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The Present Pasts: Image and Text in the Fiction of W.G. Sebald

Abstract. In her *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), Susan Sontag suggests that contemporary culture draws on photography to a historically unprecedented degree. This ubiquity of images, she claims, especially images of violence, imposes itself even on those who seek to express the specific post-Holocaust nature of reality through textual medium. Her major example is the German writer, W.G. Sebald. In his novels, text is accompanied by images whose role, in Sontag's reading, is reduced to that of an illustration. In my article, I suggest that the position of the photographic image in Sebald's novels cannot be approached from the perspective proposed by Sontag. Rather, it invites reading in terms of the spectral presence of images whose intrusion into textual reality is as haunting as it is unavoidable. Referring to recent theories of photography, I discuss how in Sebald's novels the relationship between text and image can be explained as that of parallel structures whose linearity is always already interrupted (haunted) by past events. I refer to recent theoretical perspectives on photography in order to account for the interactions between different media in Sebald's works and for their visual/textual engagement with the interplay of temporalities that characterizes the working of memory.

Keywords: W.G. Sebald; photography; hauntology; memory.

Introduction

In her *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag suggests that contemporary culture draws on photography to a historically unprecedented degree. She claims that this ubiquity of images, especially images of violence, imposes itself even on those who seek to express the specific post-Holocaust nature of reality through the textual medium (2003). In her view, nowadays, remembering means not so much being able to recall a story, but to bring up an image in one's mind: "The problem is not that people remember through photographs, but that they remember only the photographs. This remembering through photographs eclipses other forms of understanding, and remembering" (2003: 88–89). Sontag claims that because of the dominance of the medium of photography in contemporary culture, the way human memory works has been increasingly dependent on the photographic vision of the world. In her reading, this reliance on photography is problematic, as it subverts the power of the written word to work as a vehicle for memory. This reliance on the image is seen as a weakness, which is clear in Sontag's comment on one of the contemporary writers whom she deeply admires, Winfried Georg Sebald:

To remember is, more and more, not to recall a story but to be able to call up a picture. Even a writer as steeped in nineteenth-century and early modern literary solemnities as W.G. Sebald was moved to seed his lamentation-narratives of lost lives, lost nature, lost cityscapes with photographs. (2003: 89)

She claims that Sebald's prose is forcefully elegiac—because he remembers, he wants his readers to remember as well (2003: 89).

In my paper, I would like to suggest that the position of the photographic image in Sebald's novels cannot be explained in terms of visual memory aids, which assist literature in the aim of preserving the past from oblivion. What Sontag's reading ultimately suggests is that the photograph in Sebald's text simply *shows* what words might be ineffective in describing. And this, of course, is what illustrations do. In my analysis, I try to prove that the relationship between text and image is governed by a different type of dynamics, namely, one where both exist separately, yet—within the physical reality of the book—they haunt each other, transforming each other's meaning. Moreover, the special status of photography within visual arts, which stems from its direct (indexical) relationship with the represented object, whose presence is recorded rather than represented,

further complicates the status of the image in Sebald's novels. This is so because no other medium offers this form of direct relationship between the represented object and its representation. This particular form of realism will be discussed in reference to recent theories of photography, which explain how photography's realism relies on its physical and temporal proximity to its subject.

Photography and / in the Novel

Over the last two decades we have witnessed a development of research on the relations between photography and literature, which has brought illuminating new studies. In France, scholars such as Philippe Ortel, Jean-Pierre Montier, and Paul Edwards suggested a departure from analysis of literature and photography as two separate areas, towards a new, more integrated field of "photo-literature," whose works create meaning that cannot be reduced to the simple subtotal of senses created autonomously by image and text (Szczypiorska-Mutor 2016: 51). Ortel suggests that in works of photo-literature, the word-image juxtaposition functions as a complete, new means of expression (2008: 17).

Although a lot has been written on the significance of photographs in Sebald's books, most of existing studies rarely provide an analysis of their function as something more than illustrations. This approach is clear in works that seek to discover and explain the relationship of what is being described in the text to what is presented in the photographs. Photographs, it is claimed, are not included for their visual, pictorial value but "for their referential character—in other words, the photographs verify something in the world" (Harris 2001: 379). They are there to "support the documentary style and to guarantee the authenticity and reality of the events by showing that something or someone did in fact exist" (Masschelein 2007: 361).

