

Inspired by Spirals

Georges Didi-Huberman

École des hautes études en sciences sociales Paris, France

It's inspiring, a spiral. Even more so when there isn't just one: when spirals proliferate, manifest themselves, wander, seek openings. This moves the mind, excites it, sets it in motion – and never in a straight line, of course.

A child of two and a half years, who also loves soap bubbles (especially when there are many of them and of all sizes), takes a soft lead pencil and, on a sheet of paper, twirls his hand: messy spirals. Graphic emotions. Laughter breaks out at every turn. How beautiful! It always comes back (repetition), but it's never the same (difference). It bursts with rhythms which are generated by a continuum (a single line for multiple turns) and yet are *modulated*, taking some risks, and are dissimilar to one another: wide lines here and narrow ones there; emphatic strokes or relaxed gestures; overcrowded spaces (mostly at the center of the vortex) or empty spaces (mostly along the edges). It is a real dance whose outline the paper records, like a seismograph. The movement – of rotation – is undoubtedly very simple. But, merely by virtue of the fact that it varies slightly, constantly surprising itself – becoming wider or narrower, stronger or lighter – the result will be complex, potentially infinite in its diversity. A whole world is created through the countless actual variations of the hand, the emotional variations of the gaze. A whole world of forms that Henri Michaux knew how to describe so well:

The child [...] draws disorderly circle lines on the sheet of paper, almost one on top of the other.

Full of energy, he does this over and over again, without stopping. [...]



Edizioni
Ca' Foscari

Published 2021-06-30

Open access

© 2021 | Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Public License



Citation Didi-Huberman, G. (2021). "Inspired by Spirals". *JoLMA. The Journal for the Philosophy of Language, Mind and the Arts*, 2(1), 21-34.

DOI 10.30687/JoLma/2723-9640/2021/01/002

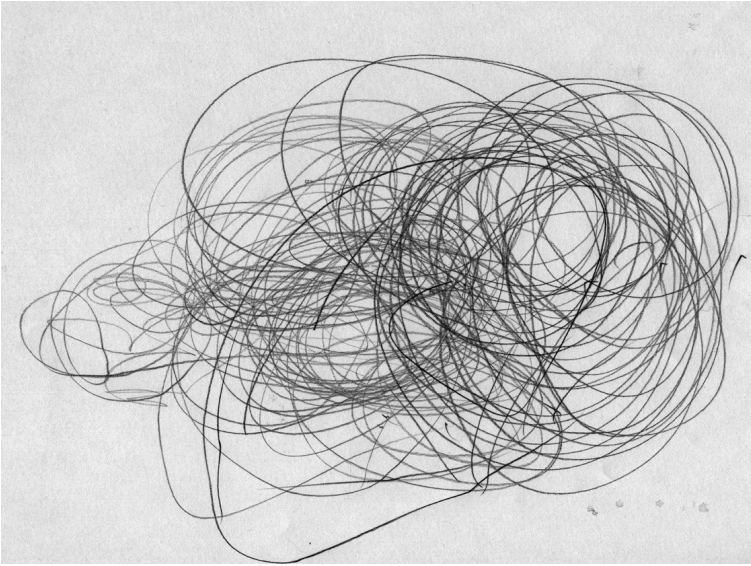


Figure 1 Dessin d'un enfant de deux ans et demi, 2020. Crayon sur papier. Photo G.D.-H

Revolving, revolving lines of wide, clumsy circles,
tangled,
incessantly resumed
again, again
as one plays with a spinning top

Circles. Desires for circularity.
Room for swirling.

