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The Baroque

Beads in a Rosary or Folds of Time

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Figure 1: Francesco Borromini, S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome, 1665-67. Façade.
Photograph by Massimo Velo.

In recent times historians have tended to shrink with embarrassment from the term "baroque" and to opt instead for "early modern", a term which is doubly problematic in prompting a conception of history which is inherently linear, and of the earlier period in subordinate teleological relation to the "modern".[1] Within history of art "baroque" has been treated with less disdain. It continues to be deployed broadly within the discipline to refer either to a broad chronological period (usually a long seventeenth century), or to an artistic style, or to both (period and style seen as overlapping). In this paper I investigate what might be recovered from the term "baroque" by exploring the radically divergent ways in which it has been used: on the one hand as a term of periodisation, a stylistic label, and an epithet largely of abuse; and, on the other, as an anti-historicist critical strategy, as a way to avoid the over-identification of appearance with period. I aim here to bring diverse approaches to "baroque" into dialogue.

This paper briefly outlines the etymology and history of the term "baroque", tracing its chequered history as a term of abuse in the eighteenth century, touches upon its recovery in the nineteenth century, and then swerves to Walter Benjamin and Gilles Deleuze in order to explore the idea of a baroque that is neither pejorative nor "early modern". I am, therefore, more concerned with ideas than with etymology and semantics in an investigation of the relationship between "baroque" and the descriptive-analytic discourse of which it is the target. Can the apparent contradictions between periodisation and critical strategy be reconciled? This paper engages with a search towards the point of contact that seems foreclosed if history is relegated to a past: the material site where history and the immediacy of visual affect coincide.

A brief outline of the development of the term "baroque" is necessary here. In the seventeenth century, the term did not exist. To describe the licence taken by Borromini, the word deployed was "gotico" and, unlike Renaissance architecture, there was no contemporaneous theory of this architecture. A detailed discussion of the terms used in relation to seventeenth-century architecture by contemporaries lies beyond the scope of this paper, but it is noteworthy that the language and attitudes that were to feed the future word "baroque", such as "unreasoned", "licentious", and "bizarre" with its implications of immodesty,

gathered force from the late sixteenth to early eighteenth centuries.[2] However, not only did united condemnation of a single homogenous baroque "style" never exist, but the inflections and connotations of terms such as *bizzarria* shifted. It is notable that *bizzarria* did not have exclusively pejorative connotations from its earliest uses – it appears in Dante's *Inferno*, written between c.1300 and c.1313 – to even as late as the 1740s.[3]

One theory of the etymology of "baroque" has it derive from the word for an irregularly shaped pearl, particularly prized by sixteenth-century jewellers: that is, something whose particular interest lay in its unpredictable departure from formal regularities or norms. These pearls were called in Italian *scaramazze*, in Portuguese were called *barocco*, supposedly derived from the Latin *verruca*. In France these pearls were called *perles baroques* from the sixteenth century and from French the word migrated to other languages.[4] In French the word "baroque" appeared in the eighteenth-century and rapidly became common. In France and Germany (at court, where French was spoken) it meant 'strange, unusual, bizarre, ridiculous, irregular'; and in Italy the term referred to abstruse reasoning ('i frati e i loro argomenti in barocco').[5] In Italian it was not used to refer to the irregular or strange until the end of the eighteenth century.

"Baroque" was linked to art in 1757, when Antoine-Joseph Pernety defined it in his *Dictionnaire Portatif de Peinture, Sculpture et Gravure* as 'that which is not in accord with the rules of proportions, but follows caprice. It is said of taste and design [that] the figures of this picture are baroque; the composition is in a baroque taste, to mean that it is not in good taste.'[6] Turning to the specific example of Tintoretto, Pernety remarks: 'Tintoretto always had something of the singular and the extraordinary in his pictures – there is always something of the *baroque* in them.'[7]

In the *Encyclopédie Méthodique: Architecture* (1788-1825), aimed in part at producing an appropriate public audience for emerging public architectures, Quatremère de Quincy seems to conceive of baroque as its nemesis, the product of the merely curious (as opposed to the connoisseur). He defines "baroque" in architecture as a nuance of the bizarre. 'It is, if you like, its refinement, or, if it were possible to say so, its abuse.'[8] For him the essence of the baroque is its excessive bizarreness, its unrestrained eccentricity: 'What severity is to the prudence of [good] taste, the baroque is to the bizarre. That is to say, it is its superlative.' It is not simply eccentric, but *bizarrerie* or ridiculousness pushed to the extreme.[9] Quatremère thus distinguishes between "baroque" and "bizarre", the one being the excess of the other: Borromini, whom Quatremère regards as motivated mostly by jealousy of Bernini, 'provided the greatest models of bizarrerie', while Guarini passes for 'the master of the baroque'; and he cites Guarini's SS Sindone Chapel in Turin as the most striking example of the taste (Fig 2).[10]

Figure 2: Guarino Guarini, Cappella SS. Sindone, Turin, 1667-90. View into dome.
Photograph by Giuseppe Burino.

"Bizarrerie" in architecture expressed a taste contrary to received principles, 'a quest affected by extraordinary forms, and of which the sole merit consists in the very novelty which constitutes its vice.'[11] There are strong moral overtones to this. "Bizarrerie", the heart of baroque, produces vice. In ethics, says Quatremère, a distinction is made between "capriciousness" and "bizarreness". While the first stems from the imagination, the second is the result of character ('le caprice se manifeste dans les goûts, la bizarrerie dans les humeurs'). While caprice implies lightness of touch and seems to be only a tiresome habit that can be broken, "bizarrerie" implies a defective shape or malformation ('une conformation vicieuse') not susceptible to reformation.

While capricious taste makes an arbitrary choice of forms in architecture and tends imprudently to distort the principles of art, bizarre taste scoffs at them. Bizarre taste strives to overturn all principles. Thus "bizarrerie" gives birth to a system destructive of nature's order and forms. Bizarreness attacks the forms that are constitutive of art.[12] While Michelangelo and Vignola had entertained some capricious details in their work, Borromini and Guarini were 'masters of the bizarre manner' ('les maîtres du genre bizarre'). The taste for "bizarrerie" was born of not seeking to imitate the ancients, weariness with the best things, an unbridled taste for novelty, and a search for the unwonted.[13]

To this 'perversion de l'art' Quatremère proposes the development of the true principles of imitation and invention, since it is the false notions and the abuse of such terms which he regarded as having paved the way for the sway of "bizarrerie".[14] Striking here is the appeal to the order and forms of nature and the ancients as the correct regulators for architectural forms. In fact, the *Dictionnaire* calls the structure of mimesis into question in "accomplished"

Figure 3: Title page to Francesco Milizia, *Vite de' più celebri Architetti d'ogni nazione e d'ogni tempo* (Rome: Paolo Giunchi Komarek), 1768.
By permission of the British Library, shelfmark 1401.k.18.

