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Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for Oratorio*).* Spatial Displacements Produced by Labour[1]

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This essay travels through the ruins of labour, interrogating the latter's territoriality and revealing certain hidden relationships between different times and spaces through flamenco and through the repetition of gestures suspended in the rifts of history. It deals with the movement of bodies as a last refuge from the displacements caused by labour; as a border zone between private and public space that stands in permanent conflict, which also is a latent controversy in the Antigone myth that constitutes one of this essay's key subtexts. Because, perhaps, labour is our myth today, and we must give shape to it through gesture.

1. Context of the Production

Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for Oratorio*)* is an artistic research project that has resulted in a video installation with four channels. The project is based on a free interpretation of a staging of the theatre piece *Oratorio* written by Alfonso Jiménez Romero (which in turn is a reinterpretation of *Antigone*) in a very specific context: namely, the performance that the theatre group Teatro Estudio Lebrijano staged in 1971 for the workers (a majority of

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[1] Translated by Carlos van Tongeren. An earlier version of this text was published in Spanish in *La Murad* and is available here: http://lamurad.eina.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Ru%CC%88sselsheim-2016un-ensayo-para-oratorio-Maria-Garcia.pdf.

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whom were Spanish migrants) of the automobile manufacturer Opel in the German city of Rüsselsheim, where Opel is headquartered.

Based on this performance from 1971, of which there are no extant audio-visual footage or pictures, we undertook a research process whereby we tried to retrieve testimonies, traces and lost inheritances. In 2016, we travelled to Rüsselsheim along with a group of international artists who generously collaborated on the project (the Mexican flamenco dancer Karen Lugo, the Syrian dancer and *bailaor* Diaa Homsy and the Mexican percussionist Israel Varela) and there we started working on a reenactment of the four "prayers" (*oraciones*) of which *Oratorio* is comprised, alongside professional and amateur dancers from Rüsselsheim and the surrounding areas the latter of whom are the children and grandchildren of migrant workers from the 1960s and 1970s. Various choreographies and performances were staged in the factory surroundings and in the Opel car park where forty years earlier the workers' housing, which has now disappeared, was located. Using all the filmed footage and materials from the research and artistic work we conducted in Rüsselsheim, we went on to create four videos, which correspond to the four prayers from *Oratorio*.

The video sequence that has been included in this publication is that of the second prayer, the Prayer of Cain and Abel, as this was most suitable for reproduction in an online format and alongside this written essay. The sequence is structured as a filmic essay that revolves around the conflicts and paradoxes that emerge around the places and displacements produced by labour. The video starts in a rehearsal room where the participants prepare the choreographies and performances. They lie on the floor facing downwards, they emit undefined sounds, and this image reminds us of the ending of *Oratorio* where the actors lie on the floor, as if they had died during the Spanish Civil War (also see Figure 13 below).

The video then moves towards the estrangement elicited by the act of travelling and then returns to the rehearsals, where the dancers tirelessly repeat the same gestures. Both in dance and in the factory the same gestures are repeated ad nauseam, until the body learns, memorises and incorporates them until they become second nature. By repeating the same gestures, we tried to invoke the sterile repetition of factory work, the repetitions carried out by bodies that have had to adapt themselves to the rhythms of the machine, as if they were trying to enter the fissures of time to make these collapse. For many of the participants in the project, flamenco is a way of life that, apart from the fact that it connects them to the past of their Spanish families, saves them from the monotony of life in this small, grey town. The flamenco gestures that were once put on stage by Teatro Estudio Lebrijano

to move the Southern migrant workers find an echo in the present-day rehearsals of the dancers, where they emerge as a type of anachronistic resistance against the ongoing alienation of the place, the alienation endured by present-day workers whose lives remain connected to the headquarters of the car factory.

Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for Oratorio*)* was undertaken in the context of a larger project entitled *Máquinas de vivir: Flamenco y arquitectura en la ocupación y desocupación de espacios* (Machines for Living: Flamenco and Architecture in the Occupation and Disoccupation of Spaces),[2] carried out alongside the artist Pedro G. Romero and with support from Sant Andreu Contemporani and the Department of Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya. We developed it at during two key periods: through research in Rüsselsheim and Seville (at the Documentation Centre for the Performing Arts in Andalusia) at the end of 2016; and in 2018, as part of the Research MA in Art and Design at EINA (School of Art and Design at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona), where the process of writing, montage and the final presentation were completed.

