

Architecture in the Age of Digital Representation

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Selkirk epitomizes this increasingly common, vacant Self, a blur even to himself. He may be known as Kent Selkirk now, but he's had several names before, and as his ex-girlfriend tells Agent Robinson, "next year he'll go by something else. He's still in play. Still forming. That's his charm. When we met, he called himself a Christian. Then he became a 'deep ecologist.' A couple weeks later, on his bedside table, I found a Koran. On a stack of Penthouse Forums. Next to a sign-up form for a tai chi class".¹

In 1936, when Walter Benjamin published the essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*,² he felt cause for alarm: theater had given way to film, literature to the daily press, and painting to images that were mechanically reproduced. He wrote in a time when he saw the old values of the truth content of art, of the categories of authenticity and of integrity, slip away into the fulfillment of the Marxist diagnosis of the total fetishization and commodification of all labor, including art production. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* is a work of grief, of bereavement, of what could and would be lost, a vision of sadly what not only would come to pass, but pass unnoticed and unmourned. There would be no work of mourning for the loss of meaning, only the heady intoxication in the passing review of images, of simulacra, of life experience reduced to a screen.

Benjamin describes in the beginning in the twentieth century, the loss of meaning inherent in the turn to the mechanical reproduction of the work of art. This reproduction is not merely the re-making of images or artifacts, for this activity has always been practiced, but through the means of mechanical reproduction, an object loses its "aura", or its authenticity as not only an original, but as a singular expression on the part of an author, or artist. Through mass reproduction and circulation, the "aura" is lost through dissemination; it becomes what Derrida has termed "*blanc*", as a coin through circulation has the embossing worn away until it no longer has any value as currency.³ The

reproduction is severed from its tradition, from its origin, from its author, from its essential source of transmission, and as such, becomes a mere image, a simulacrum. In fact, for the first time, the image not only is detached from tradition, from its ritualistic, communicative, and public function, but is in fact "designed for reproducibility".⁴ No longer are the categories of authenticity or originality or truth applicable, rather mere reproduction and dissemination. The function of art has, in this case, indeed become solely bound up in the circulation of commodities—not reproduction in fact, but mere unceasing multiplication of itself. Artistic value, then, is no longer judged upon the old criteria of the beautiful, the commodious, the authentic, the original; rather on suitability for multiplication and dissemination. It is not the quality of the image, rather the number of times the image is "exposed" which becomes the important criteria.

In this regard, the mass audience to which this image is exposed becomes a critical component in the equation, since the purpose of image is mere reproduction and dissemination. One cannot have multiplication and dissemination without passive spectators willingly viewing the fleeting semblances upon the screen, as through a mirror darkly. Yet similarly to the artist, the spectator has lost his singular point-of-view as well, reducible only to the mass audience. Indeed, only before the masses does the image have the status of existence. In the age of mechanical reproduction, for Benjamin, "the simultaneous contemplation of paintings by a large public, ... is an early symptom of the crisis of painting."⁵ Detached from any possible meaning, and indeed from any desire for meaning, the image flickers across the screen. Meaning is now opposed to "effects". The spectator no longer "contemplates" the image; rather, "the distracted mass 'absorbs' the work of art".⁶ Furthermore, this distraction has reached such a level of saturation that mankind, in "its self-alienation, ... can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order,"⁷ writes Benjamin. Yet, the vacuous mass saturated with images must be stimulated in order to continue viewing, if only to shock or to outrage—and here only war will do.

