

# **RUST, MOLD, AND CRACKS: POST-DUALIST APPROACHES ON SPACES AND IMAGES**

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## **Abstract**

Using as a starting point the piece of video art "Rust, Mold, and Cracks," created by the author, this paper addresses questions related to space, ruins, and different temporalities. Calling upon the authors Georg Simmel and Milton Santos, the text proposes an approach to ruins and abandoned places that go further than dualist concepts such as abandoned/not abandoned or modern/outdated. It also discusses the role of Nature in this scenario. In light of this situation, space and time are under mutable reorganisation, as pointed out by David Harvey. Different arrangements between them shall produce diverse modernities. Considering images as objects resulting from this spatiotemporal modification, this article comments on their accumulation. The text ends by discussing the presentation of the author's artwork in a collective exhibition and its creative process, combining some topics previously discussed and his personal experience as an artist.

**Keywords:** Accumulation; Images; Modernity; Post-dualism; Ruin; Space

## Introduction

I have worked with abandoned places, ruins, and memories in my artistic practice for over ten years. Determining when and how my attraction to this theme began takes time and effort. Naturally, these subjects started to flirt with my academic career - although I am still determining if it is possible to distinguish one from another. It was the central theme of my master's dissertation and led me to the stage demonstrated in this paper. In the Winter semester of 2021/22, as part of my doctoral studies and amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, I had the opportunity to develop field research in Germany at the Universität der Künste Berlin. One of the first investigation methods I applied was to visit abandoned sites and structures on the outskirts of Berlin, a practice I did before in 2013, on the occasion of an artistic residency in the German capital. The idea was to record videos and take pictures for future artistic works. However, as soon as I started this process, new questions appeared, and the research began to follow in different directions, dealing with Space and Modernity issues. So I investigated those subjects as an artist and academic researcher.

Within this frame, I created the artwork "Rust, Mold, and Cracks."<sup>1</sup>, a video in which the images were recorded in old buildings of the former Soviet Union - USSR - in the German Democratic Republic - G.D.R. (also known as East Germany). Both countries no longer exist. At the same time, these places – an airfield and a military village - remain out there as witnesses of a time that seems to be distant but not gone. On the other hand, they are not strictly attached to the present because they can help us to prospect a different future (maybe more than one). In other words, these constructions bring together at least three different temporalities: past, present, and future; and they float and move around the three. The trace elements found there are sure to affirm that they occasionally receive some visitors: lost-places explorers, party

people, security guards, and graffiti artists, to name a few. With these actions, one cannot confirm that the buildings are entirely abandoned. Concurrently, it would be daring to say that they are inhabited. They lie somewhere in between those definitions. In their environment, dualist relations such as past/future, abandoned/not-abandoned, place/non-place, and space/non-space seem insufficient to define them anymore. In the following pages, I intend to approach this discussion using the mentioned video as a starting point and to gather different aspects regarding those questions and how they can be related to image production.

## Space and its Systems

Defining space is a complex task. It connects several knowledge areas, from the Exact to the Biological Sciences. Thus, before we go further, it is necessary to point out an initial view of this concept and to define which aspect of this subject the paper will follow. For the Brazilian geographer Milton Santos (2021, p. 36), space is "a set of systems of objects and systems of actions." These two systems are "indivisible, interdependent, and contradictory" (Ibid, 2021, p. 35). The objects are constructions, vehicles, machines, and everything else produced through varied and/or combined techniques: instruments for a living or the "materialisation of culture" (Jameson, 1991, p. 67). The actions result from natural or artificial needs, whether "material, immaterial, economic, social, cultural, moral, and affective" (Santos, 2021, p. 49). These actions will, sooner or later, influence people's way of living and acting and will undoubtedly produce (new) objects. To name a short example, moving from one point to another is a natural need of humankind. In this case, moving would be part of the system of actions.

Meanwhile, a car, a train, an aeroplane, or any other vehicle would be an object inside its system. To accomplish an

<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://youtu.be/TM-AzjsKJ-Q>

action, we use an object. For the geographer, this combination happens in a space.