2. Teatro Estudio Lebrijano and *Oratorio*

Teatro Estudio Lebrijano (TEL) was an independent theatre group in the 1960s and 1970s formed by students, workers and peasants, whose way of understanding theatre broke with the spatial and dramaturgic schemes of bourgeois theatre through a language inspired by the radical nature of flamenco and popular culture. Their work was part of the broader current of Teatro Ritual Andaluz (Andalusian Ritual Theatre) that operated at the theatrical avant-garde of the era. The group was directed by Juan Bernabé until the latter's early death in 1972.

According to Pedro G. Romero,

> [i]n 1969, when Bernabé went to Nancy and saw the work of the Bread and Puppet Theatre from the United States, and directed by Peter Schumann, he became convinced of the need to follow the path of political theatre, a theatre of direct intervention, where the ritual and popular elements get confused with the ritual and popular

[2] Romero and García's term *máquinas de vivir* draws on Le Corbusier's term *machines à habituer*, commonly translated into English as "machines for living in"; yet it also dwells on Federico García Lorca's translation of said term with the verb *vivir* (to live) rather than *habitar* (to live in). For this reason, the project title has been translated here as "machines for living." Also see Pedro G. Romero and María García Ruiz, *Máquinas de vivir. Flamenco y arquitectura en la ocupación y desocupación de espacios* (Puente Editores, 2019), 10 [translator note].

> elements of its natural audience. In other words, theatre staged in the streets, schools, and factories, similar too to the chicano artist Luis Valdez's Teatro Campesino. When *Oratorio* premiers in Nancy, critics are quick to mention its similarities to Grotowski; especially his *Apocalipsis Cum Figuris*, as both pieces were first staged in 1968. The rituals of the body, the whole violent potential inherited from Artaud's "theatre of cruelty" are presented as similar experiences. And yet, drawing on his own background, Bernabé was reworking the experience of catharsis that he found meaningless unless he could convert it, in his own words, into "life, critique, document." Accustomed as they were to the visual and vocal rhetoric of flamenco, a song style produced by the body, as William Washabaugh has brilliantly described it, the aspirations of TEL had to go further.[3]

It is in the staging of *Oratorio*, written by Alfonso Jiménez, that those aspirations of TEL mentioned by Pedro G. Romero are materialised: a combination of popular culture and the avant-garde, supported by the use of flamenco as a primordial connector with ritual elements, which allowed the group to leave behind a type of theatre-making based on dramatic composition. *Oratorio* by Alfonso Jiménez is an interpretation of the Antigone myth in the context of the Spanish Civil War with echoes of all sorts of other wars and, more generally, of injustices committed by authoritarian regimes. We need to remember that Jiménez wrote it during the Franco dictatorship and that the composition of the piece as a series of prayers (*oraciones*) was also meant to circumvent censorship.

Teatro Estudio Lebrijano staged a version of this text where it added to its cast the flamenco quartet La Cuadra, led by Salvador Távora (who later used that same name for his own theatre group). TEL, under Juan Bernabé's leadership, made its own adaptation of Alfonso Jiménez's script and kept adapting it to the local conflicts relevant to the contexts in which they were performing. In 1971, they travelled through Europe and participated in the prestigious World Theatre Festival in Nancy. As they were already travelling and the siblings of some of the actors (who were from Lebrija) were working in the Opel factory in Rüsselsheim where they were part of the local Spanish Cultural Circle (which collaborated directly with the Spanish Cultural Circle in Frankfurt and was part of the exiled Spanish Communist Party), the group organised a performance in the Opel Residence in Rüsselsheim.[4]

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[3] Pedro G. Romero, "Un ensayo del Teatro Estudio Lebrijano," unpublished manuscript.

[4] Interviews conducted by the author with Curro, Antonia and Pilar Vidal, December 2016 and May 2017.

For our contemporary rereading of *Oratorio*, this particular situation in Germany was chosen due to the peculiarity of this encounter of flamenco, as a radical cultural expression, with the new forcefield produced by the economic boom of multinational enterprises that contributed to rebuilding Europe after the Second World War. Today, this situation has radically changed, although we might still be able to relate to it. While most work is no longer carried out in a factory, we still have to travel to go to work, and perhaps more so than ever.