These are but spirals in every respect, even if the gyrotory movement that presided over their formation was, more or less, identical. *Unbridled* spirals. They are constantly running outside of themselves: hence, they are *moved*. They have nothing to do - at least, at first sight - with the spiral understood as the archetypal figure of an eternal, cosmic construction. We have neither "Archimedes' spiral", nor "Galileo's", neither "Bernoulli's spiral" nor "Fermat's" (each being distinct from the other according to its own law of regularity). What we have is even far less regular than the baker's raisin bread, snail shells, the texture of broccoli, pine cones, runes or medieval Irish illuminations. It is much less "spiral-like" than spiral notebooks or mosquito-repellent spirals. Much less necessary - at least at first glance - than the configuration of fingerprints, the structure of DNA or that of galaxies. Nevertheless, it is a world. Like a small, tiny galaxy in formation: here it *rises*, shows itself and *comes apart* at the

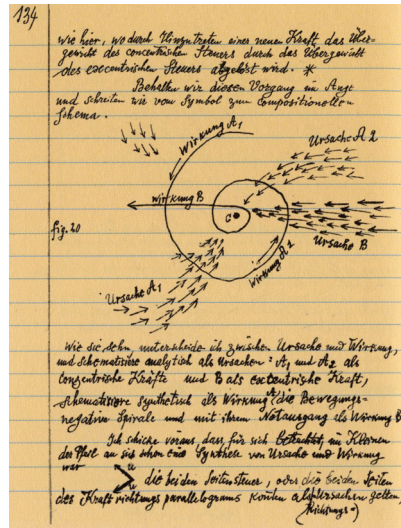
same time, like a storm in its inceptive stirring. It will have no final order. In it everything is always starting.

Therefore, it is not a “formed form”, a form elevated to the nobility of a finite, untouchable, defined being. What we see on the sheet is in no way “definitive”: only suspended or interrupted by what will be improvised as the hand’s next game. It is a *form in formation*: an indefinite and, potentially, infinite form. It is not a *Gestalt* but a *Gestaltung*, as Paul Klee said in the margin of his *Fundamental Elements of the Theory of Form* [Ed.: the course he held at the Bauhaus in 1921-22], drawing a doodle and a spiral to better reflect on the original relationship between the “chaotic” and the “cosmic”. These very reflections of Klee’s later gave Henri Maldiney the opportunity to develop a whole “aesthetic of rhythms” in which something like a vertigo of spirals was suggested from the outset, conceived of as a “self-movement of chaos”.

Alternatively, this would be an *imagement*, as Jean-Christophe Bailly has recently sought to translate the word *Bildung*, “formation”. Indeed, it is constantly forming and reforming, *re-imagining* itself. And why does it keep starting? Because it proceeds, above all, from a *gesture*. A power of the whole body, starting from the hand that experiments, which goes back and forth, which gropes in space, which questions duration and starts over again. A gesture to retrace, therefore, to make traces and not to represent something. Antonio Machón, in his great study on drawing among children, devoted an entire chapter to it, full of very similar examples. Here is a gesture to *start again in plural loops*, endlessly if possible: a gesture to produce, to throw *primordial swirls* onto the paper.

In his marvelous 1921-22 courses at the Bauhaus in Weimar - entitled *Contributions to the Theory of Pictorial Form* - Paul Klee never ceased to question this kind of gesture. This is why, in these pedagogical notes, we find drawings of spirals, vortexes, whirlpools, and counter-clockwise gyratory movements everywhere. For example, folios 132 to 134 of his handwritten notes show circular movements which differ or are even dramatically opposed: on the one hand, the dynamics of capturing, on the other the dynamics of liberation. On the one hand, a “spiral hostile to movement”, a “spiral of death in which the movement curve narrows down more and more”, as if in a funnel where everything will disappear; on the other hand, what he calls the “chance of salvation [which] opens a door somewhere” thanks to a “new emancipatory force” of an *eccentric* nature, which suddenly no longer obeys the centripetal rule of basic movement. It is an escape that creates both a difference and the possibility of “starting the loop again...” by leaving the loop through a game of multiple conflicts - this multiplicity being fundamental, since it is what makes the *whirlpool* - between contradictory “causes” (*Ursachen*) and heterogeneous “effects” (*Wirkungen*).