architecture, which has no existing model for itself anywhere and thus must produce what it is to imitate. Quatremère suggests that architecture should begin by imitating itself, by mechanically reproducing its own origins. If architecture imitates the human body, not as sculpture does dealing with external forms, but by studying and drawing on knowledge of proportions and the organisation that make up its beauty, whose relationships it will reproduce in its edifices, then architecture in its most accomplished stage "imitates" nature itself and reproduces the harmonious system of cosmic laws.[15]

A couple of years later in 1797 Francesco Milizia in his *Dizionario delle Belle Arti del Disegno* followed this closely: 'Baroque is the superlative of the bizarre, the excess of the ridiculous. Borromini went delirious, but in the sacristy of St Peter's Guarini, Pozzo, Marchione went baroque.'[16] Here, significantly, where "baroque" is used in Italian (barocco) in relation to architecture for the first time – albeit drawing heavily on French precedent – it refers to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italian architecture. The distinction between Borromini, on the one hand, and Guarino Guarini, Andrea Pozzo and Carlo Marchionni

(the latter, unlike the others, not a seventeenth-century architect, but a contemporary of Milizia) on the other, allows for baroque to be located on a wilder shore even than that inhabited by Borromini, while also implying that Borromini was transported, rather than entirely baroque. Milizia's hostility to baroque architecture as departing from acceptable classical norms is apparent also in the frontispiece to his *Le Vite de' Più Celebri Architetti d'ogni Nazione e d'ogni Tempo* (Rome, 1768), where a Classical Antique temple, a primitive hut indicated as its direct forebear, is endorsed ('hoc amet'), while that which is spurned ('hoc spernat') is represented by a parody of Borromini's Oratory, the modern counterpart to gothic architecture, which is figured behind (Fig 3).

Otto Kurz may be right in arguing that neither Quatremère nor Milizia uses "baroque" to refer to a style as such, but they do not, as he suggests, simply refer to artists.[17] They clearly refer to architecture, and to the corruption that such architecture represents. In his *Vite*, for instance, Milizia describes Martino Longhi's SS Vincenzo ed Anastasio as 'against every rule of architecture, and apparently ruled by the strangest caprice', while Borromini's 'greatest delirium' was S Carlino (Fig 1): 'so many straight, concave, and convex [forms], with so many columns of different profiles, and windows, and niches and sculptures in such a fussy little facade, are pitiful things.'[18]

In the nineteenth century the two main uses of the term occur side by side: baroque as name of a style, and baroque as an adjective denoting things strange or bizarre, indeed, decadent in the sense of decline. Winckelmann – in his *Geschichte der Kunst* of 1825 – refers to the 'spoiled taste' in painting, architecture, sculpture, and poetry of D'Arpino, Bernini, Borromini, and Marino. Thereafter baroque comes to be more closely associated with decline rather than with the strange.[19] In his *Storia della Scultura* (1813-18) Leopoldo Cicognara identifies five epochs, including a golden age from the fifteenth century to Michelangelo; and the 'decadence of the arts' ('decadenza delle arti') when the norms of antiquity and nature were no longer followed and after which there was a decline in connoisseurs of the beautiful – until Canova brought art back on the right tracks.[20] Cicognara cites as an example the greater admiration given in Naples to the Sansevero Chapel, 'full of marbles inlaid with complicated and highly laborious processes' (Fig 4) rather than to the 'simple and most noble' monuments of the earlier golden age. Ernst Fürster's *Handbuch für Reisende in Italien* (1842) contains a short paragraph on architecture of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries and its 'barocke Überfüllung' (baroque congestion or superabundance).[21]

Viewed as Renaissance architecture, baroque architecture stood condemned, its most characteristic features denounced as degraded shortcomings through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such an approach reaches its apogee in Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) who decisively linked the baroque with the concept

Figure 4: Cappella Sansevero de' Sangri, Naples, 1749-66.
Photograph by Massimo Velo.

of decadence.[22] He placed the Catholic Church at the heart of his analysis of the baroque as an artistic *bruttezza*, and Italy's decline (*decadenza*) from the middle of the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries in terms of 'entusiasmo morale' 'moral exuberance'. For him the baroque as a sort of *brutto artistico* was not artistic at all, but, on the contrary, something different from art, based on '*un bisogno pratico*' ('a practical need').[23] For Croce the word "baroque" specifically invokes the *anima barocca*, the baroque spirit, rather than particular forms – the *anima barocca* allows representation to become mere bravura and, unlike other ugly forms, leaves one stupefied, cold, and with a sense of emptiness.[24] This is crucial to Croce, since for him art is a liberator: 'By bringing them as objects before our minds, we detach them from ourselves and raise ourselves above them.'[25] In discussing the independence of art, Croce avers that 'that which is trivial or barren is only so insofar as it has not been raised to the level of expression; in other words, triviality and sterility always arise from the form given by aesthetic treatment, from its imperfect mastery of content, and not from the material qualities of the content itself.'[26] As for cause, the *anima barocca* is rooted deep in sinful human nature, but was produced by the Church, which collapsed religion into politics.

For Croce the style of seventeenth-century Italian writers was 'empty' and 'decadent'. He interpreted this empty decadence as finding a justification in the theory of rhetoric, as a suave and facile mode of knowledge as opposed to the severity of Dialectic. Wit (*ingegno*) was hailed as a genius of rhetoric. He cites Dominique Bouhours, a Jesuit writer of dialogues on *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* (1687): '"heart" and "wit" are greatly in fashion just now, nothing else is spoken of in polite conversation, and all discourse is at last

brought round to *l'esprit et le coeur*.'[27] Croce argues that it was in this same period that opposition became marked between those who judged by feeling and those who reasoned by principles.[28] Du Bos, in *Réflexions critiques sur la poësie et la peinture* (1719), upholds the theory of feeling: art is simply a self-abandonment 'to the impressions which foreign objects make upon us' ('aux impressions que les objets étrangers font sur nous'), without reflective labour.[29] For Du Bos art consists not in instruction but in style; there is no criterion except for feeling, which he terms a 'sixth sense' ('sixième sens'). The arguments of others can never persuade us of the contrary of what we feel.[30] For Croce, 'If the attempt to define "wit" and "taste" usually resulted in intellectualism, it was easy to transform imagination and feeling into sensationalistic doctrines.'[31]

Croce's ideas provoked forceful responses. The various challenges submitted to them in the early twentieth century – what Geoffrey Scott in his *The Architecture of Humanism: A Study in the History of Taste* (1914), termed 'a mitigation of abuse', rather than an appreciation – would make an interesting study in itself.[32] For Scott:

> When the Counter-Reformation made its bid for popularity, it erected on every hand churches in the baroque manner frankly calculated to delight the senses and kindle common enthusiasms. Never, perhaps, has architecture been more successfully or more deliberately made the tool of policy than by this brilliant effort which transformed the face of Italy.[33]