Notably, Benjamin in 1936, still saw architecture as a sort of sanctuary, a realm of artistic production that had not succumbed to mechanical reproduction. All other forms of art production are superseded by mechanical means, yet "the human need for shelter is lasting",⁸ argues Benjamin. Architecture, although changing historically, remains true to its origins, to its primordial roots, i. e. to shelter, to an authentic relationship between viewer and object. Indeed, embodied in architecture is not the mass spectator *per se*, but the *res publica*. Architecture is per definition a public art. Architecture, Benjamin points out, is both a question of visual perception,

and the tactile. Architecture is spatial, and not to be divorced from the haptic experience of space. *Le flâneur* still experienced the city with his feet, not on a screen—passing, flickering, images mediated by others. So although Benjamin explored the implications of modern life upon the city beginning in the early 1920's (what would later be collectively called the Arcades Project), as well as his Notes from Moscow, architecture itself had not yet become a commodity. The so-called "urban phantasmagoria" entailed the embodiment of boredom, fashion, and the increasing availability of luxury goods.⁹ The resultant impact on the post-industrial city was a "city on display", indeed a city of arcades especially designed to display, to be seen, to be represented, and ultimately to be consumed.

But Benjamin took shelter in a crumbling edifice. Already in the *l'Ecole de Beaux Arts*, architecture was becoming dematerialized. As Stan Allen cites his teacher: "architects don't make buildings; they make drawings of buildings".¹⁰ So long before "virtual reality", architecture no longer "got its hands dirty" with bricks, and steel and glass. Architects wrote specifications, made working drawings for others to build, and made contracts. At present, architects hardly ever make drawings for buildings (architects don't even get ink on their hands); rather, architects make virtual spaces, digital images. Yet in virtual space, not only is this architecture not haptic, but the *res publica* has been reduced to the masses who consume serially the passing review of images. (Many students of architecture never go to work in architecture firms, they go to work in gaming software design houses). Buildings take too long to produce; only *images of buildings* are "fast" enough to supply the streaming flow of simulacra. Remarkably, Benjamin warned that every reader threatened to become a writer—not someone trained to be a writer, but a producer of texts. "The distinction between author and public is about to lose its basic character",¹¹ he warned. Indeed, only the production of texts and images for the screen is now required. Nonetheless, what Benjamin could not foresee was the fact that the "reader" has become extinct; no one reads (let alone contemplates) for all must be occupied in either the production or consumption of the simulacra.

The production of meaning has been reduced to the mechanical reproduction of simulacra, which has in turn been reduced to the "streaming" flows of images. Knowledge has given way to mere information, which has given way to fleeting visual stimulations, "designed for reproducibility", and multiplied endlessly for the spectator, albeit a passive one agglomerated into a "mass". The mass must be supplied. The mass must consume the image upon a screen; the mass must continue to view the spectacle in order to consume even more. In fact, Benjamin's regretful "simultaneous contemplation"

of a work of art, gives way to "simultaneous consumption" of the visual.

The Ideal-Copy Distinction

This term, *simulacrum*, is not an invention of the twentieth century; rather, comes from the ancient Greeks. Simulacrum (noun) is from the Latin verb, *simulare*, "to feign", meaning 1) an image, or 2) a mere semblance, vague representation, or sham. As such, a simulacrum is the lowest form of knowing possible in the Platonic Ideal theory. Plato had set up the distinction between the Ideal and the copy, or "real being" and "becoming" in the *Sophist*. Real being (*ontos*) was unchanging and only accessed by the soul through reflection. Becoming (*genesis*), on the other hand, was mutable and available to sense perception.¹² Not only was "becoming" characterized by its ability to change, but also the ability to act and be acted upon. Real being, by contrast, was immutable and unable to act. In the earlier dialogues, Plato admitted only these two Forms.

In the *Timaeus*, Plato again makes the distinction between the pattern that is Ideal and unchanging, and the copy that is constructed. Because the world is sensible and changing, it is therefore a copy, or likeness, of an original eternal pattern. That which is changeless and eternal must be invariant and irrefutable; that is, (*to on*) "real things", being. That which is becoming, is however a mere likeness, (*eikon*). Similarly, real existence, (*ontos on*) is distinguished from "a sort of existence" *eidolon*.¹³ Being, (*to ontos*), is opposed to becoming (*genesis*) and coming-into-being (*genesis eis ousian*), that is to say becoming an individual thing.¹⁴ For Plato is his Ideal form theory, the universe, necessarily, is modeled on the likeness of this perfect idea. This notion of the ideal and the copy, however, is not just a distant theory from ancient Greece. The ideal/copy distinction also has determined for more than two thousand years our conceptions of knowledge and the possibility of meaning. Quite simply, the closer that the word or image conformed to "reality", the truer it was.