3. Displaced Spaces due to Labour

In the second channel of the video installation, a quotation by Vilém Flusser was used that addresses the main issues addressed by this project; that is to say, the territorialities brought about by labour:

> It is therefore a question of topology or, if you like, architecture. As long as manufacturing takes place without tools —i.e. as long as *homo faber* acts directly upon nature, using his hands to turn things to his own advantage and turn things into something else— during all this time one cannot identify a locality for the factory; it has no "topos." [...] As soon as tools are introduced, specialized factory areas can and must be cut out of the environment. [...] These factory areas are circular features in the middle of which stands the human being from whom circles of tools radiate outwards, themselves encompassed within the circles of nature beyond. This factory architecture has been the norm for practically the whole of human history. With the invention of machines, this architecture has to change in the following way:
>
> Given that the machine has to be situated in the middle, due to the fact that it is more durable and more valuable in the manufacturing process than the human being is, human architecture has to be subordinated to that of machines.[5]

The singularity of this development is documented in *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)*, the sense of "placeness" of Rüsselsheim is precisely that: a city (human architecture) built around a factory (machine architecture). Although the locality has existed since 765 AD as a county, it earned its current name in the second half of the 19th century and then underwent

[5] Vilém Flusser, *The Shape of Things: A Philosophy of Design*, trans. Anthony Matthews (Reaktion Books, 1999), 46-47, original emphasis.

intensive development due to industrialisation. At the end of that century, Adam Opel opened a factory that produced sewing machines and bicycles, which was later transformed into an automobile factory by his sons and their heirs. In 1929, Opel was bought by the multinational General Motors and during the Second World War it was converted into the main manufacturer of trucks for the Nazi forces. Recently, in 2017, it was bought by the PSA Group (formerly known as PSA Peugeot Citroën).

These flows of capital, which are so intimately linked to war and the subsequent reconstruction of various countries, create and shape the machine centres where the poorest members of the population have to travel in search of jobs. In the 1960s and 1970s the increase in production in those industrial hubs in central Europe attracted an enormous number of workers from southern countries, due to the decline of the agricultural systems in the latter.

Yet what shapes is taken by this human architecture emerging around the factories? In many cases, they are temporary constructions, ad hoc: for instance, workers occupy existing buildings or even old barracks from the war. In other cases, specific buildings are built to house large parts of the displaced population, to create the minimal conditions for a dwelling in which one can get just enough rest to maintain one's strength for work.

The writer John Berger and the photographer Jean Mohr have documented some of these spaces in their pioneering work *A Seventh Man: A Book of Images and Words About the Experience of Migrant Workers in Europe*, whose first edition appeared in 1975, in which they try to explain a complex and conflictual situation from their own contemporary perspective.[6] As explored by Berger and Mohr, the homogeneous and modular spaces of the barracks and workers' residences are adapted where possible by these temporary residents with their personal memories, pictures of their places of origin or images of the dreams they plan to realise with the money that they have earned. Spaces that are home to changing communities and that maintain a fragile memory, since in many cases they only exist during the years of maximum productivity at the factories or public works they are associated with.

In the case at hand, one of the architectonic responses to this migratory movement in Rüsselsheim is the Opel Residence (*Opelwohnheim* in German), a residence for single immigrant workers (or workers who, in the first instance, travelled without their families). This was the very residence at which the group Teatro Estudio Lebrijano staged *Oratorio* in 1971. The Opel

[6] John Berger and Jean Mohr, *A Seventh Man. A Book of Images and Words About the Experience of Migrant Workers in Europe* (Penguin, 1975).

Residence stayed open until the 1990s, after which it was demolished to make space for a parking lot for Opel workers's cars and new housing for migrant workers.

