Fly Ruthless
无情航空

GATE CLOSES 40 MINUTES BEFORE DEPARTURE
A future that happened in the past

In her 1974 essay "Viola de l'Expédition," Clarice Lispector remembers her visits to a fellow countryman's newly inaugurated Brasilia. In her recollections, the futuristic metropolis in grandeur, unrealized to the point of being uninhabitable, is beautiful and frightening all at once. Lispector's "Brasilia: A future that happened in the past," the city is already haunted, carrying mnemonic traces of the millennium to come. She writes, "In the year 2020, there will be the celebration here," she also writes, "It would not be shocked to run into Arabs in the street, Arabs, sudden and dead.

In this passage, the aforementioned Arabs are not necessarily Arabs. The Brown ghosts encountered by Lispector may be simply and unknowingly, ambassadors of all that she knew. They live by (and for) interior. Their seemingly odd invocation is absolutely indispensable as it renders evident the specificity of urban as a white progress driven construct. These Arabs are the rules that make the future possible-and-futurity. In its totalizing modern colonial expression, demands a spectral other. In fact, I cannot do without a spectral other. But there is more to it. futuristic. In a futuristic place, these diasporic ghosts exist in Brasilia, but only as ancestors. I have immense sympathy for them, as I too understand what it is to show up unannounced and be greeted as an ancestor. The University has never failed to make me feel this nor did Casablanca's twin towers.

Ricardo Boite, the Spanish architect behind the design of the mall, deemed it perfectly reasonable to use a concept of a building of the World Trade Center to an African nation. But why is that? When he had created something site-specific and completely new? The answer exceeds the simple argument of plagiarism of even that of laziness. It is precisely because the New York twin towers were understood as canonical that the need to re-enact them was felt. We, moreover, were the ruins that might have fit the future of (Boite's) future possible. In this situation, as often happens, the architect was merely instructing a Third-World population on progress. As a recipient of this education, you are taught and then erased, erased and then taught, and your removal from the future is at once the prerequisite and the outcome of this process. The can only operate as long as it is a spectacularizing instance.

Where do we go? Intimacy as survival.

I am grateful today for the failure of Casablanca's twin towers. They have ceased to haunt me as they did for years, and maybe it is now who haunts them.

In Western culture a clear distinction is made between the ghost and the specter. The ghost is a potentially wraith-like appearance from the past, whereas the specter is a knowledge of the future or a premonition of things to come. As a known unknown, the ghost is fearsome exactly because it is supposed to be gone (somehow) for good. The specter, unlike the ghost, expressed it is defined as "the idea of something unpleasant that might happen in the future." Is this what we ask: unpleasant to whom? The ghost shows up unannounced while the specter hovers, looms ahead. The ghost returns from the past (or, maybe, is simply deemed to exist) while the specter continues to arrive from the future. These distinctions are necessary to the maintenance of the canon as they are drawn to justify the felicity of the past and the future into a steady succession of presents. They make knowledge admissible to time in a certain way, one that fattens the mobility of the said spectral or ghostly entities and one that is incompatible with the ways of hospitality.

When operating outside of the cannon, there is no need to tell ghosts and specters apart. This is when Lispector's Arabs are received as friends into the reader's intimacy.

But what would it mean to mobilize hospitality as methodology? Where do we find how we encounter the certainty of indigenous and diasporic survival everywhere and all at times? Maybe the shape of study to come is much denser as it is deteriorating. We are already (our own) ancestors and we are already out of time. Our forced removal from the contemporary is in no case as it allows for the study of self-determined time travel technologies and the perfecting of humanistic shape-shifting. Simultaneously, this means expanding while understanding contemporaneity and intimacy alike through the acts of welcoming our ancestors and ourselves (as ancestors) into the future.
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