Only the dialectical method is capable of ascending upward from an intelligible footing or foundation, to the ultimate "first principle", *arché*. All other methods are concerned with true opinion, with becomings, with what can be moved by persuasion. For unless the gods and those few men proceed carefully to the *arché*, they will not possess intelligence (*noesis*) or knowledge (*episteme*). In the end, only the dialectician who had ascended to the first principle is capable of giving an "exact account of the true essence of each thing."¹⁵ Plato reiterates in the *Timaeus* the place of the intelligible/rational and the true opinion/sensible. The reason why the *Timaeus* is so important is precisely because it attempts to address some of the unresolved pro-

blems of the earlier dialogues—the transition from the immutable Forms to the sensible particulars in constant flux. Nevertheless, the *simulacra* remain outside of the ideal-copy distinction. The *simulacra* are “feigning”, a mere semblance, vague representation, or sham of the *eidolon*, unable to give us access to a true knowledge of things.

Baudrillard and the Production of Simulacra¹⁶

In *The System of Objects* (1968),¹⁷ a very important turn is made from the Platonic notion of the Ideal and the copy. Suddenly, in Baudrillard's analysis of the Post-War French consumption society, the model becomes, not the ideal that is to be copied, but the reproducible copy itself. He says: “The work of art does not answer to the model/series scheme either. The same categorical alternative is posed here as for a machine: the machine fulfils or does not fulfil a function, the work of art is genuine or fake. There are no marginal differences. Only at the level of the private and personalized object (not at the level of the work itself) does the model/series dynamic come into play.”¹⁸ Baudrillard gives the example of the washing machine—the post-war consumer object *par excellence*. In the serialization of mechanical production the original is lost; “every object becomes a model”, Baudrillard argues, “yet at the same time there are no more models.”¹⁹ As a consequence, Baudrillard recognizes an inversion of the Platonic ideal/copy distinction; the real model is that which is serially reproducible. This series does not lead to the knowledge of the Ideal, rather to the next model, the next reproducible desire, for each must give way to the next in order to feed capitalist production.

The reference is then not to an Ideal, rather to the circulation or play between “signs”, which are the images of objects that in themselves are “designed for reproducibility”. Capitalism, of course, was always dependent upon economic growth, per definition. However, what is at work here is not simply the increased production and the resultant increased consumption, rather the production of *desire*, for the consumption must itself be a question of ever-increasing growth. And it is this production of *desire* that gives rise to the “society of the spectacle”, the “simultaneous contemplation” of the multiplication of images that excite the desire to consume. The case here is consequently not the iteration of meaning, but serial reproduction and the repetition of the same. The model is already a copy; the model is just next year's model of a washing machine—not really “new”—but marketed as a “new” model.

By 1970, in his analysis of the consumer society situated within French Saussurian semiotics and neo-Marxist critique, the fluidity of objects and

needs becomes a kind of circulation of signs for Baudrillard. An object has already become—not exactly interchangeable because of minute differences, but able to be substituted one with the other in the exchange system of commodities. “Within the field of their objective function”, Baudrillard argues, “objects are not interchangeable, but outside the field of its denotation, an object becomes substitutable in a more or less unlimited fashion. In this field of connotations the object takes on the value of a sign. In this way a washing machine serves as equipment and plays as an element of comfort, or prestige, etc. It is the field of play that is specifically the field of consumption. Here all sorts of objects can be substituted for the washing machine as a signifying element. In the logic of signs, as in the logic of symbols, objects are no longer tied to a function or to a defined need.”²⁰