In their texts about photographs included in Sebald's novels, critics often go to great lengths in order to discover discrepancies and inconsistencies, and offer unquestionable evidence thereof. For instance, it has been proven that the person described in one of the stories of *The Emigrants*, Dr. Selwyn, is not the man with the butterfly net presented in the described photograph, but the writer Vladimir Nabokov, to whom Selwyn is compared in passing, but who otherwise has no place in the story. Silke Horstkotte's analysis of the use of images in *The Emigrants* has shown that their inconsistency is too common to result from Sebald's sloppiness and that, indeed, the writer "means to deliberately mislead the reader" (2002: 42). The story of Paul

Bereyter's life, included in the same book, is accompanied by a photograph of rail tracks, which might be said to illustrate his passion for railways or his suicide. Yet also, as Carsten Strathausen suggests, as

a reference to the train that took Paul's fiancée Helen Hollaender to Theresienstadt, where she was murdered. Or you might choose to read it metonymically as a general reference to the theme of travelling that dominates *The Emigrants* as a whole. (2007: 485)

Rather than search for possible referents in the archives, other scholars have recreated Sebald's travels, which he describes in his novels, only to realize that the names of towns that he recounted in *The Rings of Saturn*, for instance, were incorrect, or that certain locations were so much off the route, they could not have been reached within the specified time (Kraenzle 2007). Lise Patt emphasizes that this type of approach is bound to bring unsatisfactory results, since "the images Sebald worked from to create specific prose were not always the images he set in the book" (2007: 47).

A different, yet equally common approach is to refer to an established theoretical perspective on photography (usually Roland Barthes's reflections from *Camera Lucida* or Susan Sontag's from *On Photography*) and explain how the presence of images in Sebald's text helps complicate its reading through bringing forth the visual as a vehicle for memory, a medium of individual and collective process of recollection, and so forth. Those readings have been justified by Sebald's own remarks on the photograph as different from writing in that "description fosters remembrance, whereas taking photographs fosters forgetting" (Sebald 1985: 178 in Strathausen 2007: 481).

What both perspectives share is that they try to explain how the inclusion of photography in the text might help illuminate the latter, interrupt its narrative, or question the relationship between the world of the text and the world of actual, historical events. Ultimately, however, they do little to explain the photograph on its own terms, that is, as a visual medium. This is perhaps because most of such studies (with several recent exceptions) have been written by literary scholars (as were the most popular studies on photography in general by, for example, Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag), who focus on the presence of images in Sebald's novels somewhat out of necessity. This situation has been described by Lisa Saltzman, who writes:

Yet for all the recognition of the critical place of photography in Sebald's richly allusive work, very little of this scholarship

ultimately carries with the photographs. Instead, discussions of Sebald's use of photography are almost invariably a preamble to a consideration of his particular contribution to literature, whether as an heir to the traditions of modernism or as an important German voice within the genre that has come to be understood as post-Holocaust literature (2015: 72)

In her opinion, one of the significant exceptions is to be found in the writings of a British theorist of photography, John Tagg. In his 2009 book, *The Disciplinary Frame: Photographic Truths and the Capture of Meaning*, Tagg explains how Sebald's use of photographs distinguishes him from writers of photo-books of the 1930s and notes that his exceptionality lies in that his texts, seemingly non-fictional, and his photographs, of what can be understood as actual persons, in fact produce an impression in the reader that works against the overt documentary character of his work. Tagg writes:

It is not clear that Sebald writes about the photographs that appear in the pages of his book. It is not clear that the photographs that appear are about what his writing describes. Yet is it not because these things are unclear that Sebald's "unclassifiable" book has filled its readers with the sense of being moved by something that cannot be documented, something that has remained hitherto unsayable, something that has resisted coming to light? Could it have been otherwise for the book to give witness to the unforgettable forgotten that declines to enter the tribunal of history but has not vanished into the grave? (2009: 73)