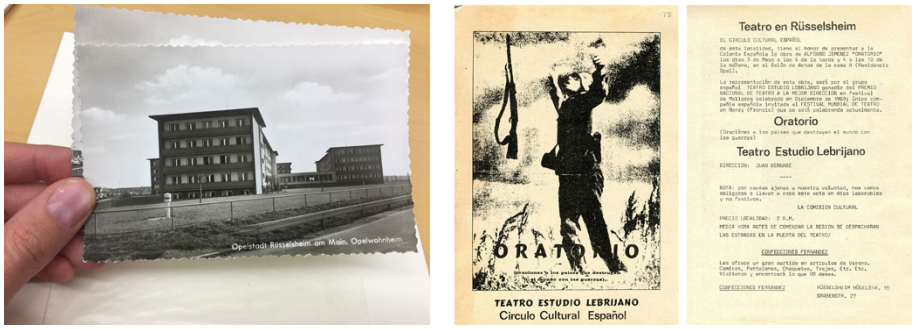

Figure 1: Left: Opel Residence (*Opelwohnheim*), post card. Source: Rüsselsheim City Archive. Used with permission. Right: leaflet about stage of *Oratorio* in the "Auditorium of House 8 (Opel Residence)." Source: Documentation Centre for the Performing Arts in Andalusia, Seville. Used with permission.

Figure 2: Flamenco dancer Karen Lugo during one of the choreographic actions in *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)* in the car park where the Opel Residence used to be located.

In the second channel of the video installation, we can see pictures of some of the Opel Residence's domestic spaces, which have been preserved in the Rüsselsheim City Archive. It is interesting to highlight the following picture.

Figure 3: Still image from "Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel." Source of the picture: Rüsselsheim City Archive. Used with permission.

This is one of the pictures that was taken shortly after the residence was built, when no one was yet living there. In other words, there were no traces of usage, no pictures on the walls, everything was orderly and ready for the new life that was being proposed. This image, specifically, represents an ideal room: a room with views of the factory. Effectively, the factory wants effectively to be the centre —literally and symbolically— of that productive lifestyle that was being proposed to the immigrant workers. It is also a premonitory image: the future, which shapes the dreams of every person, can be seen through the window. The future brings money and with it, as Berger notes,[7] the ability to act. It is the image of Modernity: an austere room, completely functional, prepared so that man can also *function* in relation to the factory. And this Modernity represents a change of paradigm towards a present in which, as Flusser writes, "people work technically, functionally, efficiently, strategically, and cybernetically."[8] As Flusser continues:

> In fact, work in the classical and modern sense is being displaced by functions. One no longer works to realize a value, nor to discredit a reality, but rather functions as the functionary of a function. This absurd gesture cannot be grasped without observing machines, for we are actually functioning as functions of a machine, which functions as

[7] Berger and Mohr, *A Seventh Man*, 164, 186-188.
[8] Vilém Flusser, *Gestures*, trans. Nancy Ann Roth (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 10.

> the function of a functionary, who in turn functions as the function of an apparatus, which functions as a function of itself.[9]

But the artistic piece doesn't only try to depict this historical moment, since the images of the domestic spaces in the Opel Residence are also placed alongside the domestic spaces that our team inhabited during our stay in Rüsselsheim and the surrounding areas in the week that we worked there.

Figure 4: Still images from "Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel."

Thus, our itinerancy, which is an itinerancy related to artistic labour and that can be identified with the work undertaken several decades earlier by Teatro Estudio Lebrijano, dialogues with the itinerancy of those migrant workers. Fordist work appears as a spectre (as is shown more clearly in the third channel of the video), as a ruin of the past that speaks to the conditions of work today.

A number of things have changed regarding this transition towards the so-called post-Fordist labour regime, such as questions regarding territoriality. It seems that, contrary to what happened in the 1960s and 1970s in the factories, today, labour does not have its own space, or to put it differently, it takes place anywhere. The factories were places where you would daily go to work (and they still are in many places around the world, but we are focusing here on a European genealogy), and they had the capacity to bring into being communities that were more or less stable and could organise themselves (through unions, workers' assemblies, etc.) to fight for their own rights. In the context of so-called post-Fordist labour, the factory space has disappeared, or rather it has been shattered into a number of pieces and it has stretched itself across space; no longer is there a specific workspace as one works from anywhere. Temporary and precarious workspaces don't allow for the creation of communities that can self-organise around shared troubles to fight for workers' rights; unionist organisation becomes almost

[9] Flusser, *Gestures*, 13-14.

impossible. Cognitive work can be carried out from home or almost anywhere else with a laptop and internet connection. The flexibility and dislocation that social movements struggled for in the sixties have become the new handicap of our time. Even beyond the distinction between labour and non-labour, something similar has happened to time. No longer is there a distinction between the time of labour and non-labour, leisure time has become productive and, one way or another, we are always working.