Crucially, therefore, for Scott, 'the artistic significance of the style which the Jesuits employed, remains something wholly independent of the uses to which they put it. To explain the first by the second is to misconstrue the whole matter. To condemn the first on account of the second ... is nothing less than childish.'[34] The baroque spirit appreciated grandeur for its own sake, aesthetically: 'The style has an orbit, and impetus, of its own.'[35] Baroque blends the picturesque and classic architecture; it 'intellectualised the picturesque'.[36]

If Croce in this respect is something of an oddity, more critical here is Jacob Burckhardt's *Der Cicerone* and Wilhelm Lübke's *Geschichte der Architektur*, both of 1855. For the first time barock was used as a stylistic term, "Barockstil", to describe a phase in the development of Italian painting and architecture (respectively). For Burckhardt and Lübke, post-sixteenth-century art did not simply represent a decline from Renaissance ideals, but was in itself a style with principles quite different from those of the Renaissance. Indeed, Lübke makes a striking analogy, of the sort that would be taken up later in relation to late Gothic: 'What fifteenth-century Gothic was to the Gothic style, the Baroque style was to the Renaissance: a period of the running wild of emancipated decoration. The content and the aim remained the same, only the expression is different.'[37] In the 1920s and 1930s German critics like Wilhelm Worringer (*Formprobleme der Gotik*, 1918) and Richard Hamann (*Geschichte der Kunst*, 1933) gave this

take a nationalistic twist when they identified baroque as essentially German, in which were revived the principles of late Gothic, as manifest in German art of the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century.

But it is Burckhardt who marks a change in attitudes to baroque. He regards every style as having a late, florid, decadent stage, and argues both that baroque is a style worthy of study and that it is important to distinguish the good from the bad in it. Amico Ricci and Cornelius Gurlitt in their respective *Storia dell'architettura in Italia* (1859, vol. 3) and *Geschichte des Barockstils in Italien* (1887) undertook not to condemn the baroque, but to write its history.[38]

Following Burckhardt, Heinrich Wölfflin's *Renaissance und Barock* (1888) characterised the Renaissance as the era of human liberty and freedom, and the baroque, by contrast, as the era of subjugation.[39] Drawing on a Hegelian conception of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, Wölfflin opposed the autonomy of the capital and column in a Renaissance façade to the way in which the part was subsumed into the whole on a baroque façade. To Wölfflin these forms were traces of the emotional life of an era. For him style is an autonomous force, which seeks expression through art works. He presents styles as oppositional and in oppositional terms, to be diagnosed and recognised by identifying certain specific characteristics, identified by comparing and contrasting art works. *Renaissance und Barock*, therefore, undertakes 'a formal analysis of the complex of symptoms that constitutes the baroque.'[40] Style is therefore not something those who deployed it have to recognise. Baroque architecture strove after effects which belong to a different art-form, such as freedom of line or interplay of light and shade which properly belong to the pictorial. Consequently, Wölfflin's approach is informed by a sense of architectural fiction and suggestion. In a painting, the solid forms of architectural masonry could appear elusive and suggestive by virtue of the play of light or the adoption of an oblique angle of vision. Wölfflin saw this transformation of concrete architectural forms within a painting as an analogue to the transformation of Renaissance forms in baroque architecture.

Yet baroque architecture was not to be understood only in terms of a slippage of effects usually exploited by oil paint; it was also diagnostic and communicative of the *Lebensgefühl* (attitude to life) of their era: 'What matter are not the individual products of an age, but the fundamental temper that produced them.' The crucial qualities of architecture were therefore neither conceptual nor (con)textual:

> ideas can only be explicitly stated, but moods can also be conveyed with architectural forms; at any rate, every style imparts a more or less definite mood … Architecture expresses the *Lebensgefühl* [attitude to life] of an epoch. As an art, however, it will give an ideal enhancement of this *Lebensgefühl*; in other words, it will express man's aspirations.[41]

For Wölfflin, then, architecture is not a reflection of an era or of a *Weltenschauung*, and far less of an individual genius, but it conveys an era's finest aspirations, effectively working through empathetic affect. In *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (*Principles of Art History*, 1915) Wölfflin interpreted the free or bound form as a material trace of the free or bound man. Baroque was the form of ecstatic subordination, the trace of the aspiration of the Church in general (and the Jesuits in particular) to bind, to oppress, to subsume.

Wölfflin's suggestive reading that architectural style is not a reflection, but an articulation of aspiration has often been blunted into an assumption that architectural form "reflects" something broader, a claim to a continuous relationship with social and political circumstances. Thus in John Varriano's 1986 survey of Italian Baroque architecture, the Catholic Church, 'the unifying element' in Italian life, produces the rhetorical foundation of baroque architecture:

> It has been said that above all, Baroque architecture is rhetorical, and there is little doubt that the primary intent of many buildings was to persuade. Churches constructed in the post-Counter-Reformation era were intended to overpower all who entered with a dramatic spectacle that, in Bernini's own words, 'would reach out to Catholics in order to reaffirm their faith, to heretics to reunite them with the church, and to agnostics to enlighten them with the true faith'.[42]

Wölfflin's reading of an era's aspirations has here become a straightforward institutional aim, epitomised by an individual giant's precise verbal articulation, while the focus on audience and rhetoric is derived from Giulio Carlo Argan's work.[43] Thus the symbolic too quickly becomes abstracted from the specific and generalised.

Art historians have, as these examples demonstrate, tended to approach the baroque as a stylistic term, alloyed with opprobrium. The task being for them to distinguish it from the styles which preceded and followed, and to identify the uses to which it was put. In great contrast to this comes the work of three scholars: Henri Focillon, Walter Benjamin and Gilles Deleuze. For different reasons, each was concerned to break the model of periodisation, and the over-identification of period with appearance. Focillon focused on form to suggest that the baroque could and did manifest itself in different times in a range of ways. Benjamin and Deleuze, in different ways, seize upon the baroque as emblematic; it forms an important case in their respective resistance to history based on time as linear chronology.

