanding of the founding of human life. The quotidian is forgetfulness by means of the narrowing at the level of days of this condition of lack lived through the appropriation and re-appropriation of things. This condition of lack is visible also in the way memory functions by means of an impossibility of remembering through

²⁰ Ibid., 30.

²¹ Ibid., 118.

²² Ibid., 180.

²³ Jan Patoča, *Éternité et historicité*, trad. Erika Abrams (Paris: Verdier, 2011), 31.

ourselves. As Maurice Halbwachs observes, in order to remember we need the others²⁴. Even the event needs to lose a time in order to regain another, as Gerard Mairet observes. We can observe how not only in history understood as becoming, but also in each configuration of memory or time in our consciousness is founded upon an absence which already existed in the interior of the project of finality.

All systems are founded, according to Baudrillard, on a principle of exchange which sustains the dynamics of the whole: either we talk about an exchange in relation to a system of values, a finality, a causality or a significant, all things are structured to have an equivalent. But, when there is no system of reference for the equivalence to take its share, we are dealing with what Baudrillard calls the impossible exchange (*l'échange impossible*.) In this case the edifice of value is exchanged for Nothing: "La mort, l'illusion, l'absence, le négatif, le mal, la parte maudite sont là partout, an filigrane de tous les échanges. C'est même cette continuité du Rien qui fonde la possibilité du Grand Jeu de l'Échange."²⁵ This is Baudrillard's interpretation concerning the profound significance of the *ex-nihilo* creation: the Nothingness is the surface against which we perceive the entire existence through its potential nullity or absence (or, in our case, forgetfulness). The potentiality of nonexistence of this world created from nothing is both a source of energy and one of emptying for the entire cultural and existential symptomatology. Baudrillard draws his thesis also from the theory of the quantum void which sustains the entire universe. If we were to eliminate the dead, the living would become strangers to each other, says Baudrillard. This means that in the absence of this exchange with the traces that tie us and make us recognizable for each other, there would only be a bare transparency. In order to give a "supplement of soul"²⁶ to our right to existence, we have developed an entire system of values or defunct, exhumed or resuscitated things by means of the labour of mourning. We can expand this idea and say that there is in the formulation of our cultural memory a labour of mourning searching to give a "supplement of soul" not only to the lost existences, but also to the remembering subject. We have set the founding of the subject on its own absence (which is something else than the consciousness of death). Constructing a labour of mourning for the lost existences and things, the subject gives to itself a "supplement of soul," making sure that through memory the universe of lost things depends upon him. Thus, his absence becomes more than the extinction of a singular life, meaning that it becomes the effacement of the effacement that only he can revisit. "The supplement of soul" could be the consciousness of a generic double, that has already died several times in our place, substituting his absence with the memory of his absence.

²⁴ Paul Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oublie* (Paris: Édition du Seuil, 2000), 147.

²⁵ Jean Baudrillard, *L'Échange Impossible* (Paris: Édition Galilée, 1999), 16.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 74.

Conclusions

As we have seen there is an entire system of the vacant in us and in our collective and personal consciousnesses. The dialectic of this system is complex, including cultural, existential and metaphysical dimensions. We have tried to observe how it manifests itself in relation to the figure of the ordinary man and to the essence of what is minor. We have found no configuration for this ordinary man except in its residual dimension which sustains his underdeveloped relation to history and perception. The rest becomes the difference between this world and another, between the possible and the impossible, between significance and insignificance. Thus, the place of the ordinary man is the place of the un-remembered, which draws the line between possible worlds and divides what we know from what there is to know.