As such, we find ourselves trapped in a machinery that doesn't seem to have an end. Flusser conceptualises this from within a functionalist paradigm:

> Of course, such a Kafkaesque understanding of the apparatus has now become obvious, and the persistence of modern and progressive optimism (whether in the form of liberalism or socialism) has taken on a poignant quality. For we have existentially experienced a reversal of the preindustrial relation "man-machine": in our activities ("work"), we function just as we do at leisure ("consuming"), as functions of many apparatuses.[10]

Undoubtedly, for the implementation of this new paradigm, artistic work has often been at the forefront of new types of post-Fordist work —flexible and dislocated—, and at the same time, paradoxically, it has also been a way to resist the alienation caused by modes of production, whatever shape these may have.

Figure 5: Still images from "Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel."

In *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)*, the artistic labour of the flamenco dancers is also shown as it constantly interrupts the story told by the images from the past; the story of the migrant workers unfolds but, at the same time, someone is always dancing. When they are rehearsing,

[10] Flusser, *Gestures*, 16.

repeating the same gestures over and over again, the following sentence from Berger can be heard: "[h]e watches the gestures made and he learns to imitate them,"[11] which refers to the mechanical way the workers learned when they started in the factories.

Thus, through this juxtaposition of image and (spoken) text, the gesture appears as an element that links the work in the factory (past) and the work of the dancers (present). In the factory, a gesture is repeated hundreds of times, just like in a rehearsal. The repetition of the gesture is something that binds but also liberates us. "I'm working! What's the difference? To love, to work, to work, to love. Show me the difference" says a character from Jean-Luc Godard's film *Passion*.[12]

One never works only to satisfy certain needs, as Vilém Fusser explains:

> If work were a tendency to strive for the satisfaction of these needs, we could speak of setting goals for work: one works to meet the needs, and after that, no more. But it's not like that. Animals don't work but meet their needs without changing the world. [...] Work is, then, a gesture, an unnatural expression of the effort to realize values and to devalue realities.[13]

Work is a gesture, both in the factory and in dance. Following the words that Godard puts in the mouth of his characters: "For me, in reality, work and pleasure are the same thing. They are the same gestures as love. Not at the same speed, but the same gestures."[14]

The gesture, which according to Vilém Flusser's conceptualisations is a movement for which there is no satisfactory causal explanation, belongs to the world of symbolical representation and is different from Reason. It here appears as the final act of resistance to the displacements of labour. Every gesture equals the preceding one but is also different, and that is the case because it always traverses the body, and the body is not the machine. In the small deviations, in the gesture's offshoots, the body appears as an irreducible singularity, as the limit of the body's colonization by the machine. In the repetition of gestures we are subordinated by the machinic apparatus, but it is also through gestures that we resist, as it is through them, also, that love and pleasure circulate.

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[11] Berger and Mohr, *A Seventh Man*, 94.
[12] Godard, Jean-Luc, *Passion.* Sara Films/Sonimage/Films A2, 1982.
[13] Flusser, *Gestures*, 11.
[14] Godard, *Passion.*

In the last channel of the video installation, we see the shadows of dancer Karen Lugo who "cuts out" fragments of dance from the asphalted parking spaces at the site where the Opel Residence was located in the 1970s. As such, the gestures appear as interpellations of the present from the shadows, gestures that are projected from the past, emerging from the ground, shapes that may be reminiscent of the movements of Teatro Estudio Lebrijano performing its version of the Antigone myth, tangled gestures that resist the everyday monotony of the production belt. And at the same time, this may be a new Antigone who with her phantasmagorical presence revisits the inexistent traces of a past life, performing her personal tribute, with ritualised and fragmented movements. The gesture is the resonance, the ephemerous trace of the effects of displacement (which are corporeal and spatial) caused by labour.

Figure 6: Still images from "Channel 4: Prayer of Man."