The art historian Focillon gave baroque a radically new interpretation in his *Vie des formes* (Paris, 1934). He questioned the rationale of periodisation, suggesting that ideological motivations betray the historical schemes that they also tend to produce.[44] Instead he proposed that the history of art is constituted by differently paced but intermingling phases. Formal patterns in art are in

perpetual states of movement, being specific to time, but also spanning across it. He observed that the contrastive styles of Romanesque and Gothic often inflect each other. 'They crisscross and sometimes fold vastly different sensibilities into each other.'[45] Focillon identified a "Baroque" phase in both styles, when they share features best identified by categories whose descriptives belong to a later period – for instance, a profusion of moving shapes, the search for picturesque effect. He argues that what might be mistaken as impoverishment is, on the contrary, a sign of living form. A "Baroque" phase at once sums up, turns upon, contorts, and narrates the formulae of all the others. Forms move back and forth, disappear, recur, or bring out new shapes when they are superimposed or interconnected. Baroque, therefore, is not Borromini, Bernini, and Guarini. Focillon insists: 'The Baroque state reveals identical traits existing as constants within the most diverse environments and periods of time.'[46] Thus for Focillon "Baroque" refers to a mode of being: 'Baroque forms live with passionate intensity a life that is entirely their own … they break apart even as they grow; they tend to invade space in every direction, to perforate it, to become as one with all its possibilities.'[47]

There is in Focillon, then, a tension between baroque as a style belonging to a period and forms which can be discerned outside that period. Unlike Focillon, Walter Benjamin was concerned not with art, which for Benjamin, through its beauty, was indelibly linked to myth, but with history. Above all in his *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* (*Origin of the German Mourning Play*, written 1924-25, and published in Berlin in 1928), he deals with his conception of the baroque not as an early development of modernity, but as its obscured counter-face.[48]

Benjamin approaches the baroque in intense, adamantine fashion. His is deliberately not an attempt to categorise a specific historical situation (although there are moments when he seems to do just that); rather, the baroque figure is central to Benjamin's conception of time and history. For Benjamin the baroque represents a way of thinking which is part of his undertaking to critique a linear historical analysis. Above all, it is retrospective, as a mode of understanding the present, modernity, and capitalism. In *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* he analyses the culture of nascent capitalism – hence the book's close relationship with his later work analysing high capitalism's culture, such as in the *Passagenwerk* where he tries to find allegories of modernity in the flâneur.[49]

Central to Benjamin's baroque idea is allegory and its unstable signification, as the destruction of myth (a view that is at odds with conventional notions of allegory). He argues that allegory, especially allegory about fate, death and melancholy, is the principal element in the aesthetic of modernity and originates in the forgotten and obscured past of modernity – the baroque. But this is not akin to saying that the baroque, as if it were just a synonym for "early modern",

presages modernity. Benjamin distinguishes between what he calls a literary-historical treatment of his subject and that offered by the philosophy of art:

> In the sense in which it is treated in the philosophy of art the *Trauerspiel* is an idea. Such a treatment differs most significantly from a literary-historical treatment in its assumption of unity, whereas the latter is concerned to demonstrate variety. In literary-historical analysis differences and extremes are brought together in order that they might be relativised in evolutionary terms; in a conceptual treatment they acquire the status of complementary forces, and history is seen as no more than the coloured border to their crystalline simultaneity.[50]

Benjamin is not concerned with conceptualising the "baroque" in such a way as to categorise an epoch. He dismisses 'the view that a modern insight into the different periods of history can be validated in, for instance, polemic confrontations in which, as at great historical turning points, the epochs faced each other eyeball to eyeball, so to speak.'[51] That would be, he says gently, 'to misunderstand the nature of one's sources, which is usually determined by considerations of contemporary interest rather than the ideas of historiography.'[52] It is as ideas, not as concepts, then, that Benjamin finds names like 'baroque' to be useful: 'they do not make the similar identical, but they effect a synthesis between extremes … When the idea absorbs a sequence of historical formulations, it does not do so in order to construct a unity out of them, let alone to abstract something common to them all.'[53] In a striking analogy Benjamin claims that ideas are to objects as constellations are to stars – neither their concepts nor their laws; ideas do not contribute to knowledge of phenomena.[54]

Benjamin carefully opposes allegory to symbol: 'They stand in relation to each other as does the silent, great and mighty natural world of mountains and plants to the living progression of human history.'[55] While the symbol tries to efface the gulf between thing and over-naming, for Benjamin allegory terrifyingly brings the viewer face to face with the *facies hippocratica* of history as a 'petrified, primordial landscape'. Thus history's moment before death 'is the heart of the allegorical way of seeing, of the baroque, secular explanation of history as the passion of the world.'[56] Allegory presents itself as an incomplete ruin. In this image of petrified unrest (*Bild der erstarrten Unruhe*), the dreams of an epoch are arrested.[57] Allegories are always 'allegories of oblivion', because they express the un-freedom of men and women.[58] Neither *Trauerspiel* nor Tragedy achieve the fulfilment of historical time. Benjamin calls this time the 'idea', the 'historical idea' and 'messianic time'.

In Benjamin's later work his conception of history is clearer: the "Angel of history" melancholically shatters the temporal continuum (derived from a social-democratic faith in progress), replacing it with a catastrophist, messianic insistence that will release the future buried with the past. To the empty linear time of a cumulative succession of events, Benjamin opposes the necessity of a

Figure 5: S. Caterina, Palermo, c.1598. North side from Piazza Pretoria.
Photograph by Helen Hills.

Figure 6: S. Caterina, Palermo. Interior looking east. Chancel decorated 1705-20.
Photograph by Helen Hills.

temporal break. *Jetztzeit* or 'now-time' becomes visible in states of emergency, and the repressed memory of 'those without a name' can repossess a history fashioned by the historicism of the victors.[59] He writes:

> A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus he establishes a conception of the present as 'now-time' which is shot through with chips of messianic time.[60]

The history of the oppressed demonstrates that the state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule, therefore *Jetztzeit* is the past as 'crux of the present'.[61] Since the basic characteristic of allegory is its ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning, the contrast between 'sound and signification remains something ghostly and terrible'.[62] It is the fragmentation of language and representation that gives rise to appreciation of the Now which is characteristic of allegory: an unprecedented cultural shift in the relations between visible and invisible, tangible and intangible.

The duty of allegory is the representation of history at a stand-still. Allegory betrays this duty, like the intriguer operating in the space between expression and signification, representing their division. The result is the destruction of the formal prison of quasi-mythological stasis.[63] Allegory betrays the appearance which it sets out to represent; but as that appearance was untrue, allegory opens up the possibility of gaining truth. Allegory reveals knowledge to be an allegory: 'Through the subversion of its own project allegory gives the true name – that of folly – to the attempt of subjectivity to signify objects according to its own will.'[64]

In other words, while the writers cited above regard appearance precisely as giving access to essence, Benjamin regards this relationship as difficult and recognises discrepancy between them. Allegory emerges from this difficult, discrepant relationship. In Howard Caygill's words: 'The symbol tries to make the finite participate in the infinite, to freeze the moment into an image of eternity, while allegory inscribes death into signification, making the relationship between appearance and essence one which is provisional and endangered'.[65]

For Benjamin, far from being the mere embodiment of an abstract idea, allegory is 'emotional writing' which suppresses the mediations between figure and meaning. As the language of a torn and broken world, the representation of the unrepresentable, allegory fixes dreams by laying bare reality. 'The function of baroque iconography is not so much to unveil material objects as to strip them naked.'[66] Allegory, then, is the destruction of myth and in this it lies beyond the sphere of art, which Benjamin regards as allied to myth through its beautiful appearance.