These relations could be - and frequently are - complex. It happens simultaneously on different levels, through various layers. If, on the one hand, the systems are inseparable, on the other hand, however, it is possible to break down the concept to have a clearer understanding of it. Diverse individuals, communities, social groups, and other societal organisations can have their system of objects and actions. Meanwhile, they share the same space. This system overlaying creates mixed "everyday lives" (*cotidianos*), a scenario in which "groups, institutions, and individuals live together but do not practice the

same time" (Santos, 2013a, p. 42). According to him, in this situation, it would be more appropriate to use the word "*temporality* instead of time" (Ibidem), therefore a unique space can have more than one temporality; it might happen simultaneously or even share some aspects among them, reinforcing their complexity and plurality.

Old Soviet Hangar at the Flugplatz Schönwalde (Airfield Schönwalde). The German National Socialist Government originally built the place in the 1930 decade. During WWII, the Soviet Red Army overtook the facilities and used them as a base for its ground troops and small aircraft until the German Reunification (1990). Over the decades, the same space



Fig. 1 Still frame from *Rust, Mold, and Cracks*, Lucas Rossi Gervilla, 2022.

received different systems of action. In other words, it was a stage for several temporalities and *cotidianos*.

Let us consider images - like the one above - as objects and their productions within this multitemporal context. Every image created shall be precarious because it can only frame a glimpse of time, never the time in the sense of unity or a whole thing. It would be impossible to record all the different temporalities from a place into a single image. Of course, capturing some aspects of everyday life activities through a photograph is possible, but not in the dynamic sense of different *cotidianos*.

This scheme proposed by Santos can be noticed in diverse backgrounds: whether in a metropolis or a small town. However, could it be applied to places like the ones depicted in "Rust, Mold, and Cracks"? The constructions could be considered objects - a materialisation of culture, as previously quoted by Jameson - but what about actions? Since the beginning of the 1990s - after the German Reunification and the dissolution of the Soviet Union - those places have lost their original functions. In this sense, the first logical alternative would say that they no longer have a system of actions. Therefore, they cannot be considered a *space*. Instead of affirming that their actions are over, I would rather say that they are suspended and, eventually, can be resumed. For instance, when someone goes there to accomplish any activity: a photographic essay, a security round, or even for curiosity, for a while, the systems of actions and objects are again combined and complete.

Furthermore, there is another action related to those places, but they are not visible and do not necessarily happen in loco: real estate speculation. After the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and a process known as "die Wende"<sup>2</sup> ("the change,"

in a free translation), many state properties in East Germany were privatised. Regarding the Soviet bases, they began to be disassembled during this period. In the following years, after the end of the Soviet state (1991), they became an actual "no man's land." Indeed, those buildings have an owner nowadays. It can be seen through the signs of "No Entry." However, the lack of maintenance reveals that no one is worried about the aspect or condition of the buildings, even less about the historical tenor they might carry. They are possibly under market speculation, waiting for the area to value, arousing the interest of investors. The same method could be observed in some areas of Berlin, particularly those on the former East Side, where it is easy to find massive empty spaces expecting to receive new constructions. Cranes and bulldozers are also part of the landscapes of the German capital, constantly reconfiguring the urban space. The real estate speculation devours the old buildings to make room for more modern buildings. I will come back to this *modern* matter ahead. Sooner or later, the structures of "Rust, Mold, and Cracks" will probably face the same fate and be demolished. All these movements can be understood as a system of actions, converting the former Soviet constructions into spaces once again.