4. Four prayers

As stated earlier, the investigation materialises as a video installation of four channels, which refer directly to the four prayers in Alfonso Jiménez's *Oratorio*. We preserved the original titles, although the interpretation of each of them is very free. The piece was presented to an audience for the first time on 20 April 2018 in Fabra i Coats, a performance space in Barcelona, as part of a series of activities accompanying the exhibition *Machines for Living: Flamenco and Architecture in the Occupation and Disoccupation of Spaces* in La Virreina Centre de la Imatge, from 23 February 2018 to 20 May 2018; it was a presentation of the project that won the Miquel Casablancas Prize (a competition part of the Sant Andreu Comtemporani programme) and was supported by El Dorado Sociedad Flamenca Barcelonesa and Fabra i Coats Centre d'Art Contemporani.

The factory space of Fabra i Coats was the ideal place to present the piece; the old spinning mill, which has been transformed into a cultural venue, formalises in spatial terms this transition from a Fordist to a post-Fordist labour regime. Thus, the projected images resonated perfectly with the space that housed them. The four channels were distributed through

space, allowing the spectator to embark on a spatial tour that, like a landscape, would show them the different screens, and with seated spaces allowing them to view each channel in detail.

Figure 7: Presentation of *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)* in Fabra i Coats, 20 April 2018.

There was, furthermore, a special collaboration from flamenco dancer Marco de Ana, who performed a dance act around the four screens, using repetitive gestures, movements from the choreographies that had been rehearsed in Rüsselsheim, emphasising the movements in-between such gestures and choreographies, that is to say, movements of pause and transition, which ultimately represents the proper work of dance.

Figure 8: Marco de Ana during the presentation of *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)* in Fabra i Coats, 20 April 2018.

4.1 Channel 1: Prayer of Antigone

The original Prayer in Alfonso Jiménez's piece is an interpretation of the Antigone myth, but all the characters are Andalusian peasants. Antigone is the main character and almost the entire scene is a dialogue between Antigone and the Chorus. The atmosphere replicates that of the Antigone myth and how it repeats itself throughout history, in a variety of contexts. The Oracle says: "Antigone rebelled against the tyrant and his unjust laws. And the tyrant sentenced her to death." At the end, the Chorus rebukes itself asking why it did not support Antigone despite being aware of the tyranny of those laws.

Alfonso Jiménez wrote the text in 1968 in the context of the Franco dictatorship. It is a direct address to the "people," and the tyrant can be identified with the dictator. The resonances of the two opposing factions from the Spanish Civil War are still very present, as is the Francoist repression of the countryside in Lebrija during the war. Antigone's rebellion against the injustices of the dictatorial laws suffered by all is lauded.

Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for Oratorio*)* is also a performance of the Antigone myth in a very specific context. The contemporary issues at stake are the following: while in Sophocles's original myth Antigone confronts the tyrant who represents the state, in this case, Antigone confronts an image (or a statue) representing the corporation, the multinational, the new forces that model, control, and oppress the destinies of human beings. The stage, in this case, is Rüsselsheim in the year 2016, the sight of a grey city in the centre of Germany ruled by the rhythms of its main productive centre: the Opel corporation. That centre is not even represented by the factory anymore, but rather by the corporation. The old Opel factory embodies the city's symbolical centre. The current factory operates at the half of its productive capacity (due to the dislocation of labour) and rents spaces to Korean companies. The main offices, as well as the company's Research and Development Centre appear as the most representative billboard of this corporation, and they thus play the part of Thebes, the city, the representation of society, its values and concerns. The Chorus is represented by the cars. Almost every inhabitant of the city of Rüsselsheim own an Opel, since the company has a special department that sells cars to the factory workers and their families. King Creon talks to Antigone from the imposing position afforded by the immobility of his statue. Antigone answers through dance, her gestures contain the rage, the pride in her actions and her resignation to fate.

Figure 9: Still images from "Channel 1: Prayer of Antigone."

Credits: Channel 1: Prayer of Antigone

Creon: Statue of Adam Opel

Antigone: Karen Lugo

Choreography: Marco de Ana

Images and editing: María García

Setting: Rüsselsheim, 2016

Text: Fragments from Friedrich Hölderlin's version of Sophocles's *Antigone*, Spanish translation by Helena Cortés Gabaudan.