Benjamin's work resists ready co-option. Although his own work is pitted with brilliant insights into visual objects as microcosms, which alight on specific visual characteristics to break open key insights in social analysis, Benjamin's deeply held suspicion of art as intimately related in its beauty to myth mean that we cannot simply apply his ideas about allegory to the glorious allegorical paintings of baroque palaces and churches.

Finally, I turn to Gilles Deleuze. In *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (1988) Deleuze partially adopts Focillon's broad use of the term baroque as radiating through histories, and cultures. His ideas are in many ways complementary to Benjamin's. For Deleuze, 'the essence of the Baroque entails neither falling into nor emerging from illusion, but rather realising something in illusion itself, or

of tying it to a spiritual *presence* that endows its spaces and fragments with a collective unity.'[67]

As Deleuze (surely referring also to himself) notes, 'the best inventors of the baroque, the best commentators have had their doubts about the consistency of the notion, and have been bewildered by the arbitrary extension that, despite themselves, the notion risked taking.'[68] It was just such extensions, incidentally, that Erwin Panofsky sternly condemned in his 1934 essay 'What is Baroque?' Sometimes this has resulted in radical disavowal: the baroque never existed. But it is not fabulous like a unicorn, insists Deleuze; it depends on a concept for its existence: 'Irregular pearls exist, but the Baroque has no reason for existing without a concept that forms this very reason.'[69] Instead Deleuze points in a similar direction to Benjamin arguing for the importance of the idea: 'even if there were no such things as the pure tragedy or the pure comic drama which could be named after them, these ideas can still survive'.[70]

Deleuze takes 'the Baroque', in the figure of the fold, through the history of art, science, costume, mathematics, lyric and philosophy. He deploys the figure of the fold as baroqueness's synecdoche.[71] The fold theorises and embodies the relationship without centre. For Deleuze Leibniz, the first philosopher and mathematician of the pleat, of curves, and twisting surfaces, is also the philosopher of the baroque fold. He rethinks the phenomenon of "point of view", of perspective, of conic sections, and of city planning. Commenting on Leibniz, Deleuze argues that the baroque fold is far more than an element of decoration. As a figure, it defines a specific type of thought: 'The Baroque refers not to an essence but rather to an operative function, to a trait. It endlessly produces folds.'[72] While there are many sorts of folds (Eastern, Greek, Romanesque, etc.), the Baroque trait twists and turns its folds, pushing them to infinity, fold over fold, one upon the other. First, the Baroque differentiates its fold in two ways, by moving along two infinities, as if infinity were composed of two stages or floors: 'the pleats of matter and the folds in the soul'.[73]

As, for Leibniz, the monad is the autonomy of the inside, an inside without an outside, it has as its correlative the independence of the façade, an outside without an inside. Consider the façade and interior of S Caterina in Palermo (Figs 5 & 6) in light of Deleuze's suggestion that 'Baroque architecture can be defined by this severing of the façade from the inside, of the interior from the exterior, and the autonomy of the interior from the independence of the exterior, but in such conditions that each of the two terms thrusts the other forward.'[74] The device of the fold joins interior and exterior even as it separates them. Wölfflin claimed something similar: 'the contrast between the agitated idiom of the facade and the relaxed peace of the interior is one of the most compelling effects in the baroque repertory.'[75] Deleuze adds that Wölfflin may be mistaken in thinking that the absolute inside in itself is peaceful. He suggests that the

Figure 7 (right) & 8 (detail, below):
Gianlorenzo Bernini, Ecstasy of S. Teresa, 1647-53, Cornaro Chapel, S. Maria della Vittoria, Rome.
Photograph by Gaspare Piazza.
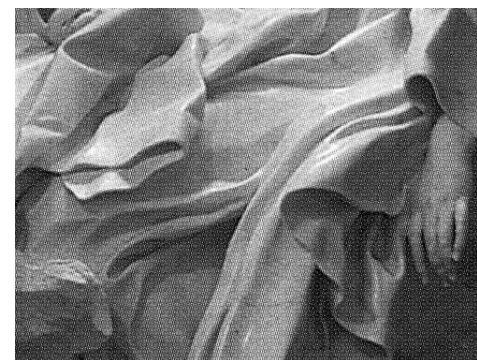
inside remains perfectly integral from the point of view, or in the mirror, that oversees its decoration, no matter how complicated it might be. A new kind of link must be made between the inside and the outside, or the spontaneity of the inside and the determination of the outside.

Material folds are not Deleuzian/Leibnizian folds, which both separate and join the material and the immaterial.[76] But what would it mean to fold a Deleuzian fold back onto that art work whose formal complexity and religious intensity conventionally earn it the epithet "baroque"? Before we hastily condemn such a move as subverting critical distance, or as simply reinstating periodisation, let us pause to see what might be gained. Thus rather than presuppose that the essence of "baroque" is necessarily to be located, semantically or conceptually, in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, might this entirely modern baroque folding help us attend to the complex surfaces of these art works without presupposing that the unique conditions for their understanding lie in a lost (but supposedly recuperable) past?

While Bernini's *St Teresa* (Figs 7&8) has not infrequently been viewed as the bodily representation of what is happening in the soul (the reverse of Leibniz's idea that the soul represents to itself what occurs in its organs), Deleuze sees the marble as seizing and bearing 'to infinity folds that cannot be explained by the body, but by a spiritual adventure that can set the body ablaze. [Bernini's] is

Figure 9: Gianlorenzo Bernini, Blessed Ludovica Albertoni, 1674. S. Francesco a Ripa, Rome.
Photograph by Giuseppe Burino.

Figure 10: Giuseppe Sanmartino, Shrouded Christ, 1753. Cappella Sansevero de' Naples.
Photograph by Massimo Velo.

Figure 11: Balustrade of the high altar in the church of the Certosa of San Martino, probably by Tagliacozzi Canale, Giuseppe Sanmartino, and Filippo Belliazzi, Naples.
Photograph by Helen Hills.

not an art of structures but of textures.'[77] Deleuze understands folds as liberated by a go-between from 'merely reproducing the finite body' – these go-betweens, placed between clothing and the body, are the Elements. The livid drapery of St Teresa's habit is alive with fire that spreads through her body, including its surface.[78] Indeed, Teresa's body – apart from its telling extremities, her head, hands, and feet – disappears inside the flames of folds; her body is burned up. The cost of her experience is the loss of subjectivity.