Moreover, I would like to introduce another possible system of action. The ones we have seen so far are an outcome of human acts. Nevertheless, we have to consider the actions of Nature. These actions happen in a way that the German sociologist Georg Simmel (1958, p. 379) called "nature's revenge." For him, architecture can be considered a victory of culture over nature. However, retribution begins when nature claims back what has been taken from her to be used to build an architectural structure; after all, its raw materials came from nature. Nature's revenge is what we see in ruin. The movement here is not a mere ruination; it is an intricate

<sup>2</sup> "Die Wende" is the name given to the period when several events took place in the G.D.R. and characterised the end of the socialist government. It does not have precise dates, but it is understood that between the Autumn of 1989 and the official reunification of Germany on 12/09/1990. Some lines of thinking believe that social-economic-political transformations in reunited Germany over the 1990s were also part of *Die Wende*.

process in which nature transforms “the work of art into material for her expression” (Ibid, 1958, p. 381)<sup>3</sup>. At this point, nature becomes an active agent – no longer the domesticated nature – crafting “the present form of a past life” (Ibid, 1958, p. 385). Nature herself becomes an artist. Nature does it according to her terms and pace. If we recognise these natural actions as a system, then Santos’ system of actions is no longer suspended because natural movements happen continually.

These other action possibilities help us understand the complexity of defining a space. Such various systems and their combinations indicate that the dualist definitions of space/non-space and place/non-place are no longer enough to delineate what those buildings are. They are dissolved through a classic opposite relation between culture and nature. They are not caught between a specific term; on the contrary, they can move in different directions – sometimes, they do it simultaneously – blurring traditional borders of space and time.

As I intended to demonstrate, the characteristics of space have several layers. We will find another and/or a new one when we try to go deeper into one. The images presented in “Rust, Mold, and Cracks” can represent these encrusting temporalities; such as the three elements of the artwork’s title: once they get together, it is almost impossible to separate them.

### Different Modernities

As we have seen, definitions of space are frequently dynamic because the combination of systems of actions and systems of objects continuously alters a previous configuration, creating plural temporalities. We should not see time and space as two inseparable categories if we search for perspectives beyond dualist and paired interpretations. Instead, it would be more appropriate to look at their interrelationship aspects, as outlined by Fredric Jameson (1991, p. 154). For the author,

Time and Space are always connected but have their characteristics. As mentioned, one is the possibility of diverse times coexisting in the same space. Jameson outlines that the relations between these two elements should be seen beyond just an inseparable pair. Let me point out some possibilities about this proposition.

If space and its systems are mutable, so are their relationships with time. According to David Harvey (1990, p. 419), “objective conceptions of space and time must change to accommodate new material practices of social reproductions.” Therefore we have an environment in a concomitant exchange between society, space, and time. However, there is no hierarchy among them. Indeed, each has its autonomy and characteristics; simultaneously, they are linked. Different space-time arrangements create diverse temporalities that, in turn, create different modernities.

Using these ideas, I propose once again a combination of concepts to formulate a possible and summarised definition of *modernity*: reorganising space-time relations. With this statement, it is imprecise to affirm that modernity is necessarily related to something new, as it could occur in common sense. When discussing modernity, we shall consider questions such as: “Modern compared to what?” or “What modernity are we talking about?”. Whereas space can have simultaneous temporalities, it can also have different modernities. There is no unique modernity but “successive modernities, which form and dismantle periods” (Santos, 2013a, p. 68).

Harvey (1990, p. 429) reminds us about “personal space and time,” an idea that can be expanded and helps us to understand that it is possible to have individual and collective modernities. It can happen simultaneously, arousing the idea that space/time relations, and consequently modernities, shall have a personal aspect. We can have our perception of time and space, reinforcing that space is a social matter. In

<sup>3</sup> For Simmel, the “work of art” here is the architecture itself.

short, every sort of modernity is under a scheme of several variables, including social ones. Just as the different temporalities, the same space can agglutinate varied modernities. They are in a constantly (ex)changing process but can also coexist.<sup>4</sup>

Many military personnel lived at Flugplatz Schönwalde with their families. In order to accommodate them, the complex also had residential buildings, a school, and a playground for

the children, just a few meters from the barracks. It depicts how diverse temporalities and modernities can coexist in the same space. The time conceptions of the young ones were not the same as they were for the soldiers, which in turn were not equal for the officials.

It is essential to distinguish between modernity and modernisation because sometimes they might be treated as synonyms. They could occur together. However, they are not the



Fig. 2 Still frame from *Rust, Mold, and Cracks*, Lucas Rossi Gervilla, 2022.