4.2 Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel

Alfonso Jiménez's original Prayer situates the war from the Antigone myth, which was a war between the brothers Polinices and Eteocles (Oedipus' sons), in the primordial scene of sibling rivalry in the Judeo-Christian tradition: that of Cain and Abel. Cain kills Abel on stage and different voices angrily berate him for having killed his brother. A war atmosphere starts to emerge and the actors construct different images related to scenes of war: labour camps, the recruitment of young people for the war, and so on. In this way, Alfonso Jiménez makes a tacit reference to the Spanish Civil War, the war between brothers.

In this case, we started with the idea that the confrontation between Cain (a farmer) and Abel (a shepherd) could represent the eternal conflict between nomadic and sedentary people. One type of nomadism is represented by the constant displacements caused by labour. This channel, then, is an audio-visual essay that explores the tensions between movement, work, territoriality, and architecture. Moreover, it works with the notion that in post-war Europe, the first sites to be rebuilt were the factories. Peace is an indirect way to maintain power hierarchies that become manifest much more incisively during times of war.

Figure 10: Still images from "Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel."

Later, images are shown from the archive of the Opel Residence while the voice over reflects on how human architecture (both buildings and bodies) revolves around machine centres. The images from the bedroom looking out onto the factory can be seen as paradigmatic of this type of spatial organisation that subjugates an entire way of living. Capitalism has changed

shape in the last forty years, but bodies are still organised and distributed in line with the exact needs of the modes of production.

Some of the materials in this essay are the outcome of the situated work that was carried out with a group of amateur flamenco dancers in Rüsselsheim. They are the daughters and granddaughters of immigrants from the 1960s and 1970s and they have maintained a connection with Spanish culture mainly by taking flamenco dance classes. For many of them, flamenco dance is an escape valve for the monotony of their work in the Opel factory.

Figure 11: Group of dancers in *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)*.

The essay is based on images from Rüsselsheim that were taken from its City Archive and on events surrounding the situated work with the dancers. We carried out three choreographic actions in relevant spaces: the first in a car park where the Opel Residence was located in the 1970s; the second in the old Opel factory; and the third at the entrance of the new factory. In addition, we worked with original textual fragments and with quotations from other authors. The authors are listed in the credits below but they are mixed indistinctly in the audio-visual essay. Sometimes, they appear in the subtitles and sometimes these quotations are read out by the voiceover to give different textures to the narrative, making it more heterogenous and fragmented.

The video ends with a quoted dialogue from Jean-Luc Godard's film *Passion*, where the continuity between the gestures of love and work becomes manifest. Is there anything indecent about the act of showing gestures of love and gestures of labour in films and public spaces? If so, it may be the case that they have something in common. In both instances, the body puts itself at the disposal of something that is external to it; it moves outside of itself, it surrenders itself to an external current that controls it, whether to achieve a degree of liberation (in the case of work) or a degree of subordination to the other (in the case of love).

Credits: Channel 2: Prayer of Cain and Abel

With: Karen Lugo, Diaa Homsy, Marco de Ana, Silke Beck, Melanie Delgado, Anna D'Errico, Mandana Flores, Laura Jimenez, Yulia Korchagina, Cristina Muñoz, Ann-Cathrin Obinyan, Gudrun Pfahl, David Morán, Israel Varela, Alfonso Posada, Lorena Rodenas-Martínez and Curro Vidal.

Texts: fragments and *détournements* of John Berger, Marco de Ana, Vilém Flusser, María García, Santiago López Petit, Rogelio López Cuenca and Jean-Luc Godard.

Collaborations: Stadtarchiv Rüsselsheim and Tanzwerkstadt Darmstadt.

4.3 Channel 3: Prayer of Voices in the Wind

The original Prayer deals with the voices and echoes of the dead and the vanquished of the civil war; those that once belonged to humans are now "voices in the wind." A character appears who questions whether the vanquished are voiceless, and different characters reply that they are not voiceless and not even dead. The people who respond and stand up identify themselves (through a song that is repeated) with the people of Thebes. Reference is made, moreover, to the silence of the vanquished among other people, in other places: Poland, Germany, Portugal, and Castille, thereby adding overtones of a common and universal story. The voices in the wind are the voices of silence, silenced voices, voices from the past, as well as the resonances of all those past injustices in those who are alive. It is a way of reanimating those voices and bringing them to the present.

