POROCITY

There are in the English language several modes of designating and qualifying visual perception, and the cognitive activity inextricably associated with it. Thence, we have verbs such as 'to look', 'to stare', 'to peer', to 'peek', 'to watch', 'to eye' (a verbalization of a noun), 'to glimpse', 'to gaze' and 'to pore'. Obviously, it is this last mode that concerns us here.

Nevertheless, one should first inquire after some of the implications, meaning, and definition of 'pore' as a physical, or biological, entity/structure.

Notwithstanding for the moment the intricacy of its mechanical functioning, a pore is basically described as a passage, or a valve between two areas of space (either two altogether *different* areas or merely two zones of the same *area*). As such, it is reactive, particularly in the case of skin pores, which are activated so as to release secretions from the *inside*, or to absorb substances from the *outside*.

Of skin pores, it is said that they "open and/or close", very much like doors or gates. However, to the contrary of doors, gates, windows, pores are *hingeless* and, as such, they could perhaps be better said to remain – from a certain point of view – always simultaneously closed and/or opened, thus challenging the fundamental logical-ontological axiom of non-contradiction, which states that *being cannot be and not be at the same time and under the same aspect.*[1]

The entity 'pore' is suspension, and latency, not a bridge between adjacent areas but an *event* that temporarily abolishes the distinction between interior and exterior (this occurs, at the biological level, through identifiable morphological changes). It is not a connection but a latent disposition for communication, and a possibility of communion[2] encompassing knowledge as lucid awareness (identifiable at the cognitive-mental level).

In the sense briefly laid out above, a pore defies conventional (*v.* normal) logic. So, returning now to the verb 'to pore'[3], one finds that also here the normal pattern of knowledge, as a relation between a subject and an object is undermined. To pore (at or into something) points towards a level of intensity[4] that renders the subject-object compound meaningless precisely because it seems to induce a merging of the two – or, more radically, a complete going beyond the illusion of their value - through a voluntary abandon or fall of the subject into the object[5] – as if the very ground that allows for both

[1] Or, rather, simultaneously neither closed nor opened. A thing capable of remaining absolutely closed would ultimately be impervious to change into another state, in this instance, openness. Therefore, the physical elasticity of the pore – its *hingeless* state – seems to leave room for an equivalent logical elasticity.

[2] This should not be taken for any form of *unio mystica* or ecstatic surrendering.

[3] There is an opposition between 'to pore' and 'to gaze'. The latter brings about an asymmetry between the subject and the object of the gaze, an unbalance of power.

[4] "To pore" is often described as "looking intently", "contemplating meticulously".

[5] The volitional aspect should be stressed to distinguish this encounter from the mere Kantian synthesis of *a priori* judgments. Will is, in this case, supra-conditional; although there may be levels of absorption that seem to occur spontaneously when attention is intensified in the course of day-to-day tasks. Because volition is able to supersede the habitual ground of knowledge, this type of abandon stands apart from other processes, often described as *rapture* (as a sort of receiving of higher, bestowed from above, grace), to become an eminently moral gesture/practice.

their separation (their *ex-istence* in themselves and, one is almost tempted to say, from one another) and their encounter, would collapse.[6]

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At first, the piece *Porous* may seem to be predominantly architectural. However, a closer exam, or rather, a dwelling in the zone altered by this object conveys a blurring of the perceptual field into an experience which departs from an initial manipulative gestalt to arrive at a breaking down of the habitual, conventional inhabiting of space. But, in fact, it is through the hypnotic quality of this architecture that the whole body is offered a possibility of transformation into an organ of extreme attention, it is modified and turned into a pore (the materiality aspect of the experience) and a poring (its mentality aspect). The body is *porified*[7]. The architectural houses the ethical, gives it right of way.

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Being a play with opacity and transparency, *Porous* also has a very present, if less obvious, political dimension as it deals with the public and the private aspects of life.
The vulnerability linked to a material such as glass – in that it allows the viewing of events and states inside the space contained in and by it – is reduced, although the operation is effected in a manner which does not transform the *inhabitant* into a voyeur - ambushing the outside - despite the fact that it offers an increased measure of protection to the gestures occurring on the inside. *Porous* achieves a delicate balance between intimacy and the need for not estranging, or altogether removing, the space of its intervention from the public sphere. Once again, it challenges the conventional definitions that install the conditioning of the public *versus* private program in the mind-at-large. Therefore, the piece achieves a full verbalization of the noun 'pore' by proposing a new field of meaning for the action of 'poring', which can now, perhaps, be understood as a complete psycho-physical event and practice.

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[6] In meditation (an increasingly insufficient term) this phenomenon is known as 'absorption' (the correct translation of the Sanskrit. – *dhyana*; Pali- *jhana*; Chinese – *chan*; Japanese – *zen*)

[7] The etymology of 'pore': Greek – *poros* via the Latin – *porus* (both signifying 'passage'). The Greek verb for "passage/passing through/crossing a threshold/ traversing" is *diaporein*.
To *porify* is a coinage that should be understood in the sense of how the voluntary action of *poring* changes the subject, although, here, it may appear to be the effect of an outer agency (i.e. the presence of the object in space).