4 The French author Michel Foucault (1994, p. 17) would name this convergence of different temporalities at the same space as "heterotopias." This overlaying combines "in a single real place several spaces, several emplacements that are incompatible" (Ibid, 1994, p. 19). A heterotopia can accumulate diverse modernities, and there needs to be a well-defined method to access them. According to this idea, the places of "Rust, Mold, and Crack" could be considered heterotopias. Whether by the personal meanings that they might have or as products of different modernities.



same. For Santos (2013b, p. 48), modernisations are creating new activities to respond to necessities relating to technological aspects and not necessarily spatial relations. Jameson<sup>5</sup> (1991, p. 310) distinguishes modernity from modernisation and modernism. The former would be something connected to the base of development, while modernism could be associated with the superstructure. In this scenario, modernity would be a mediator between them. As modernity is a dynamic concept, and it is constantly altering itself, a fixed definition does not apply to it. In one way or another, modernity relates to expanding culture over nature.

A new modernity - or a "spatiotemporal" (*spatiotemporal*) (Santos, 2013b, p. 37) rearrangement - brings along the production of new objects as part of the new solutions for new necessities. Our everyday life continues through a space in which "a system of increasingly artificial objects, populated by systems of actions equally imbued with artificiality." (Ibid, 2013a, p. 86). This uncontrolled production of artificial articles and actions pushes humanity far away from nature and results in an accumulation of technical objects, reminding us that humankind is no longer a friend of nature (Ibid, 2013a, p. 18).

About this accumulation process, Simmel (1998, p. 103) affirms that this is a typical issue of modern society: "being surrounded by innumerable cultural elements that are not devoid of meaning to them, but which are not, in their foundation, full of meaning either." As this happens at a non-stopping pace, these cultural objects have, on the one hand, a "quality limit." On the other hand, they have no "quantity limit" (Ibid, 1998, pp. 102-103). Caught amidst this scenario, we feel daily "a little more ignorant and helpless" (Santos, 2013a, p. 19). Ignorant because there is no time to assimilate all these new (and sometimes useless) production and helpless because there is not much we – as ordinary people – can do about it.

Images are also a cultural element. Every day countless images are thrown into our eyes. Be it through smartphones, tv sets, computers, billboards, shop windows, or all of them simultaneously. Harvey (1991, p. 427) states that in our days, the "lifetime of consumption of images [...] is almost instantaneous". In our actual world, I would suggest removing the "almost" from his quote. With this background, the video as language support - artistic, commercial, personal, or any other genre - lies in a particular category. For decades, video has been known as *time-based media*; in other words, we are talking about an image in which its production is utterly connected to time and cannot be detached from it.

On the other hand, the video has broken the chains of space since its gloomy pixels are everywhere. It arouses the contemporary situation of discomfort, as proposed by Simmel, or ignorance feeling, as suggested by Santos. It might be a convergence point of the different modernities of our time: the addiction to images, whether as producers, consumers, or both. Again, the images made in this context will always be precarious because they can catch just a portion of modernity for a short time. One image shall succeed the other in an increasing velocity, faster than we can assimilate. The images of our time need to be updated even before they are done.

## Spaces, Modernities, and Ruins

In light of this situation, it is understandable to have a displacement feeling among the production of the objects. Buildings and architectural structures are also objects made during different modernities. Consequently, they are part of the mentioned accumulation methodology as well. When these kinds of assets are no longer helpful – due to many possibilities – they are just left behind, similar to the Soviet bases in East Germany. Sometimes, these activities happen so fast that

<sup>5</sup> The literary critic and philosopher from the U.S.A. Fredric Jameson (1991, p. 308) would use the term "postmodern" to refer to a period that is "characterised as a situation in which the survival, the residue, the holdover, the archaic, has finally been swept away without a trace. In postmodernism, then, the past itself has disappeared". The postmodern would be a criticism of the conventional modern. This article does not address these postmodern issues because it requires a detailed analysis that should be carried out in another text format.

there is no time left for what Simmel (1998, p. 83) calls “cultivation” (*Kultivierung*). A process in which we – as subjects – could analyse the situation – as an object – using our backgrounds.