Figure 2 Paul Klee, *Chaotique et cosmique (en évolution)*. 1921. Dessins illustrant les « Éléments fondamentaux de la théorie de la forme », trad. S. Girard, *La Pensée créatrice. Écrits sur l'art*, 1, éd. J. Spiller, Paris, Dessain & Tolra, 1973, p. 2. Photo G.D.-H.



To create whirlpools or “wild spirals” would therefore be to create inceptive movements: origins. In Paul Klee’s notes – in his drawings and even in his paintings – we sometimes see figures of interference in waterways, what he occasionally calls “sources in the stream”. These – who knows? – might be echoes of Leonardo da Vinci’s depictions of the Deluge, that *original whirlpool* in the Genesis account. How, then, can we not newly invoke the notion of “origin” (*Ursprung*: the initial “jump” or “leap”) as a “whirlpool”, as it appears in the writings of the young Walter Benjamin, again the 1920s? He spoke of it in a way that was very enigmatic in the eyes of his contemporaries: “Origin is a whirlwind in the river of becoming (*der Ursprung steht im Flu des Werdens als Strudel*), and it drags the emergent matter (*Entstehungsmaterial*) into its rhythm (*seine Rythmik*)”.

Benjamin points out – and this is a crucial aspect of the question – that all of this, this swirling appearance or *rhythm*, “can only be perceived from a double perspective (*Doppeleinsicht*). On the one hand, it needs to be recognized as a restoration, a restitution (*als Restauration, als Wiederherstellung*); on the other hand, as something that is unfinished, always open (*Unvollendete, Unabgeschlossene*)”. The “double understanding” (*Doppeleinsicht*) that Benjamin demanded here obviously foreshadows what he was later to enunciate about *dialectic*. In the overall context of his text, however, it is to the notion of *rhythm* that such an understanding refers: “restitution” on the one hand, which is to say the power of *repetition*, and the “unfinished opening” on the other, which is to say the power of *difference*.

It goes back and forth, ceaselessly, between the “re-” and the “start” of the same gesture in order to “restart”.

But isn't that exactly what the two-and-a-half-year-old child introduces into his or her drawing? A gyratory (and already cosmic) “restitution” of the line that returns to itself and a (still chaotic) “unfinished opening” of the same line that will be lost at the ends? A wide gesture that suddenly tightens, and then frees itself again? An emphatic stroke that can be modulated and relaxed, first scratching the surface and then barely caressing it? An occupation of space that here seems to plug holes and, there, to make some room, to free up space? A form that is at once circular (turning back on itself) and wandering (fleeing itself)? Systematic and yet disassembled? Such would, perhaps, be the primordial spiral: following the thread of the labyrinth, one never knows if one has come too close to the navel or if one has moved away from it for good. At every moment, therefore, one finds oneself *between proximity and distance*, contact and withdrawal, a force of gravity and a force of liberation. And this can also be said temporally: every *now* I am in touch and disengaged - rhythmically, my mind grasping and divesting itself - with all my “*in other times*”.

What is this child doing with his pencil at his fingertips? He is having fun alternating, without rest, a gesture to move away and a gesture to draw closer, by instinct or by decisions as sovereign as they are sudden. When the roundabout movements become more pronounced, a distance emerges, which is immediately countered by tighter movements in which closeness can occur. The child thus establishes a rhythmic, if not a dialectic, of *departure* (an escape to somewhere else) and *coming back* (a return to the inside). Or, possibly, one of possession and dispossession: of centrifugal *loss* or loss of control and centripetal *taking* or control. This is very much like a graphic version of the child's game described by Freud in his 1920 article *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In both cases it is a game; in both cases it must first be examined according to what Freud calls the “consideration of the gain of pleasure (*Rücksicht auf Lustgewinn*)”; in both cases, again, it is a reciprocal transformation - dialectical and rhythmic, through interposed gestures - of distance into proximity, or of loss into a recapturing.