However, by 1972, in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of Sign*, Baudrillard has made a further turn away from not only the Platonic ideal-copy distinction but the de Saussurian semiotic reading of the consumer object embedded within an interplay of signifiers. Radically, the objects themselves are not the signified; rather the circulation of images themselves, divorced from any possible referent, begins to be problematized. The “consumer society” gives way to the “society of the spectacle”. Exchange value, for Marx, was always predicated upon equivalence. However, in the system of exchange value that was being diagnosed in post-war Europe, a system of need became so rarified and abstracted as to be in fact “alienated” from any simply definable need: “I am hungry; I will buy bread”. Baudrillard begins to articulate in the early 1970's, that “at the present stage of consummative mobilization, to see that needs, far from being articulated around the desire or the demand of the subject, find their coherence everywhere”.²¹ As a consequence, all needs are abstracted and translated into an equivalent in terms of the currency of desire. “Everything surging from the subject, his or her body and desire, is dissociated and catalyzed in terms of needs, more or less specified in advance by objects. All instincts are rationalized, finalized and objectified in needs—hence symbolically cancelled.”²² This essay is absolutely pivotal in the development of Baudrillard's thought: need is no longer tied to exchange value, but totally set free in a system of economic circulation whereby *the need itself is that which is produced* in order to multiply or to expand the reproduction of itself.

This move, then, allows Baudrillard to analyze the production of desire, and its concurrent economy of signs, the production of *simulacra*. In the seminal essay, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (c. 1976), which refers to a critique both of Marx and Freud's notion of the death drive, he outlines the three stages or orders of simulation:²³

- the *counterfeit* (up to the timeframe of the industrial revolution),
- *production* (the industrialization period, and thus the object of Marxian analysis),
- *simulation* (the twentieth-century, post-war consumption society, dominated by the circulation of images).

Baudrillard acknowledges his debt to Benjamin, for he says, it was Benjamin “who first separated the implications of [the] principle of reproduction, ... [showing] that reproduction absorbs the process of production and alters its goals, the status of the product and the producer ... Benjamin and McLuhan saw that the real message, *the real ultimatum*, lay in reproduction itself, and that production, as such, has no meaning; its social finality gets lost in seriality.”²⁴ As such, serial production of “models” is divorced from any referent, any “truth” or conformity to a “model” as ideal; rather, “models” are simply the reproduction and dissemination of *simulacra*. In this schema, which Baudrillard attributes to the post-war consumer society, the old order of the “real” as defined as “that for which it is possible to provide and equivalent representation.”²⁵ Yet this being impossible, the order of the “hyperreal” is ushered in, where the possibility of representation (with any possible referent or signifier) is happily abandoned because it operates under its own “code”, the circulation of the “realm of simulation”. The realm of simulation usurps the production of signification. Thus, Baudrillard concludes, “in fact, we must interpret hyperrealism inversely: today, *reality itself is hyperrealistic*.”²⁶

Indeed, not only is reality “hyperrealistic”, but ideas or concepts themselves are caught up in the multiplication of the simulacra. Baudrillard states: “Theoretical production, like material production, is also losing its determinations and is beginning to spin on its own, disconnectedly, *en abîme*, towards an unknown reality. Today, we are already at that point: in the realm of undecidability, in the era of *floating theories*, like floating currencies. Every current theory, from whatever horizon it originates (including psychoanalysis), with whatever violence it arms itself, pretending to recover an immanence or fluidity without referent (Deleuze, Lyotard, etc.)—all are floating, and their only purpose is to signal one another. It is futile to fault them for lack of coherence by appealing to some sort of ‘reality’. The system has removed from theoretical labor power all referential guarantees, as it did in the other realm. *Theory no longer has any value either*. The mirror of theoretical production is also cracked. And this is the order of things.”²⁷ In the end, in the final stage of the orders of simulation, the dissemination of *simulacra* comes to be “the multiplication of objects without an original.”²⁸ Yet not only are objects multiplied, but theories too are divorced from any possible determination in truth, produced

and circulated like the newest “model” of washing machine.