As we have seen, a building or construction can be considered a space if the systems of actions and objects gather themselves there. We can go further than the abandoned/not-abandoned categorisation using a post-dualist approach. A closer look at a ruin might blur this division more. According to Simmel (1958, p. 380), in a ruin, one can see nature living in the artwork (*Kunstwerk*) – therefore, a cultural object – and vice versa. It reinforces the idea that the system of actions is still there. Hence, it is still a space.

A collapsed barrack at Vogelsang military village. Built by the USSR in the 1950s, 60 kilometres north of Berlin, the base had several underground bunkers that stored nuclear missiles. The site, which once received one of the most aggressive forms of the domain of culture over nature, today has trees growing up through its ruins.

It is still possible to attribute another role to the ruins and (no longer) abandoned places: when one considers them as a memory marker. Not only ruins that became notorious monuments worldwide but also the “ordinary” ones. Harvey (1991, p. 429) alerts us that “in a world of rapid flux and change,” spatial constructs could be seen “as fixed markers of human memory and of social values.” According to this idea, a ruin



Fig. 3 Still frame from *Rust, Mold, and Cracks*, Lucas Rossi Gervilla, 2022.

could have another active meaning, and an abandoned place can be seen through another prism. They assume a function of a link with other modernities. In this situation, these edifices are not used in consonance with their original purposes. However, it is not crucial. As remembering is an action that can be practised from anywhere, it could also be understood as a mode to reactivate the system of actions without the need for physical presence. It could also be why the ruins are so frequently wiped off from the urban landscapes: to avoid remembrances of diverse modernities. If a spatiotemporal relation can change its meaning, so do the ruins.

Ruins as memory markers can also contribute to the prospect of a different future.<sup>6</sup> They do not necessarily need to be analysed as melancholic but understood as a remanence from a different - or former - modernity that might influence the next one. Abandoned places considered active places may confuse the so-called logical future, as they prove that control over time is a relative concept, and due to several variables, the spatiotemporal arrangement can suddenly change again. This imagination is a cultivation process, contributing to the broader understanding of ruins.

Once more, opposite relations like old/new and progress/regression are inappropriate for classifying a ruin or an abandoned place. The universe around them goes beyond a conventional idea of cultural progress, questioning a traditional notion of modernity. Ruins have a solid connection to nature, and she has nothing to do with modernities.

### Video, exhibition, and creative process

In July 2022, "Rust, Mold and Cracks" was presented as part of a collective exhibition named "Singular" at the "Alcindo

Moreira Filho" gallery of the Arts Institute of Sao Paulo State University - IA-UNESP, in Brazil. The event gathered works made by visual arts undergraduate students during my teaching internship for the discipline "Fundamentals of the Tridimensional Language." Due to the pandemic, the classes took place online. Within this context, the learning program was focused on site-specific art, having the students' homes as creative spaces and the only available place for the process of their creation. By the end of the course, the students were encouraged to create their works in a domestic environment, incorporating the specificities of their homes and materials they could easily find. We had a digital version of the show in 2021 (under the name "Em Casas") in which each participant presented their installations in their homes. A few months later, we had the opportunity to accomplish the event in presence, with the participation of 15 artists. Singulares<sup>7</sup> It was the first exhibition at IA-UNESP since the beginning of the isolation period in February 2020.

"Rust, Mold, and Cracks" was presented through an artistic installation format. Besides the video reproduced through a television positioned on the ground of the gallery, among objects - newspapers, screws, tiles pieces, small animal bones, and alike items - I collected in the Soviet bases. Objects can be seen as a materiality of culture, trace elements and witnesses of other modernities. Bringing them to the exhibition space was a form to combine different temporalities. It is impossible to transmit to the audience the feeling of being in such places, as it is a personal experience; the objects, however, could give some clue about the ambience. Naturally, their displacement could interfere with their significance. Without any context, they are not so different from objects that could be found in a junkyard.