Photographic Realism and Trauma

Photography's claim to a more direct relationship with the represented object has come to be viewed in terms of its pursuit of the ambitions of realistic representation. It is commonly acknowledged that people put more trust in photography than in any other medium—as confirmed by photography's unrivalled position (at least until the invention of film) as a technique offering evidence of countless human endeavours, from science, medicine, military operations, to police investigations and courtroom procedures. As one of the media of visual arts, photography was often seen as a final stage in art's development towards ultimate veracity. As Kendall L. Walton summarizes, "those who find photographs especially realistic sometimes think of photography as a further advance in a direction which many picture makers have taken during the last several centuries, as a continuation or

culmination of the post-Renaissance quest for realism” (2010: 15). Yet, Walton claims, photography does not provide representations that are more realistic than others, as they are often unclear and out of focus (like Sebald’s often are), while hyper-realist painting is capable of producing images whose accuracy exceeds that of the photographic image. Any relationship between the photograph and the reality it represents is made possible, yet at the same time, thoroughly complicated through the same aspect of photography—its apparent indexicality. In Sebald’s books, it is because the quality of the photograph is often wanting, or the close-up leaves the reader to *assume* what is being shown, rather than actually *see* it. Lise Patt comments thus about the quality of photographs in *The Rings of Saturn*:

If, as readers of this seeming travelogue, we are asked to accept the grey patches as documents, if we are intended to give them evidentiary status, either as photographs of sites visited or photographic reproductions of *realia* collected along the way, then the request proves difficult to honour since we are often left wondering what it is exactly we are looking at. (2007: 47)

And yet, photography’s link with its object is unquestionable:

With the assistance of the camera, we can see not only around corners and what is distant or small; we can also see into the past. We see long-deceased ancestors when we look at dusty snapshots of them. . . . Photographs are *transparent*. We see the world *through* them. (Walton 2010: 22).

The question is then: why does Sebald create a semblance of a documentary role of the photograph, whose function as such the reader immediately assumes due to Sebald’s prose language that manifests equally factual qualities, when its reference to the world of facts is simultaneously questioned? Some of Sebald’s commentators underscore that the purpose of that is to direct the reader / viewer’s attention to the visual aspect of the photograph—to bring forth its irreducibly visual reality.

In her essay on places and geography in Sebald’s *Rings of Saturn*, Christina Kraenzle suggests that Sebald’s choice of frame is meant to undermine the referential or evidentiary role of the photograph. Among other instances from the novel, her claim is based on the depiction of one of the objects of architecture that he discussed, or rather, a model of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, photographed originally by Alec Garrard (notably, in the novel, he is given the name of Thomas Abrams). The

model is shown in close-up, with no indication of its actual size, and gives the impression of an actual object of architecture. Kraenzle comments that where models create representations of reality in a scale that is both accessible and controllable, photographs underscore the temporal rather than spatial aspect. She states that “this temporal relationship is nevertheless more disquieting in the photographic medium, which offers not a copy but an ‘emanation of a past reality,’ a world of light and shadows which both is and is not the referent” (Barthes 1981: 88; Kraenzle 2007: 131). The image of the model is thus used to subvert representation, especially this representation that has a special claim to reality. This, as it seems, is the book’s main goal: “the erosion of confidence in the power of representation to record a knowable world adequately and thereby control it” (Beck 2004: 75; Kraenzle 2007: 131).

Although with their little insistence on photographic artistry, the images in Sebald’s books seem to serve a non-artistic, presumably documentary purpose, their status as evidence is immediately called into question. This is supposed to complicate the usual insistence on truthfulness that is inherent to a large number of post-Holocaust works, where giving testimony is seen as their dominant function. Lisa Diedrich claims that “in Sebald’s texts the juxtapositions of words and images are not to illustrate or support the one with the other; rather they represent the fragile relationship between word and image, as well as an anxiety about the practice of witnessing itself” (2007: 271). Her example is the inclusion of fragments of Roger Casement’s diary into *The Rings of Saturn*. Casement, hanged for treason in 1916, remains what Diedrich calls a “ghostly” figure throughout the text, around which Sebald constructs his commentary on English imperialism. In Diedrich’s opinion,

the image of Casement’s diary in Sebald’s text isn’t meant to prove once and for all that Casement actually wrote the secret diary, but to reveal the ghostly quality of all historical evidence, and to leave open the possibility of future witnessing. (2007: 273–274)