At this point in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, Baudrillard whole-heartedly embraces the multiplication of images, serially, as through a cracked mirror²⁹—without referent, without possibility to appeal to “truth”, without regret. Indeed, by 1981, in “Simulacra and Simulations”, perhaps his most definitive description of the true Greek meaning of *simulacra* occurs boldly in a section entitled “the divine irrelevance of images”, he states, “to dissimulate is to feign not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign, to have what one hasn’t.” Yet, he goes on to say, to feign is not simply not to tell the truth, for this move would leave intact the old ideal-copy, truth-referent schema. No, only the *simulacra* exist, as feigning, as uninterrupted exchange of images, bearing no relationship to a possible “real”.³⁰ Slogan-like, Baudrillard emphatically calls out: “simulation is the ecstasy of the real”.³¹

In this addiction to the ephemeral surface, then, the criteria of originality or authenticity could only seem laughable. The category of the “new” replaces that of the “original”. Production is not of meaning, rather the multiplication of “effects”. In order to have a “reproduction”, an original is necessary. Yet the original is lost as well. Only the “new” remains to be disseminated; indeed, the images are designed to be circulated. Furthermore, although Baudrillard followed Benjamin in his critique of modes of representation, Baudrillard abandons all regret, and fully embraces the ecstasy of simulacra, of the circulation of images feigning.

Reading the earlier works of Baudrillard, he began with a neo-Marxist critique of the status of production. Capitalist production was no longer a question of labor/capital/profit-land (the so-called “Trinity Formula”). In the development of capitalism, the production not only became transitory, so-called “soft production”—not of goods, but of services—but production became the production of itself. What was produced were in fact images, without context or referent; indeed, not production of a product, but the production of *desire* for a product. So, in tracing the development of Baudrillard’s thought as the natural successor to Benjamin, through his neo-Marxist critiques, to the abandonment of nostalgia for the possibility of meaning and “regret”, to the full-embrace of the simulacra; we glimpse the status of representation in the digital age.

In reading some of the critiques of Baudrillard’s work and the obituaries after his death in January 2007, one could easily get the impression that he had always *believed in the surface*. Indeed, Baudrillard could be accused of “making a spectacle of himself”, both in the Debordian sense, and in the sense of the expression in English where to “make a

spectacle of yourself" is to intentionally make yourself into a clown, a person not to be taken seriously, a fool in fact. Yet Baudrillard, in surfing the wave of "star philosopher" was a phenomenon of the time, yes, a spectacle, a simulacrum; perhaps indeed intentionally making himself the fool, for let us remember only the fool may criticize the king.³²

So if we say with Baudrillard, "no regrets!" goodbye correspondence theory of meaning, goodbye representation of artistic truth, goodbye autonomous, singular, original works of art; we are happily swimming in the stream of images. Not only have we given up meaning, but also given up the possibility of representing truth to ourselves; we have given up the criteria with which to judge what we have made. The digital representations flow past, without grasping what they are and how they are produced. We are merely asked to consume them—not judge them, not "read" them, not "contemplate them".

In Walter Benjamin's canonical essay of *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, he signaled several important phenomena: objects become intentionally "designed for reproducibility". No longer are the categories of authenticity or originality or truth applicable, rather reproduction and dissemination, a mere unceasing multiplication of images themselves. Furthermore, the "mass market" requires "simultaneous contemplation", giving rise, of course, to all forms of mass media for the reproduction of need, of desire, of "effects". And ultimately, in a society dominated by images designed for reproducibility, the consumers themselves must necessarily be made to consume, maintaining the *perpetuum mobile* of hyper-capitalism.