6 The Russian author Svetlana Boym (2017, p. 39) would call this practice "prospective nostalgia". A kind of nostalgia that "is not merely a wistful acknowledgement that nostalgia would or should be what it used to be. Nor is it an escape from the complexities of the present" (Ibidem). For her, it is not an attempt to recover the past but to look forward without forgetting the previous path. Simultaneously the prospective nostalgia frees us from the linear vectors of past and future, which lock us in the present. Ruins could be a trigger for this sort of nostalgia.

7 The title "Singular" brings a wordplay: it deals with the word "singularity"; meanwhile, just "lares" means "homes" in Portuguese.

On the other hand, they might be caught in the middle of the neither deficient nor full of meaning situation, as proposed by Simmel. Using the objects helps to reconstruct my imaginative route through the spaces. However, there is the possibility to observe these items as a form to ground the video images to a temporality. Harvey (1991, p. 427) affirms that we live in a world "where image streams accelerate and become more and more placeless." In a time when we can swipe from one image to another with our fingertips, the objects help slow down the sight of the audience, inviting them to look at the artwork with less rush. I am aware of the ethical aspect of taking away objects from the place where they belonged. That is a constant moral confrontation in this work, as well as if it is right to trespass on private properties to create images. However, the lines separating artistic freedom from conventional law could be more precise.

If we consider an artwork such as "Rust, Mold, and Crack," it would be incomplete to consider that work is constituted just of the video and the installation. I understand that the whole processes - before and after - the video editing and exhibition are also part of the process. From the choice of the places, the dislocation until them, the visit, the "being there," all of it are different stages of the work creation. I want to discourse how it can be applied here.

When the Berliner Mauer fell in October 1989, I was just five years old, and names such as East Germany, Soviet Union, Communism, and Capitalism were not part of my daily vocabulary. Although, I remember my parents watching the news on television and my father saying: "You are watching the history happening live." At that time, I did not understand what it meant. Just one month later, we experienced in Brazil the first democratic elections for president since the military coup of 1964. Somehow the images of both countries looked similar

to me. The colours of the flags were different, yet the queues of cars crossing the German borders seemed similar to the endless lines at the Brazilian gas stations on the day before the readjustment of the petrol price, a widespread scenario on those days: possibly the period with the most extraordinary inflation in the country. The chains of east Germans waiting to spend their "Begrüßungsgeld"<sup>8</sup> ("welcome money," in a free translation) Western products were similar to the Brazilians at supermarkets before the new prices. These diverse situations looked alike to me when watching television. During the following decade, these thematics were always there when I had my primary education at school. All these scenarios, plus the fact that my father used to work as a truck driver for a German company in Brazil, helped me to create my imagination about the new modernities in Europe. Still, it all seemed very far away from me, literally on the other side of the ocean.

Almost two decades later, when I had the opportunity to visit these places for the first time, all my previous imaginations came up again. As soon as I arrived in Germany, a series of comparisons began. I tried to connect the images I had seen on T.V., books, and newspapers with the reality I was experiencing. Of course, it is a complex task. This practice might cause a clash of temporalities. The Germany that I imagined was not there anymore. It probably never existed. Within my imagination, it meant that it was real for me.

On the other hand, everything seemed very different from what I had in mind. Of course, my thoughts were based on my system of actions and objects, not those from Germany. The language, the sounds, smells, the air, the visual stimulus, everything was different from my constructed memories.

It got even more complex when I visited a former Soviet building for the first time. There the layers of temporalities were

8 The "Begrüßungsgeld" was an initiative from the Federal Republic of Germany - or West Germany - that gave 100 German Marks to the inhabitants of East Germany, so they could buy whatever they wanted with this amount. The German photographer Sophie Kirchner created a photo series called "Träume aus Papier" (2022). An artwork that depicts some people and their purchases and comments from that time.

more numerous. Walking through the empty giant halls, long corridors, the Cyrillic writings on the walls, the “nature’s revenge” everywhere, and the humidity created a post-dualist environment for me. I was not in a place where I could recall what they were one day from my imagination. It was not the USSR, East Germany, or Germany’s scenario near the cultural centre that I was hosted. Somehow I was caught somewhere in time in between all of it. In spatiotemporal confusion, which brings a displacement feeling<sup>9</sup>.