Through the rhythm of the “o-o-o-o” and the “da” - i.e. the “gone!” (*loud*) and the “here it is!” (*da*) - Freud saw the child playing on the reel as a structural, complete situation: it is a “complete game of disappearance and return (*komplette Spiel, Verschwinden und Wiederkommen*)”. But this game is complete only because it is dialectical: it shows conflicting relationships that it immediately brings together and *puts back into work*. On the one hand, the game repeats a painful experience, the mother's departure (“gone!”); on the other, it establishes the new, imagined, mastered, newly begun pleasure of her return (“here it is!”). “The child has transformed his ex-

perience (*Erlebnis*) into a game (*Spiel*) [...]. He was passive, at the mercy of the event; but now, by repeating it, however unpleasant it may be, as a game, he assumes the active role". The "gain of pleasure" - or the transformation of anguishing disappointment into a joyful recovery - is directly linked, as Freud emphasizes, to the power of *repetition*.

Now, insofar as it can play and modulate itself, thus creating difference, repetition is nothing other than a form: *a form of time*. It transforms the experience suffered (as *Erlebnis*) into a playful experience (as *Experiment*), where a real "work" on the form emerges, producing an experimental joy. In these conditions, it is unsurprising that Freud concluded his analysis by mentioning, as though in passing, the fact that his small observation could possibly serve as a paradigm for a future "aesthetic of economic orientation (*ökonomisch gerichtete Ästhetik*)". By producing his wild spirals in one go, as something at once "chaotic" and "cosmic", the child draftsman plays on the dialectic, the dynamics or the economy of the "gone!" In the midst of his cries of joy accompanying the tracing of the spirals, he drops, together, his two favorite words: the first and most frequently uttered ones, "*paei!*" - which in his mother's tongue means "*parti* (gone)!" (in his more recent games with soap bubbles, when the bubbles disappear before his eyes, he utters a repeated formula: "Too late!") - and "*gaga!*", which is the contracted form of the signifier for the moon, but which designates for him everything that glows beneficially, everything that appears. "Here it is. *Voilà!*"

It is fascinating that the simplest gesture (here a gyratory one), the most elementary stroke (here a doodle of rough spirals), can convey such *dialectical* complexity. This last word may seem exaggerated in such a context, or at least premature. However, I am using it on account of the fact it was associated by Walter Benjamin not only with the idea of *rhythm* (in the context of his reflection on the origin as a whirlpool), but also with that of *elliptic*. In a letter to Gershom Scholem of 12 June 1938, for example, Benjamin spoke of the Kafkaesque dialectic by using the image of an "ellipse whose focal points are far apart". In our child's drawing, we will have noticed that the spirals are never circular, but elliptical: this means that there are "foci", "centers", everywhere or nowhere. And, in any case, it would be pointless to look for a single center from which - as in classical spirals - everything proceeds.

It is also fascinating (if only in a symmetrical way) that Walter Benjamin, exactly on 22 May 1934 - that is, at the age of forty-two - drew and then preserved in his papers what must, in a way, be regarded as *one of his childhood drawings*. This drawing, in ink, appears in a series of notes taken in the course of drug experiments carried out from time to time from 1927 onward. On that day, his friend, the doctor Fritz Fränkel, administered twenty milligrams of mescaline to

him and meticulously recorded the course of the experiment. Benjamin therefore begins by “regressing”, as they say (though what else could this be but a basic form of the *Search of Lost Time*? Or a form of ritual lamentation, of wailing?): he “starts to weep, he groans about himself and his state”. He invokes what he calls the “hazy world of affects (*Nebelwelt der Affekte*)”. Fränkel explains: “[He] means that at an earlier stage of life the affects are not yet clearly differentiated, and what later comes to be known as ambivalence (*Ambivalenz*) is the rule”.