The unreliability of the image and its tendency to make present the spectres of the past rather than provide evidence of this reality persistently direct our attention as readers to this sphere where reality is most resistant to be expressed verbally and meaningfully, namely the Lacanian Real. As Lisa Patt argues, “any time we are forced to renegotiate our contract with the photograph’s Indexicality—its agreed upon ability to represent the world—we risk brushing up to the disorienting . . . psychic realm that refuses to

be tamed by meaning” (2007: 48). Yet, to read the role of the photographs in terms of what—referring to Lacan—Hal Foster termed traumatic realism, would be to simplify their engagement with reality by explaining it as the process of dealing with trauma by means of repression (absence) and repetition (insistent presence) (Foster 1996: 127–170). Foster claims that, by its power of reproduction, a photograph of a traumatic event attempts to at once cover the place where the Real is discerned, as well as open the door to its intervention (1996: 136). In Sebald’s novels, however, the relationship between the traumatic event and its (im)possible representation is rendered more complicated not so much because of the photograph’s ability to realistically depict what once has been, but because of the temporal distortion introduced by the unstable condition of the past, or, its refusal to yield to the rules of chronology.

The Ghost of What Never Was

In his illuminating essay on Sebald’s novels, Adam Lipszyc investigates the case of the Wolf Man (described in Sigmund Freud’s *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis*), who suffers from a delayed trauma, initially caused by what Freud identifies as witnessing his parents’ sexual intercourse, but ultimately triggered by a dream about wolves (Freud 2008: 161–263). This phenomenon, which Freud calls the *Nachträglichkeit*, in Lipszyc’s reading, has two complementary aspects: one is that a later event invests the earlier one with a traumatic power, another that the latter event actually constructs the image of the former, even though it is merely its repeated echo (2011: 145). The critic brings up the story of the Wolf Man to discuss Sebald’s account of the life story of his childhood teacher, Paul Bereyter, delivered in *The Emigrants*. Because of his partly Jewish descent, in the 1930s, Bereyter was prohibited from working as a teacher. He left Germany, but after the war came back to the same town, and took up his old job. Lipszyc suggests that Bereyter is an emigrant who migrated back to Germany, while his emigrant *Nachträglichkeit* becomes extremely compressed: the world of his exile and the world of his homeland become one and the same. This way, the spectral nature of the world becomes doubled: the world around him becomes its own spectre (2011: 150).

A similar condition is experienced by the eponymous character of Sebald’s last novel, *Austerlitz*. Because of his traumatic separation from his parents as a child, when he was taken to Wales as part of the *Kindertransport*, Austerlitz does not remember anything from his past before that period. When, due to

some kind of sudden revelation, he discovers that he was originally living in Prague, he embarks on a journey that would ultimately allow him to find his old nanny, Vera. She shows him pictures of him as a boy, but—as much as he tries—the man is incapable of recognizing himself in the picture. He recalls an idea that has been haunting him for a long time:

The image of a twin brother who had been with me on that long journey, sitting motionless by the window of the compartment, staring out into the dark. I knew nothing about him, not even his name, and I had never exchanged so much as a word with him, but whenever I thought of him I was tormented by the notion that towards the end of the journey he had died of consumption and was stowed in the baggage net with the rest of our belongings. (Sebald 2001: 316)

The boy in the picture, Lipszyc suggests, is this lost twin brother who has been haunting him all his life:

Austerlitz as his own twin, the one who hides behind the silk veil that separates the living from the dead; it is himself transformed into a spectre, yet at the same time very real, whose place had been taken by the spectral Austerlitz-the emigrant. (2011: 160)

Much like the Wolf Man, Austerlitz's experience of trauma as an absent event (or, at least, absent from memory) makes him unable to connect his present being with the image (and experience) of himself as a boy. In Freud's text, this condition is a personal problem that is to be treated by means of therapy—through coming to terms with the event through language (the “talking cure”). In Sebald's book, his character stands for the wider condition of the present historical moment: the irredeemable loss of the possibility of narrating its own life story—the trauma that is impossible to experience as a primary moment and is always experienced in its secondary, belated form in the *Nachträglichkeit*. This is why the experience of loss in Sebald's novels is not coped with through mourning, but through a continuous melancholic engagement. As Adrian Daub explains, this condition becomes a compulsive mode of looking at the world, which affects the way its images are perceived:

the work of melancholia is subject to a secondary loss. We repeat the initial loss and in repeating we forget, turning melancholia's compulsion into *habitus*. In order to remain melancholy, pilgrimage not only performs constraints upon the hermeneut, it also performs it on its *images*. (2007: 307)