Meanwhile in Bernini's *Blessed Ludovica Albertoni* (1674, S Francesco a Ripa, Rome, Fig. 9) the fold which surges over her turns back 'to a deeply furrowed earth'.[79] Air or wind redefines the Bernini's *Louis XIV*; water ebbs and flows over the body of Giuseppe Sanmartino's *Shrouded Christ* in the Sansevero Chapel in Naples (Fig 10); while flesh (earth) erupts from the body of Francesco Guarino's *St. Agatha*. 'In every instance,' insists Deleuze, 'folds of clothing acquire an autonomy and a fullness *that are not simply decorative effects*. They convey the intensity of a spiritual force exerted on the body, either to turn it upside down or to stand or raise it up over and again, but in every event to turn it inside out and to mold its inner surfaces.'[80]

This is true not only of representations of human bodies. Architectural matter also becomes surface in this manner. Consider the crested waves which burst along the top of the altar balustrade in the church of the Certosa di S Martino in Naples (Fig 11), as if the spiritual forces enclosing the miracle of transubstantiation erupt over the symbol of the limit between the sacred and profane.[81] In the baroque, masses spill over, overflow, undo limits. For Wölfflin: 'The Gothic underlines the elements of construction, closed frames, airy filling; Baroque underlines matter: either the frame disappears totally, or else it remains, but, despite the rough sketch, it does not suffice to contain the mass that spills over and passes up above'.[82]

In the Chapel of S Ugo and S Anselmo (Fig 12) in the Neapolitan church of the Certosa of S Martino, the walls seethe like waves, surging forward through the main altar, compressing its entablature to form a crest, like flotsam, the pressure articulated in the cornices, the fractured architraves ruptured by the heads of cherubs, limits dissolved by the whisper of paradise. The decorative mass of the inlaid floor is barely contained either by its planar surface or by the grey marble band which frames it, but appears to press upwards through the inlaid decoration of walls, altar frontal, corbels, to the half-length sculptures of the two saints, leaning out above the ruptured segmental pediments of the doorways. Each art is prolonged, even into the next art, which exceeds the one before.[83] Here sculpture and architecture are stretched into each other. Beautifully cut grey marble is framed like a mysterious shadowy painting, and the floor sings like a tapestry carpet.[84] But it is not simply one art that is extended into another, but one unit within each: consider the prolongation of
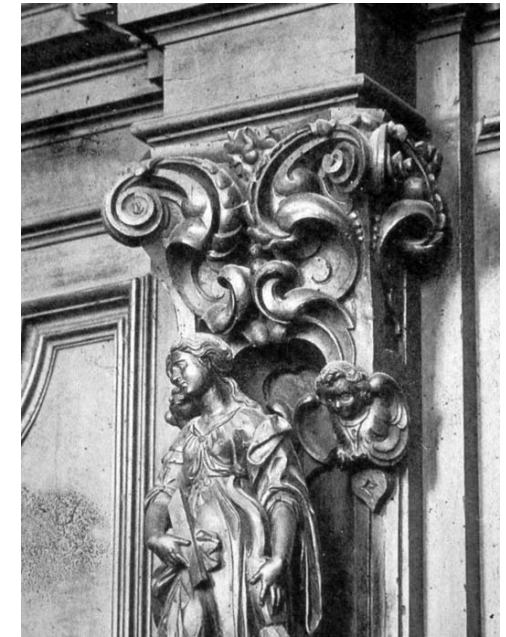
Figure 12 (opposite): Certosa of S. Martino, Chapel of SS. Ugo ed Anselmo, Naples.
Photograph by Massimo Velo.

Figure 14 (above left): S. Maria dei Miracoli, Naples. Holy water stoup.
Photograph by Helen Hills.

Figure 15 (above right): Gesù Nuovo, Naples. Capital in the sacristy.
Photograph by Massimo Velo.

picture frame, of doorway, of the strangely replicated cornice that shudders as it seeks to hold the whole together by twice embracing the space. This prolongation, this refusal to let go, and the pleasure of twisting and turning in a wayward distraction abound in details like the holy water stoup in S Maria dei Miracoli (Fig 13) or the capital in the sacristy of the Gesù Nuovo (Fig 14), as much as in overall effect.

Sculpture goes beyond itself by being achieved in architecture; and in turn, architecture discovers a frame in the façade; but the frame itself becomes detached from the inside, and establishes relations with the surroundings so as to realise architecture in city planning, as in the curve of S Carlino's façade.

Thus, suggests Deleuze, 'from one end of the chain to the other, the painter has become an urban designer.'[85] This assertion does not simply mean that one form overlaps into the other, that façades belong to the city and are the walls of its roof-less rooms; rather that one is a challenge to, and disturbs the limits of the other. We are left with the baroque fold articulating pleats of matter and folds in the soul; that is, baroque as 'a theoretical notion that *implies* – literally, that is, visually, in its folds – a mode of translation, an activity of metaphoring that resists the singular translation of one sign to another with the same meaning.'[86]

It is too easy to dismiss the notion of the baroque as unuseful because it is anachronistic; but, conversely, it is easy to see how the term readily lends itself to extension such that it becomes meaningless. In this paper I have sought to sketch some of its potential and possibilities outside the standard usages by art historians. The projects of Benjamin and Deleuze are often at odds with each other; and they are not reconciliable. But a baroque that is neither decadent, nor early modern, that neither periodises nor condemns in relation to that which went before may not only be conceivable, but might be redemptive.

NOTES

1. The term "Counter-Reformation", which has been taken up by historians in particular, is also problematic, not least in its implicit characterisation of several hundred years of history in terms of religious reaction. Within History of Art "baroque" has not suffered the same fate. Anthony Blunt's survey of the terrain made in 1973 remains broadly true today. Anthony Blunt, *Some Uses and Misuses of the Terms Baroque and Rococo as Applied to Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1973).

2. United condemnation of a single homogenous "style" never existed, of course. It should not be forgotten, for instance, that Borromini's architecture continued to receive favourable comments through the 1670s. See Joseph Connors, "Francesco Borromini. La vita (1599-1667)" in *Borromini e l'universo barocco*, ed. Richard Bösel & Christoph Frommel (Milan: Electa, 1999), 7-21. Terms deployed were informed by historical ideas, personal and geographical rivalries, and artistic and political disagreements. See Werner Oechslin, "Borromini e l'incompresa intelligenza della sua architettura. 350 anni di interpretazioni e ricerche" in *Borromini e l'universo barocco*, 107-17; Rodney Palmer, "The Illuminated Book in Naples, 1670-1734," PhD thesis, Sussex University, 1997; and "The Bizarre in Art," m/s (Naples, forthcoming). I am grateful to Dr Palmer for allowing me to read parts of his manuscript in advance of its publication.