This would be the original psychic whirlwind: our affects are undifferentiated as in a ball of threads that come and go, as in a scribble of irregular spirals. They go off in all directions, only to continually return to their own inherence or ambivalence. Benjamin then evokes a “first experience (*erste Erfahrung*) that the child has of the world[: it] is not that adults are stronger, but that they cannot be magicians (*nicht zaubern kann*)”. But, Fränkel notes, “in the meantime, with ever-increasing intensity, an incredible [or even frightening] sensitivity (*eine ungeheuere Empfindlichkeit*) to acoustic and optical excitations is developing [in Benjamin]” – followed by tactile ones. “[Benjamin] is terribly sensitive to the slightest touch”. He speaks above all of tickling, that “thousandfold access to a person”, whether or not in a fit of laughter, as is so often the case with children. Then, the theme of contact unfolds in relation to *caressing* (“the true reign of the mother”), *combing* (but “the comb begins by removing dreams from the hair”) and *unravelling*. Benjamin, then, has the feeling that he “is fraying the fringes of his experiences, braiding them”.

With this feeling of fraying and this fringe theme, a *graphic motif* powerfully emerges. There are lines everywhere (incidentally, as in some of Paul Klee’s drawings). “Closing his eyes tightly, B[enjamin] [...] sees something ornamental, which he describes as hair-thin ornaments (*als eine haarfeine Ornamentik*)”. If he hears the refrain of a song, it seems modeled after the weaving of threads: a “hem pattern”. He rejects the images of the Rorschach test, only to then ask for them. He takes the pen himself. He writes words, bits of sentences. Above all, “he writes like a child (*sie kindlich schreibt*)”. And what he writes – in two series of short sentences – comes back to him from memories, from old refrains, from children’s songs:

The little sheep reads
Go to sleep, my little sheep, go to sleep
Is the frame a song of writing? Is it an image?
Write, my little sheep, write

Sheep, my dodo sheep
Sheep, my dodo sheep
Sheep

My dodo sheep
Go to sleep, my little child, go to sleep
Sleep well, get a good night's sleep.
You have to sleep

The first series of words are written in a way that is not only childish, but also extremely embellished: much more so, no doubt, than is required at school when introducing children to calligraphy. The Ss or Bs, for example, begin or end with large spirals. The second series encompasses letters and spirals in a large ellipse, which is itself turned over, twisted back onto its own path. Benjamin immediately “noticed the embryo form (*Embryo-Form*) within which there were several [other] embryo forms”. We are far from any theoretical inference of space from the “point-line-plane” sequence, for example, Benjamin here suggests an inference of his own actual body from the “line-spiral-ellipse-embryo” sequence, a sequence to which the letters themselves - these means of conveying language and thought - would be able to return as to their native condition.

The rest of this session continued to be dominated by the pattern of lines, whether drawn together or not: “the hands tighten a net [...]. To be or not to be? Net or coat, that is the question. [Benjamin] explains that the net (*Netz*) relates to the nocturnal side and everything that makes existence shiver. The ‘shiver’ (*Schauer*), he explains, is the shadow of the net on the body”. When children “laze around” - that is, when they *take their time* with no concern for social usefulness - “they unravel experiences, weave them together”. That is exactly what happens in the present experience: the hand of the draftsman/writer “dawdles” in its own way, gaining maximum “pleasure” (*Lust*) from its own “catatonic” wandering: “To the minimum of change in innervation [it] associates the maximum of change, of reversal (*Wechsel*) in the representations. This economy is its pleasure. It’s like a draftsman who has given shape to the outline of his drawing and now derives ever new images from it (*immer neue Bilder*)”.

This last impression - which is also an authentic thought about what is happening to him - is found in Benjamin as a leitmotif marking all his experiences with drugs. “Ever new images” emerge from jumbled configurations, like balls, spools or skeins from which threads could be drawn in several directions. As early as September 1928, in Marseilles, Benjamin wrote: “To get a closer look at the enigma of the happiness of intoxication (*Rätsel des Rauschglücks*), one must once again think of Ariadne’s thread. What a pleasure in this simple act: unrolling a ball. And this pleasure is very closely related to the pleasure of intoxication and the pleasure of creating, of doing (*Schaffenlust*)”. It is as if the chaos or labyrinth of spirals tangled together called for the expansive movement of free lines capable, as Benjamin writes, of “producing real bursts of images (*eine stürmis-*