Sebald, Photography, and the Representation of History

Susan Sontag's reading of the photographic image of suffering, pain, and violence, which I have discussed in the introductory part of this essay, is driven by her emotional opposition against using photographs as true representations of past events. In her view, images should not be treated as "windows to reality," or as witnesses to actual events (2003: 26). Neither should they be given the status of metaphors. Yet, if they do not show exactly what has been, they still possess the power to record the time that has been and powerfully confront their viewer with the realization that this moment has passed. Markus Zisselsberger explains this quality in terms of the technological aspect of the photograph:

The arrangement of the images hence offers a kind of phenomenology of the photograph. It reminds us of the temporality proper to the photographic process itself: the creation of photographs depends on a delay between the moment the light hits the photographic plate and the moment the image and referent cannot coincide, what we see is not really there anymore. (2007: 293)

Yet, both image and text in Sebald's book seem to combine the symbolic aspect with documentary quality—his imagery means to record reality, yet intentionally subverts the human mind's ability to do so. As John Sears suggests,

for Sebald the possibility of literary and photographic "writing" seems to be predicated upon the inevitability of the loss of that which all "writing" seems to refer, so that representation always implies the disappearance of things represented. (2007: 205)

This sense of loss is inherent to Sebald's condition of a writer whose literary interests and his general outlook on history had been formed by what is termed the condition of the "latecomer" (or "*Nachgeboren*"). He wrote about it explicitly in his *Air War and Literature*:

At the end of the war I was just one year old, so I can hardly have any impressions of that period of destruction based on personal experience. Yet to this day, when I see photographs or documentary films dating from the war I feel as if I were its child, so to speak, as if those horrors I did not experience cast a shadow over me, and one from which I shall never entirely emerge. (Sebald 1999: 71)

Undoubtedly, Sebald's account of his relationship to his own past mirrors that of Austerlitz in his novel in that the foundational event from the past has been experienced, yet cannot be remembered; it is both absent (from memory) as well as insistently present in the form of a spectre that reveals itself without the subject's control or will. In that, it is different from memory, as its intervention is anything but an intentional recollection. As Avery Gordon notes,

reckoning with ghosts is not like deciding to read a book: you cannot simply choose the ghosts with which you are willing to engage. To be haunted is to make choices within those spiralling determinations that make the present waver. To be haunted is to be tied to historical and social effects. (1997: 190)

Moreover, Sebald's wish to reformulate this haunting presence of the past into consciously cultivated memory is meant as an invitation to a collective process of remembrance—it is not an individual dealing with the problematic nature of a personal life story, but an attempt to allow the German society at large to narrate its story in a meaningful way. Due to postwar Germany's complete repression of the tragedy of the bombings, its identity narrative had been inextricably linked with the direction towards the future and reconstruction. As Richard Crownshaw argues, in postwar Germany “the impossibility of history is compounded by the dynamics of postwar recovery” (2007: 573). As a result, modernity in this narrative becomes “the site of an eternal present,” while the ideological response to this critical situation is “the idea of historiography as a science and history as progress” (2007: 574). In this way, “rather than remembering past experience, this ‘historicism’ sought to re-establish the continuity between past and present in an abstract and chronological time” (2007: 574). Walter Benjamin called this time the “homogenous empty time” of “historicism” (1992: 252–253).

The author of one of the recent publications on hauntology in Poland, Andrzej Marzec, suggests that Sebald's prose epitomizes a change that occurred in our perception of time around the year 1970. He sees this moment as a turning point, marking the decline of futurist optimism and uncritical belief in that the future equals progress (2015: 194–195). Since that time, we have observed a general sense of disillusion, which manifested itself in both theoretical reflection, as well as in a variety of art forms, from fine arts to popular culture and cinema. In art history, this turn has been perhaps best explained by Rosalind E. Krauss in her text on *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, where the modernist myth of artistic originality was finally shown as merely an unrealistic, optimistic belief in the incessant progress of art, which

then, in the era of postmodernism, was finally revealed for what it was—an illusion (1986: 151–170). A similar fate, argues Marzec, was shared by the future, which suddenly lost all its seductive power. From that moment on, cultural imagination has become increasingly interested in the past rather than the future, while both literature and the arts have begun parallel investigations of the presence of the past in contemporary images, texts, and even fashions, suddenly driven by explorations of old trends and everything *vintage* and *retro* (2015: 179–250).