3. Vasari's *Lives*, Serlio's *Libro Extraordinario* (1619), Filippo Titi's Roman guide books, *Studio di Pittura, Scoltura et Architettura nelle Chiese di Roma* (Rome, 1674 [1686, 1708, 1721]) & *Descrizione delle Pitture, Sculture, ed Architetture esposte al pubblico in Roma* (Rome, 1763); even Bernardo de Dominici's *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti napoletani* (Naples, 1742-45), amongst others, use the term to indicate novelty value in aesthetic creativity. Vasari refers to Michelangelo's 'bizarre breaks' in the Laurentian library staircase steps, made so that it would depart radically from common usage. See Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle relazioni del 1550 e 1568*, eds. P. Barocchi & GG Bertelli, Florence: Edizioni Scelte, 1957: 'fece tanto bizarre rotture di scaglioni e variò tanto da la commune usanza degli altri' ('he made bizarre disjunctures on the stairs departed radically from the common methods used by others'). For Serlio *bizzarria* broke the rules of the canonical orders and described nature's incursion into architecture. Thus Serlio credits a 'bizarre architect' with his eighteenth portal in his *Libro Extraordinario* which combines incompatible orders, anomalous elements, and a sense of dislocated time (a ruined novelty). See Sebastiano Serlio, *Tutte l'opere d'architettura, et prospetiva*, book 4 (Venice: 1619, reproduced by Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1964), ff 11v: 'Uno bizzarro architetto ritrovando fra le antichità.'. See also Palmer, "The Bizarre in Art," ch 6.

4. See Otto Kurz, "Barocco. Storia di un concetto" in *Barocco Europeo e Barocco Veneziano*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), 16.

5. For a discussion of other possible etymological derivations, including *barocchio*, a fraudulent usury, or swindle; *barocco*, a syllogism of logic, absurd reasoning (the etymology favoured by Benedetto Croce); and even from the name of Federico Barocci, a baroque painter; see Kurz, "Barocco. Storia di un concetto," 16-18, 19. It derives from mneumonics devised by late Scholastic logicians where "a" denotes a general and positive statement and "o" a partial and negative one (barbara, baroco, baralipton). For instance, 'all cats have tails, some animals have no tail, therefore some animals are not cats.' See Erwin Panofsky, *Three Essays on Style*, ed. I. Lavin (Cambridge & London: MIT Press, 1997), 19. For useful discussions of the term "baroque", see also Victor-Lucien Tapié, *Baroque et Classicisme* (Paris: Plon, 1957), trans. A. Ross Williamson as *The Age of Grandeur. Baroque and Classicism in Europe* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1960); Otto Kurz, "Barocco. Storia di una parola" in *Lettere italiane* 12 (1960): 414-32; and Blunt, Some Uses and Misuses.

6. Antoine-Joseph Pernety, *Dictionnaire Portatif de Peinture, Sculpture et Gravure, avec un Traité Pratique des Differentes Manières de Peindre* (Paris: Bauche, 1757), 24. Orig. wording: 'Baroque: qui n'est pas selon les règles des proportions, mais du caprice. Il se dit du goût & du dessein les figures de ce tableau sont *baroques*; la composition est dans un goût baroque, pour dire qu'elle n'est pas dans le bon gout.'

7. Pernety, *Dictionnaire Portatif*, 24. Orig. wording: 'Le Tintoret avoit toujours du singulier & de l'extraordinaire dans ses tableaux – il s'y trouve toujours quelque chose de baroque.'

8. Antoine Chrysostôme Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique: Architecture*, vol. 1 (Paris: Pancoucke, 1788), 210. Orig. wording: '[U]ne nuance du bizarre. Il en est, si on veut, le rafinement, ou, s'il étoit possibile de le dire, l'abus.'

9. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 210.

10. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 210, 299-300.

11. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 282. Orig. wording: 'une recherche affectée de formes extraordinaires, et dont le seul mérite consiste dans la nouveauté même qui en fait le vice.'

12. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 282-83.

13. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 283-84.

14. Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, 286.

15. See Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture*, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge & London: MIT Press, 1992), 22-23.

16. Francesco Milizia, *Dizionario delle Belle Arti del Disegno estratto in gran parte dalla Enciclopedia Metodico*, vol. 1 (Bassano: 1797), 90. Orig. wording: 'Barocco è il superlativo del bizzarro, l'eccesso del ridicolo. Borromini diede in delirj, ma Guarini, Pozzi, Marchione nella Sagrestia di S Pietro ec. in barocco.'

17. Kurz, "Barocco. Storia di un concetto," 23.

18. Francesco Milizia, *Le Vite de' Più Celebri Architetti d'ogni Nazione e d'ogni tempo precedute da un saggio sopra l'Architettura* (Rome: Paolo Giunchi Komarek, 1768), 347.

19. Leopoldo Cicognara, *Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia sino al secolo di Napoleone per servire di continuazione alle opere di Winckelmann e di D'Agincourt*, vol. 3 (Venice: Picotti, 1818), 24.

20. Cicognara, *Storia della Scultura*, 24.

21. Cicognara, *Storia della Scultura*, 14.

22. Alois Riegl devised the term of artistic "decadence" with specific reference to the art of the final period of the Roman Empire. Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline E. Jung (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 61-65.

23. Croce discusses the baroque in terms of 'un modo di perversione e bruttezza artistica', with 'il suo fondamento in un bisogno pratico'. Benedetto Croce, *Storia della Età barocca in Italia. Pensiero: Poesia e Letteratura Vita Morale* (Bari: Laterza, 1929), 20, 24. For his discussion of "decadenza", see also 41-51.

24. Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, trans. Douglas Ainslie (London: Peter Owen, 1953), 28. Orig. wording: 'Il barocco è questo giuoco e questa corsa allo stupore.'

25. Croce, *Aesthetic*, 22.

26. Croce, *Aesthetic*, 59.

27. Dominique Bouhours, *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* (Paris: 1687); Ital. ed. (Modena: 1735) cited in Croce, *Aesthetic*, 190.

28. Pascal, *Pensées sur l'éloquence et le style*, section 15, cited in Croce, *Aesthetic*, 196.

29. Jean Baptiste Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture* (Paris: Mariette, 1719), cited in Croce, *Aesthetic*, 196.

30. Du Bos, Réflexions critiques, esp. sections 1, 23, 26, 28, 33, 34, cited in Croce, *Aesthetic*, 197.

31. Croce, *Aesthetic*, 201. This resonates strikingly with Bernini's claim that 'l'ingegno e il disegno sono l'arte magica attraverso cui si arriva a ingannare la vista in modo da stupire'. Maurizio Fagiolo del'Arco, "Il fin della meraviglia" in *L'effimero barocco. Testi. Strutture della festa nella Roma del '600*, ed. Maurizio Fagiolo del'Arco & Silvia Carandini, vol. 2 (Rome: Bulzoni, 1978), 231.

32. Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism: A Study in the History of Taste* (1914. London: Constable, 1947).

33. Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, 24-25.

34. Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, 25.

35. Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, 26.

36. Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, 87.

37. Wilhelm Lübke, *Geschichte der Architektur von den Ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart* (Cologne: E.A. Seemann, 1858), 538.