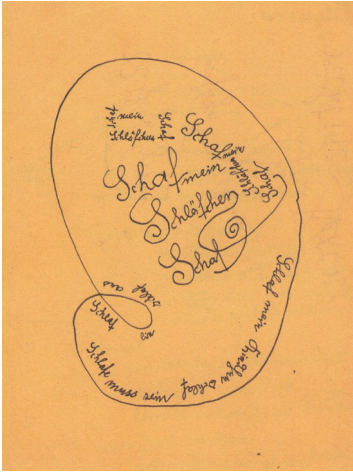


Figure 3 Paul Klee, *Concentrique-Excentrique*.
1922. Dessins illustrant le Cours du Bauhaus,
Weimar 1921-22, folios 132-3. Photo DR

che Bildproduktion)". In June 1930, he evoked the vision of a dancer: "When she danced, I drank each of the lines (*als sie tanzte, trank ich jede Linie*) that she set in motion". In an undated protocol, Benjamin was to write, in French (a "scraped" version of a sentence by Paul Klee): "Je brousse les images [Ed.: I am grazing the images]" - in the ambivalence of an act of incorporation (*brouser*) and a sensation of being lost himself, eaten in the "bush" (*brousse*) of a spiral-like chaos.

Now, in this great bush of lines, there also arise, on all sides, a host of *bifurcations*. The ball motif unfolds through "constant digressions (*ständigen Abschweifungen*)" and a "phenomenon of space peddling (*Kolportagephänomen des Raumes*)". Everything forks out, swarms and migrates here and there. All ambivalence throbs with the "coming and going (*Hin und Her*) [of] the thing and its opposite (*Teil und Gegenteil*)". In a protocol written by Fritz Fränkel in April 1931, we read that, for Benjamin in a state of hashish intoxication, "two terms of a representation separate to accommodate in their separation the whole mass of images of a new phase. We are, so to speak, dealing with an 'Open Sesame' addressed to representation. The representation divides itself and gives free access to new treasures of images (*die Vorstellung selber tritt auseinander und gibt den Zugang zu neuen Bilderschätzen frei*)". For example: "All colors start from the snow (*alles Farben gehen aus dem Schnee fort*)".

The fact that all colors are thus able to "start from the snow" ultimately means that, in this type of process, the incessant bifurcations - resulting from chaotic and tangled balls - are endowed with centrifugal, radiant energy. The *aura* motif arises here, which is not religious, and which even goes well with childish laughter and intoxicating pleasure: "All those present become comically iridescent (*alle*

Anwesenden irisieren ins Komische). At the same time one is penetrated by their aura". Benjamin reminds us that this is a way of "playing with spaces (*mit Räumen zu spielen*) [while] there is a loss of orientation (*Verführungen Orientierungssinnes*)". Finally, "the authentic aura (*die echte Aura*) appears on all things [and] changes from top to bottom with every movement made by the thing whose movement is the aura". This aura - famously defined by Benjamin as a single weft of space and time, near and far - thus reconfigures its "weft" with each new gesture that sets it in motion (and of which it constitutes the movement). The context of hashish intoxication also makes it possible to understand that everything Benjamin says about the *visual* must also be understood as a *temporal* experience: that is, as a singular weft combining the instant and the origin in the same whirlpool of experience.

We also know a drawing - thanks to the *Benjamin-Archiv* of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, which exhibited it in 2006 - that is dated 1930 and remarkable for its double elliptical shape.

In it, Benjamin establishes a relationship between "Eros and language" or "sensuality and spirit": all of this within a process of turning and returning, as with some planets' trajectory - by making a return and revolution at each turn. The two terms written in large print on the drawing, as if they were the two main poles of these elliptical movements, are "Demonic" (*Dämonische*) and "Dialectic" (*Dialektik*). This brings great anthropological instincts to mind such as the Dionysian and Apollonian envisaged by Nietzsche or - to consider Benjamin's contemporaries - the Chaotic and Cosmic in Paul Klee, the *monstra* of the impulse and the *astra* of thought in Aby Warburg...