According to Marzec, in Sebald's novels, the new unstable condition of the present, its condition of being always already anchored in the past, makes the readers access both the past as well as the future that make up their present. It is impossible to reach the actual “now,” for it proves merely a human fantasy, justified by petrifying, time-stopping desire for one's own presence. The only real movement is towards entropy, transience, and erosion (2015: 198). This realization of catastrophe that is continuously and inevitably taking place in our present comes especially when the narrators in Sebald's books, in particular *The Rings of Saturn* and *Austerlitz*, are confronted with ruins of bunkers from the Second World War, whose image evokes both the vision of old, ancestral burial mounds, a group of tumuli, as well as ruins of our present generation seen, in a brief vision, as if from the vantage point of the future. His vision presented in *The Rings of Saturn* contains both the realization of a now compromised belief in the future, in the preservation of the idea that stood behind the erection of those structures—a dead, past future—as well as the possibility (effected through literature) of seeing the present from a future perspective—to look into the future past (Marzec 2015: 201).

For Sebald, this instability of chronology manifests itself most powerfully in the photographic image, which reveals itself to be a reality between the world of what is and the one of what has been. He explained this in an interview, where he insisted on the “spectral” nature of the photograph:

I believe that the black-and-white photograph, or rather the grey zones in the black-and-white photograph, stand for this territory that is located between death and life. In the archaic imagination it was usually the case that there was not only life and then death, as we assume today, but rather that in between there was this vast no-man's-land where people were permanently wandering around and where one did not know exactly how long one had to stay there. (Scholz 2007: 108)

Yet, it is not merely what is being seen in the photograph that evokes the absence of once present and now in-existent person or object. Equally poignant are those absences that have not been recorded, but whose past existence is still sensed in the presence. In *The Rings of Saturn* numerous places are described, but not shown. Kraenzle describes this condition by referring to Michel de Certeau's concept of place as always-already marked by past presence: "We are struck by the fact that sites that have been lived in are filled with the presence of absences. What appears designates what is no more . . . [and] can no longer be seen. . . . Every site is haunted by countless ghosts that lurk there in silence" (Certeau 1985: 143; Kraenzle 2007: 138).

Conclusion

The inability of contemporary culture to define itself at once in reference to history and with the rejection of historical narrative's insistence on linearity and progress is presented in the opening pages of *Vertigo*. The initial scenes introduce the historical figure of Marie-Henri Beyle (Stendhal), who describes his participation in one of the battles in Napoleonic wars (in 1800) with the help of a map he sketched on location. Beyle is convinced that his position as a reliable witness of what he had experienced is questionable: "At times his view of the past consists of nothing but grey patches, then at others images appear of such extraordinary clarity he feels he can scarce credit them" (1999b: 5). In this instance, as Lisa Diedrich comments, Beyle attempts to recollect his past experience by positioning himself at a distance, "above in space and beyond in time" (2007: 261). He draws the map of the battlefield and tries to remember what happened to him from the perspective of several decades. This process proves impossible, as "his impressions had been erased by the very violence of their impact" (Sebald 1999b: 5–6). As Diedrich comments, "Beyle knows that he is not a good witness, and he is anxious to witness better, to see the whole. And so he makes a map. His sketch is an attempt to locate his traumatic memories in time and space" (2007: 261). This image of unreliability of memory is also a recurrent motif in *The Emigrants*, where the narrator notes:

Memory . . . often strikes me as a kind of dumbness. It makes one's head giddy, as if one were not looking back down the receding perspectives of time but rather down on the earth from a great height, from one of those towards whose tops are lost to view in the clouds. (Sebald 1997: 100)

However, the meaning of the past's haunted aspect in the present becomes most pronounced not so much in Sebald's approach to the workings of individual memory and individual rapport with the past, but in his approach to collective history and its conceptualization. The spectral in his work is not so much individual but cultural—it is not a personal trauma of his characters that needs to be narrated to be treated, it is rather the persistent longing, inscribed in a culture that has lost the power to historicize itself.

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