In the third channel of the video installation, the voices from the past, which is the recent past of Fordism, are brought to the present. On the one hand, the soundtrack consists of the resonances, within a hangar, of a distorted fragment from *La fabbrica illuminata* by composer Luigi Nono. Nono was a member of the acclaimed Darmstadt School (based in a city near Rüsselsheim), which invented a new way of composing that wanted to prioritise direct uses of sonorous material over traditional questions of musical form. Schoenberg's dodecaphonism was an advancement in these types of composition where rhythm was also divided into separate units as a way of structuring the compositions. Exponents from this School developed forms of serial as well as electronic music. In this piece, Luigi Nono works directly with the voices and words of the workers from a factory in Cornigliano, as well as directly with the sounds of the machines from that factory. A soprano

voice interprets words articulated by the workers, texts from folders and other elements, while the machines and other voices create the sonic atmosphere.

In our piece, these sounds from Nono's composition echo through the dilapidated spaces of the old Opel factory in Rüsselsheim. The opera now becomes an opera of images of this abandoned factory, which could very well represent other factories in a number of other places. The collection of images reflects the state of abandonment, the past of the factory, the voices of workers and machines that are no longer there and now speak to us from the past. A past that no longer exists, but that somehow is still present.

Figure 12: Still images from "Channel 3: Prayer of Voices in the Wind."

The final image in the performance, which appears at the same time as a voice in Luigi Nono's composition exclaims the word *Lager* (a reference to the Nazi concentration camp, though it also means "warehouse") is a reconstruction of one of the images of war from Alfonos Jiménez's *Oratorio*: all actors lie dead on the floor.

Figure 13: Left: Still image from "Channel 3: Prayer of Voices in the Wind." Right: picture from a performance of *Oratorio* by Teatro Estudio Lebrijano in the streets of Lebrija. Author: Mario Fuentes. Source: Documentation Centre for the Performing Arts in Andalusia, Seville. Reproduced with permission.

Credits: Channel 3: Prayer of Voices in the Wind

Composition of images of the old Opel factory in Rüsselsheim for a distorted fragment from *La fabbrica illuminata* by Luigi Nono.

With: Ilke Beck, Melanie Delgado, Anna D'Errico, Laura Jimenez, Yulia Korchagina, Cristina Muñoz, Ann-Cathrin Obinyan and Gudrun Pfahl.

4.4 Channel 4: Prayer of Man

"I condemn you, brother."[15] The last prayer in Alfonso Jiménez's piece is a monologue where the actor directly addresses the culprits of war, those who write history without permission from the vanquished, those who destroy cities. Antigone's voice can be heard again as she sings, and then, finally: "Silence. All look fixedly at the audience. They don't move."[16] The provocation is made so that the audience either feels guilty or is moved to condemn the culprits for their injustices. It is also a reclamation of the present, a way to bring forward the themes that were treated earlier in the piece and that may otherwise seem to belong to the past.

In the fourth channel of *Rüsselsheim, 2016 (An Essay for* Oratorio*)* the Prayer is protagonised by a woman, and not a man. Antigone, or rather her shadow, her trace, her movement which can hardly be followed in the present, appears again on stage to close the cycle (we started with Antigone and end with Antigone). Fleeting shadows over the asphalt of the car park where the Opel Residence, which provided housing for the migrant workers and became a stage for *Oratorio*, was located in the 1970s. Gestures from the past are brought into the present, or gestures from the present that are meant to be projected backwards towards the fragile memory of fleeting ways of living. The gesture itself emerges as a pure transition, as a trace that remains in the bodies and in our symbolical field and that pushes us towards the present, to a certain presence, always emerging from the ground.

Figure 14: Still images from "Channel 4: Prayer of Man."

[15] Alfonso Jiménez Romero, "Oratorio," in *Teatro Ritual Andaluz* (Centro Andaluz de Teatro, 1996), 150.

[16] Jiménez Romero, "Oratorio," 150.

Credits: Channel 4: Prayer of Man

Choreography: Marco de Ana

Karen Lugo in the car park where the *Opelwohnheim* was located in the 1970s.

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