But what matters here is that such terms were not simply opposed, set up on either side of an impassable border. On the contrary, they did not stop moving and transforming each other in the rotation or *revolution* suggested by the double ellipse. The question arises, therefore, as to how far the same experience - scribbling disorderly spirals on a sheet of paper, for example - can be at once, instinctively, "chaotic" and "cosmic", "demonic" and "dialectical", "monstrous" and "astral". Is the child's *graphic emotion* to be understood according to the "double perspective" that Benjamin talked about in relation to the whirlwind? But how can this double perspective be understood? Through what notion, through what word for such a rhythm?

The answer will be given by the child himself. In spite of his still developing language, he will state the thing with wonderful precision. Because, even before he knows all the words, he has understood that each of them has its own aura, its iridescence, its power of play, its expansive force. He will therefore exclaim: "*gaga!*". And everything will have been said. I have yet to understand what he has already understood through this expression. So I must listen, look a little more. There he is in front of his paper: he throws himself, pencil in hand.

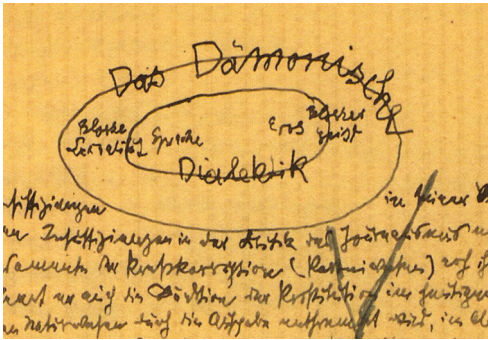


Figure 4 Paul Klee, *Effets-Causes*. 1922. Dessin illustrant le Cours du Bauhaus, Weimar 1921-22, folios 134. Photo DR

We're going to make a spiral, but if we have to make one, we might as well make dozens of irregular spirals in a single gesture, superimpose them, spin them as quickly and powerfully as possible: make them *play chaos*. Let them really make - and not just represent - a whirlpool of multiple forces on the scale of a sheet of paper. To populate space, to confuse things and, at the same time, to deliver them as they are being born.

The gesture is therefore, in the first place, effusive, explosive. It is that of an instantaneous *putting into disorder*: “chaotic” or “demonic”. And the great cry of joy that doubles it is also “gaga!”. This word, triumphantly uttered in the very instant of the gesture, directly accompanies the “bursts of images” that the hand traces at full speed. It thus expresses a pure joy linked to the *phenomenon*: “Voilà! It appears! It glows and radiates from all sides from the energy of my own gesture, of my body, of my imagination and of this marvelous operation which consists in *making* many things *appear* in an instant with a simple pencil”. Now, this word thrown in the instant of the gesture will be followed by the same word, subsequently uttered, once the hand has stopped and the child considers - contemplates for a moment - what he has just done. So he looks at his disorderly spirals and - in a very different tone now, which seems astonished, pensive, almost admiring - repeats: “gaga!”.

It is not his “work” that he admires, then, still less his own “artistic” skill (these are only problems for old people). What he admires - what leaves him pensive and makes him utter his sweetest “gaga” - seems to be the hitherto unsuspected capacity of the graphic web itself to create new images without anyone wishing to represent them. Suddenly he sees what I cannot see yet. I will only be able to see it thanks to his *word that sees*, his pretty little word “gaga!” - which means “the moon” (it is an abbreviation of the Greek *fengári*, φεγγάρι). It designates, in this child, not only the luminous appearance in general, the moon-*phenomenon* extended to everything that glows in the dark, but also the moon-*form*. Now the child knows that

this form takes many forms: it changes from one night to the next, from the full moon to the thinnest crescent. He even sees it in the contour of the mouth when someone smiles. So he did not fix the word “gaga” on a single thing, a single phenomenon or a single form, and it is already there as an *Urphänomen*, an original form of poetry through the *radiant empowering* of a single word.