All these experiences and perceptions can not be detached from the artistic process. The artwork is already being created amidst this background. Image production is just one part of it. It has an important role. Still, it can not be seen in an isolated manner. Artistic creation happens in the gaps. One of the first ones is the gap between what the artist has in mind and what is materialised by him or her. Another gap is between the object of art itself and the audience’s perception. It is not possible to foresee what happens amidst these



Fig. 4 Installation *Rust, Mold, and Cracks*, Érika Ozako, 2022.

9 Svetlana Boym (2017, p. 43) names “*Ruinophilia*” the mixing of feelings when someone might feel when visiting a ruin on the 21st. They could simultaneously stimulate a “utopian imagination” (Ibid, 2017, p. 44.) and “give us a shock of vanishing materiality” (Ibid, 2017, p. 43).

experiences. That is, simultaneously, the beauty and a possible tragedy of the Arts<sup>10</sup>.

This combination of temporalities and perceptions might require a slower thinking rhythm to help us process considerable information. Deceleration is also applied to the images of "Rust, Mold, and Cracks." At first glance, they might look like photographs or static images. It happens because, during the recordings, the camera was on the tripod, and there were almost no movement references inside the frame. However, it is always possible to notice some small action: a branch

swinging due to the wind or the clouds passing through the sky. It is a form to represent the pace of nature activities on human architecture, creating a "documentary constructed time" (Jameson, 1991, p. 75).

The video "Rust, Mold, and Cracks" was screened on television among the collected objects on the floor without any visible demarcation between the other artworks. Items from different spatiotemporal arrangements. Above the television is a "Prohibited Entrance" sign, one of the first German expressions I learned.