Indeed, we are not naïve. We no longer expect art or architecture to be anything like "permanent", "true", or even "beautiful". For centuries, architecture and its means of representation could be said to be a stable collection of tools of representation: drawings, models and specifications. No confusion abounded as to the conflation of categories of the represented object and the "thing" itself, the three-dimensional architectural object. Vitruvius had already, in the first century B. C., defined "good"

architecture as *firmitas, utilitas, venustas*—that is to say, firmness or strongly supported; useful or fit for a specific purpose, commodious; and graceful, beautiful, and charming.

In the age of digital representation, I propose three new categories: *the mutable; the ephemeral; the sensational*. Architecture is *mutable* in the age of digital representation, not only because of the speed at which the image is mediated, but also precisely because it is mediated, constantly mutated from one medium to another. Architecture is *ephemeral* in that as a haptic experience, architecture is "written" on the body, and thus is necessarily "of the moment". As much as we try to capture architecture as something stable, space itself is a constantly changing space/time. Further, architecture in the age of digital representation is *sensational*, not only in the sense that the architectural press drives the architectural image, but also because sensation is always the foundation of a perception of space. We must not forget the most important thing about architecture is that architecture is a three-dimensional spatial experience—not a digital image. Furthermore, digital representation is a tool, and like any tool, is not to be confused with that which it represents. The pen and paper are not the book. Similarly, digital imaging is not the space.

Undoubtedly, many architectural designs executed or facilitated in some way through digital representations are quite compelling. An architect uses the tools to hand, including the most recent animation and graphic softwares. Yet in the throws of seduction of these tools, a pause is necessary in order to access what exactly we are producing. Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" signaled the loss of "aura", of what could and would be lost. Yet, this loss would pass unnoticed and unmourned. Baudrillard's hyper-reality divorced from any possible signification would serve only to radicalize the loss. Nevertheless, here we pause in the unremitting consumption of the image, in order to briefly examine the dangers of fully giving oneself uncritically over to the intoxicating flow of simulacra, and remember, concerning architecture: the image is not space.

Notes:

- 1 Quote from Kirn, Walter, *The Unbinding* (one of the first e-blog-books). New York Times Review of Books, February 18, 2007 Matt Weiland reviewed *The Unbinding*, which "began as a serial novel published on Slate that featured hyperlinks to a wide range of Wikipedia Web pages, YouTube clips, online news reports and blogs... Surely when Vannevar Bush imagined his hyperlinked memex or Jorge Luis Borges his Library of Babel or Tim Berners-Lee his World Wide Web, what excited them wasn't the possibility of reading the boldfaced words "nympho starlets" in a printed novel, racing to the nearest computer to type a U.R.L. into a browser and watching a YouTube clip of James Blunt singing "You're Beautiful" over scenes of Sharon Tate in *The Fearless Vampire Killers*. Kirn optimistically compares the print edition to 'primitive motion pictures or very early, very slow computers.' But it's more like a microwave trying to do an oven's work."
- 2 Benjamin, Walter, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, V, 1,(1936). English translation in: *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, translated by Zohn, edited and introduced by Hannah Arendt, New York: Schocken Books, 1969, pp. 217–251.
- 3 Within the circulation of signs, the concept necessarily departs from and forgets its origin in the physis. cf. Derrida, Jacques, "White Mythology" in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (New

York: Harvester, 1982) pp. 213. "White mythology – metaphysics has erased within itself the fabulous scene that has produced it, the scene that nevertheless remains active and stirring, in-scribed in white ink, an invisible design covered over in the palimpsest."