Thus, when he says “gaga!” for the second time, considering his own drawing, it is as if he was inviting me to take a better look at his wild spirals: to get closer to what should also be seen, beyond the disorder itself. I then discover this evidence left behind by my preliminary observation: as soon as two curved lines cross, this indeed gives the outline of a crescent. The gyratory and spiral movement of the pencil has disseminated a treasure trove of “gagas”, that is to say these multiple forms evoking crescent moons that proliferate in all directions and in all dimensions, without, of course, ever representing something such as “The moon in a nocturnal landscape”. It was a question of doing much more: of engendering, of making visible to oneself, a thousand and one possible moons.

It is often said that children “ask for the moon”, to suggest that they desire the impossible. One forgets that they know how to bring it back to themselves with disconcerting ease, unpredictably fast movements, a multiplying imagination and an extraordinary power of observation. At the very moment of *playing chaos*, this child will have seen his scribble as a way of *playing cosmos* through inspired spirals – all this through the simple joy of drawing freely. And he will have done so without wasting his time by paying attention to sterile aesthetic judgments seeking to distinguish once and for all between what is “form” and what is “formless”.

References

- Henri Michaux, « Essais d'enfants, dessins d'enfants » [1972], *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 3, éd. R. Bellour, Y. Tran et M. Cardot, Paris, Gallimard, 2004, p. 1327.
- Paul Klee, « Éléments fondamentaux de la théorie de la forme » [1921-1925], *La Pensée créatrice. Écrits sur l'art*, vol. 1, éd. J. Spiller, trad. S. Girard, Paris, Dessain & Tolra, 1973, pp. 2-3.
- Henri Maldiney, « L'esthétique des rythmes » [1967], *Regard, parole, espace*, Lausanne, L'Âge d'homme, 1973, p. 150.
- Jean-Christophe Bailly, *L'Imagement*, Paris, Le Seuil, 2020, pp. 9-10.
- Antonio Machón, *Los dibujos de los niños. Génesis y naturaleza de la representación gráfica. Un estudio evolutivo*, Madrid, Ediciones Cátedra, 2009, p. 113-95.
- Paul Klee, *Cours du Bauhaus, Weimar 1921-1922. Contributions à la théorie de la forme picturale* [1921-1922], trad. C. Riehl, Strasbourg-Paris, Éditions des musées de Strasbourg-Hazan, 2004, pp. 164-6.
- Walter Benjamin, *Origine du drame baroque allemand* [1928], trad. S. Muller et A. Hirt, Paris, Flammarion, 1985, pp. 43-4.

- Sigmund Freud, « Au-delà du principe de plaisir » [1920], trad. J. Laplanche et J.-B. Pontalis, *Essais de psychanalyse*, Paris, Payot, 1981, pp. 51-5.
- Walter Benjamin, *Correspondance*, vol. 2, 1929-1940, éd. G. Scholem et T. W. Adorno, trad. G. Petitdemange, Paris, Aubier Montaigne, 1979, p. 248.
- Walter Benjamin, *Sur le haschisch et autres écrits sur la drogue* [1927-1934], trad. J.-F. Poirier, Paris, Christian Bourgois, 1993, pp. 88-100 ; pp. 49, 58 et 62 ; pp. 18-19 et 75-6 ; pp. 9, 13 et 56.
- Ursula Marx, Gudrun Schwarz, Michael Schwarz et Erdmut Wizisla [dir.] [2006], *Walter Benjamin, archives. Images, textes et signes*, trad. P. Ivernel, Paris, Klincksieck, 2011, pp. 245 et 254.
- Georges Didi-Huberman, *La Ressemblance informe, ou le gai savoir visuel selon Georges Bataille*, Paris, Macula, 1995 [éd. augmentée, 2019], pp. 422-80).