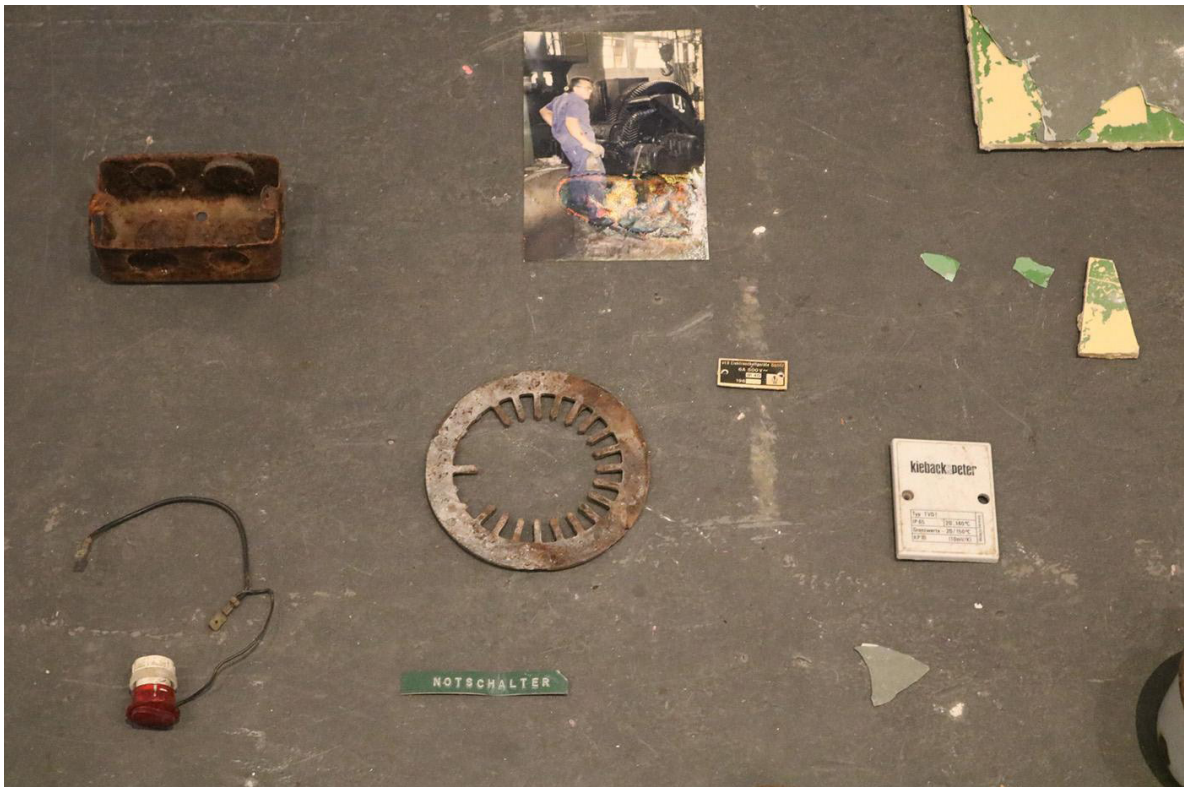


Fig. 5 Installation *Rust, Mold, and Cracks*, Leticia Andrade, 2022.

10 More about the concept of "tragedy" can be found in Georg Simmel's "Der Begriff und die Tragödie der Kultur." Alfred Kröner Press, Leipzig, 1919.

Regarding the video sounds, what we listen to is not necessarily direct sound; it means there is no synchrony between sound and image all the time. In some situations, the sounds were changed from one image to another. Sometimes they are remixed, and, for a while, they are different from the exact location. As previously discussed, this sound displacement represents the overlaying of different temporalities in the same space. It is also a way to go further from the pair of opposites, presence and absence: what we hear but do not see is there. Or is it only in our imagination? In determined moments, we hear a sound but cannot see its source, so it is impossible to affirm if it belongs to that image (after all, the audio source could be out of the frame). It is also not appropriate to say if that sound is "real" or "false"; what matters is that it exists while the video is played. It could be a way to resignify the place. This kind of interpolation reinforces that the video has no hierarchy between sound and visuals.

Detail the installation objects representing the three elements of the work's title: diverse time patinas and photography, which is also being retaken by nature. I am still determining if taking away those objects is right.

The artwork's images are not complete; something is always missing inside the frame. We cannot see all systems of actions or objects simultaneously. The same incomplete scenario applies to the sounds because recording and reproducing all the frequency layers is impossible. What we hear is just a cut of the soundscape. The audience might notice this "incompleteness feeling in the exhibition," as visiting an abandoned place is a unique and subjective experience that cannot be framed into images.

## Conclusion

This paper aims to demonstrate how Space is a complex and dynamic concept. It shall not be seen as just a location or a construction; its meaning results from many variables that,

usually, are mutable and connected. Santos' conception of dividing space in systems helps us to understand how inner and outer factors influence and transform a space, creating multiple temporalities. This complexity and diversity of temporalities can also be applied to ruins, converting structures that one could consider useless into active places once again. Simmel's approach to ruins demonstrates that Nature has a significant role in structures built by humanity. In a ruin, it is possible to watch nature's retribution while she takes claims back what was taken from her.

New or diverse arrangements of space and time create new modernities that can share the same space, crafting different temporalities - or time layers - at the exact location. It might happen simultaneously. This spatiotemporal (re)organisation produces new objects and accumulates them. If we consider constructions as objects, they are also part of this accumulation process. Depending on the modernity we are talking about, this accumulation will leave behind places that, at first sight, could be treated as abandoned. However, through a post-dualist approach, it is possible to understand these places in another way, such as memory marks, as pointed out by Harvey, or an outcome of different modernities. In light of this situation, dualist terms such as abandoned/not abandoned, modern/outdated, and place/non-place are no longer eligible.

Sharing some aspects of my personal experience and artistic process, I intended to expose my connections to the subject of "Rust, Mold, and Cracks" and this article. Indicating that the artist's practice starts before crafting the artwork itself, it has an intricate acquaintance with his or her life course. These connections can rarely be torn apart.

Images, seen as objects, are also susceptible to being accumulated. Moreover, they cannot frame all temporalities and modernities at once. In this sense, they shall always be precarious and carry an incompleteness. On top of that, the images of our days have an expiration date. Shorter and shorter.

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