- 4 Benjamin, see note 2, p. 224.
- 5 Ibid., p. 234.
- 6 Ibid., p. 239.
- 7 Ibid., p. 242.
- 8 Ibid., p. 240.
- 9 Cf. Buck-Morss, Susan, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989, p. 81. "But for Benjamin, whose point of departure was a philosophy of historical experience rather than an economic analysis of capital, the key to the new urban phantasmagoria was not so much the commodity-in-the market as the commodity-on-display, where exchange value no less than use value lost practical meaning [and became] purely representational..."
- 10 Allen quotes his teacher Robin Evans in Allen, Stan, *Practice: Architecture, Technique and Representation*, Amsterdam: GPA, 2000, p. 1.
- 11 Benjamin, see note 2, p. 232.
- 12 Plato, *Sophist*; 248a.
- 13 Cf. Cornford, F. M., *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, New York: Humanities Press, 1951, p. 216, fn. 1.
- 14 Cf. Guthrie, W. K. C., *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. V: *The Later Plato and the Academy*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986, pp. 303–4. "The Greek words for 'becoming' and 'to become' (genesis) had two senses: (a) coming into existence at a particular time, either suddenly or at the end of a process of development or manufacture; (b) in process of change, in which though something new is always appearing, something old passing away, the process may be thought of as going on perpetually....The later sense had a peculiar importance for Plato, who talk of 'what is' and 'what becomes' marked a difference of ontological rather than temporal status."
- 15 Plato, *Republic* §534d.
- 16 Cf. Baudrillard, Jean, *Selected Writings*, edited and introduced by Poster, Mark, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford UP, 1988.
- 17 Baudrillard, Jean, *The System of Objects*, trans. Benedict, James, London: Verso, 1996.
- 18 Ibid., p. 151, note 4.
- 19 Ibid., p. 153.
- 20 Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, in *Selected Writings*, see note 16, p. 44.
- 21 Baudrillard, *The Political Economy of the Sign*, in *ibid.*, p. 68. (my emphasis).
- 22 Ibid., p. 69.
- 23 Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, see note 16, op cit, p. 135.
- 24 Ibid., p. 138.
- 25 Ibid., p. 145.
- 26 Ibid., p. 146.
- 27 Ibid., p. 147–8, note 3.
- 28 Baudrillard, *On Seduction*, see note 16, p. 164. See also Derrida, Jacques, *Dissemination*, translated by Barbara Johnson, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 206–7. "There is mimicry... We are faced then with mimicry imitating nothing... There is no simple reference. It is in this that the mime's operation does allude, but alludes to nothing, alludes without breaking the mirror, without reaching beyond the looking-glass... This speculum reflects no reality, indeed, is death... In this speculum with no reality, in this mirror of a mirror, a difference or dyad does exist, since there are mimes and phantoms. But it is a difference without reference, or rather a reference without a referent, without any first or last unit... wandering about without a past, without any death, birth, or presence....the structure of the phantasma as it is defined by Plato: the simulacrum as the copy of the copy. With the exception that there is no longer any model, and hence, no copy... one is back in the perception of the thing itself, the production of its presence, its truth, as idea, form, or matter."
- 29 The metaphor of the mirror is often employed when speaking of the transparent nature of the representation of truth as corresponding to Nature. See for example, the most excellent examination of this ubiquitous desire in the history of philosophy, Rorty, Richard, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton UP, 1979, p. 12. "The picture which holds traditional philosophy captive is that of the mind as a great mirror, containing various representations—some accurate, some not—and capable of being studied by pure, non-empirical methods. Without the notion of the mind as mirror, the notion of knowledge a accuracy of representation would not have suggested itself."
- 30 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations*, in *Selected Writings*, see note 16, p. 168–170.
- 31 Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies*, in see note 16, p. 187.
- 32 Indeed, Baudrillard states in *On Seduction*, "the world is naked, the king is naked, things are clear. All of production, and truth itself, aim to uncover things...'perhaps we only wish to uncover truth because it is so difficult to image it naked'." from Baudrillard, *On Seduction*, in see note 16, p. 164–5. One is reminded, of course, of Nietzsche's admonition of the indecency of uncovering "truth", and exposing her nudity.