38. For Burckhardt baroque architecture was Italian. Soon afterwards German scholars, such as Wilhelm Pinder (1912) and Georg Dehio (*Geschichte der deutschen Kunst*, 1926) produced histories of the baroque as a German style. See Kurz, "Barocco. Storia di un concetto," 29-30.

39. Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Munich: Bruchmann, 1915); Engl. ed. *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art* (New York: Dover, 1932). For Burckhardt Baroque's decadence was its lax morality. He characterised Baroque architecture as speaking 'the same tongue as the Renaissance, but in a dialect gone wild'; 'one forgets mere questions of style [in front of] the shocking degradation of the supernatural' in Bernini's Cornaro Chapel. Jacob Burckhardt, *Der Cicerone* (Basel: 1855).

40. Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock* (Munich: Ackerman, 1888), Engl. trans. Kathrin Simon as *Renaissance and Baroque* (London: Phaidon, 1964), 17.

41. Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, 77-78.

42. John Varriano, *Italian Baroque and Rococo Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

43. Giulio Carlo Argan, "La 'rettorica' e l'arte barocca" in *Retorica e barocco. Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Umanistici*, ed. Enrico Castelli (Rome: Bocca, 1955), 9-14; and "Rettorica e architettura" [1964] in *Immagine e persuasione. Saggi sul barocco*, ed. Bruno Contardi (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1986), 25-29.

44. Henri Focillon, *Vie des formes* (Paris: Quadrige & Presses Universitaires de France, 1934), Engl. trans. Charles Beecher Hogan & George Kubler, *The Life of Forms in Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942).

45. Tom Conley, "Translator's Foreword: A Plea for Leibniz" in Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Liebniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Athlone: London, 1993), ix.

46. Focillon, *Vie des formes*, 15.

47. Focillon, *Vie des formes*, 15.

48. Walter Benjamin, *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* (1928. Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1963), Engl. trans. John Osborne as *Origin of German Tragic Drama* (London: NLB, 1977).

49. For Benjamin the Christianity of the reformation period did not favour the development of capitalism, but became capitalism. Capitalism therefore became a religion (without dogma or theology, whose celebrations are permanent and incessant, and which is the first cult not to expatiate but to bestow guilt). The dramas of the seventeenth-century Protestant writers Benjamin studied in Origin are pervaded by gloomy intimations of death and disaster to which mourning is the appropriate response. See Howard Caygill, *Walter Benjamin: The Colour of Experience* (London & New York: Routledge, 1998), 56.

50. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 38.

51. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 41.

52. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 41.

53. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 41, 46. Elsewhere Benjamin speaks of how the 'characteristic expression' of a form is often particularly distinct in the 'laborious efforts of minor writers' (58).

54. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 34.

55. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 165.

56. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 166.

57. Benjamin quoted by Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *La raison baroque. De Baudelaide a Benjamin* (Paris: Galilée, 1984), Engl. trans. Patrick Camiller as *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity* (London: Sage, 1994), 46.

58. The violence of a sovereignty that asserts itself in states of emergency. In the face of such power, the total or totalizing world of beautiful syntheses breaks into fragments. 'It is the endless fragmentation of allegory as frozen portrait of horror, as enactment of an ultimate difference which displays a world of ruins and materially represents the dead and suffering body.' Buci-Glucksmann, *Baroque Reason*, 69.

59. Buci-Glucksmann, *Baroque Reason*, 44.

60. Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. & intro. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 263.

61. Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 257. 'We penetrate the mystery only to the degree that we recognise it in the everyday world, by virtue of a dialectical optic that perceives the everyday as impenetrable, the impenetrable as everyday.' Benjmin, "The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia" in *One-Way Street and Other Writings* (London: New Left Books, 1979), 237.

62. Benjamin cited in Buci-Glucksmann, *Baroque Reason*, 70.

63. Caygill, "The Significance of Allegory in the *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels*" in *1642: Literature and Power in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Francis Barker, Jay Bernstein, John Coombes, et al. (Colchester: University of Essex, 1981), 216-17.

64. Caygill, "The Significance of Allegory," 217.

65. Caygill, *Walter Benjamin*, 59.

66. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 185.

67. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 124. A reader for *Fabrications* has remarked how this formulation presents the seventeenth-century "marvelous".

68. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 33.

69. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 33.

70. Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 44.

71. Mieke Bal, "Ecstatic Aesthetics" in *Compelling Visuality: The Work of Art In and Out of History*, ed. Claire Farago & Robert Zwijnenberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 5. Thus a Baroque line would move exactly according to the fold, and that would bring together architects, painters, musicians, poets, and philosophers. Deleuze acknowledges that the concept of the fold might be too broad: 'What period and what style would fail to recognise the fold as a trait of painting and of sculpture?' And: 'Should we wish to maintain the working relation of the baroque and the fold, we shall ... have to show that the fold remains limited in the other cases, and that in the Baroque it knows an unlimited freedom whose conditions can be determined. Folds seem to be rid of their supports ...' Deleuze, *The Fold*, 34.

72. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 3.

73. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 3.

74. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 28.

75. Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, 60.

76. See Anthony Vidler, "Skin and Bones: Folded Forms from Leibniz to Lynn" in *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge & London: MIT Press, 2000), 219-34.

77. For Leibniz the soul's nature was made in such a way from the outset that it would represent in succession changes in matter. G. W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Texts*, trans. & ed. R. S. Woolhouse & Richard Francks (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 198-204. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 121-122. For Benjamin ecstasies occluded the world, rather than figured the world anew: 'For the dominant spiritual disposition, however eccentrically it might elevate acts of ecstasy, did not so much transfigure the world in them as cast a cloudy sky over its surface.' Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, 79.

78. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 122.

79. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 122.

80. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 122.

81. For the high altar balustrade, see Teodore Fittipaldi, "Puntualizzazione sulla prima attività dello scultore Giusppe Sanmartino a Napoli," *Arte Cristiana* (1973), 71; Raffaello Causa, *L'Arte nella Certosa di San Martino a Napoli* (Naples: Di Mauro, 1973), 83-84; Vincenzo Rizzo, "Niccolòn Tagliacozzi Canale o il Trionfo dell'ornato nel Settecento napoletano" in *Settecento Napoletano: Documenti*, ed. F Strazzullo (Naples: Liguori, 1982), 139-40.

82. Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, 73, ch. 3.

83. This idea derives from Wölfflin, who articulates it most sharply in *Renaissance and Baroque*, 29-37, and is taken up again by Deleuze, *The Fold*, 123.

84. The marble of the rectangular panels on either side of the free-standing *verde antico* altar columns is veined and book-matched as a framed tableau, a *pittura* showing the *disegno* of God, just as the altar-painting shows the *disegno* of man.

85. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 123.

86. Bal, "Ecstatic Aesthetics," 12.