15. | Rain making





2004, Morocco, France, 6 min 07, SD, 4/3, color, stereo.
Courtesy of the artist and Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris.
Ed. of 5 + 2 A.P.

Collection of N.B.K. Video-Forum, Berlin

This work was part of Gwangju Biennale - A drop of water, a grain of dust, Gwangju, 2004.

Sur fond de chant et de prière, l'image d'un même minaret, émergeant parmi des toits terrasses équipées de paraboles, se répète dans un montage saccadé et rapide. Derrière lui des nuages passent en accéléré, et d'autres, peu à peu, enveloppent en surimpression le bâtiment sacré.
Les Arabes Pré-Islamiques pensaient que la pluie tombait du fait du mouvement des étoiles.

Dans le folklore des temps postérieurs le pouvoir de faire descendre la pluie était conféré à certain « wali », une ouverture dans la coupole de sa tombe symbolisait d'ailleurs ce pouvoir. Son prestige était si grand parmi le peuple que chacun souhaitait avoir dans sa généalogie un ancêtre « faiseur de pluie ». L'Islam dispose d'une prière collective de seize minutes destinée à faire tomber la pluie.
Car pour le croyant, la pluie représente la bénédiction que Dieu, qui, en sa miséricorde suprême, l'accorde ou la refuse aux hommes. Dans la mesure où elle commande la régénérescence du règne végétal, elle est don de Dieu par excellence. Contre toute tentation critique, on enseigne que le Hadith rapportant comment Dieu exauçât les vœux de pluie attire l'attention des hommes pieux sur le fait que quelque soit la cause directe d'un phénomène naturel comme la pluie,

Against a background of chants and prayers, the image of a minaret, emerging from amongst satellite-clad roof terraces, is repeated in a swift staccato montage. Accelerated clouds cross the sky behind it, and gradually envelop and overlap the sacred building. Pre-Islamic Arabs thought that rainfall came from the movement of stars.

In the folklore of subsequent times, the power to be able to make rain fall was conferred to a certain "wali", an opening in the dome of his tomb would symbolise this power. He had such prestige amongst the people that everyone hoped to have at least one "rain maker" ancestor in their family line. Islam has a sixteen minute long collective prayer intended to make rain fall.
As, for the believer, rain represents God's blessing, which he grants or refuses to men in his supreme mercy. Since rain controls the regeneration of the plant kingdom, it is an archetypal gift of God.
Against any critical temptation, the teaching of the Hadith, reporting how God fulfilled the rain's wishes, draws pious men's attention to the fact that whatever the direct cause of a natural phenomenon like the rain, it is necessarily and finally God who commands everything.

c'est nécessairement, et finalement, Dieu qui dispose de toutes choses.

Pourtant, en 1988, le ministère des affaires religieuses du Bengladesh fit annuler les prières de masse pour appeler la pluie, après des averses torrentielles qui tuèrent près de cent personnes.

Faiseurs de pluie postule une réflexion critique sur la compréhension finaliste des phénomènes, et sur la relation, et la résistance, du fidèle à la science, dans lesquelles s'entrelacent des considérations économiques et politiques. Croire que la pluie puisse dépendre de la volonté divine, n'est-ce pas se réfugier dans cet « asile de l'ignorance » que décrivait Spinoza ? Mais ce refuge n'est-il pas précisément celui dans lequel une théocratie entend maintenir les fidèles ? Spinoza dit encore que pour les interprètes de Dieu, « détruire l'ignorance, c'est détruire (…) leur unique moyen de sauvegarder leur autorité »*. Utiliser la météorologie moderne pour en appeler ensuite à une sollicitant la pluie, afin d'asseoir à coup sûr la légitimité d'un pouvoir, ou justifier de difficultés économiques, ressort d'une stratégie politique d'un cynisme absolu.

Marie Deparis, Paris 2007.

*Spinoza- Appendice de l' Ethique Livre I, prop. XXXVI

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And yet, in 1988, the ministry of religious affairs in Bangladesh revoked mass rain prayers after torrential rain showers killed almost a hundred people.

Rain making requires critical reflection on the fatalistic understanding of phenomena, and on the relationship and the resistance of the believer to science, intertwined with which are economic and political considerations. Isn't believing that rain depends on divine will a way of taking refuge in the "asylum of ignorance" described by Spinoza? But then isn't this refuge exactly what a theocrat intends to keep believers? Spinoza also said that for God's interpreters "to destroy ignorance, is to destroy (...) their only way of keeping their authority*". Using modern meteorology to then appeal to someone to solicit rain, in order to establish the legitimacy of power, or to justify economic difficulties, comes from a political strategy of absolute cynicism.

Marie Deparis, Paris 2007.

Translation: Caroline Rossiter.

*Spinoza- Appendix of Ethics Book I, prop. XXXVI

" Rain making requires critical reflection on the fatalistic understanding of phenomena, and on the relationship and the resistance of the believer to science, intertwined with which are economic and political considerations. "

Marie Deparis, 2007

exhibitions:

2018

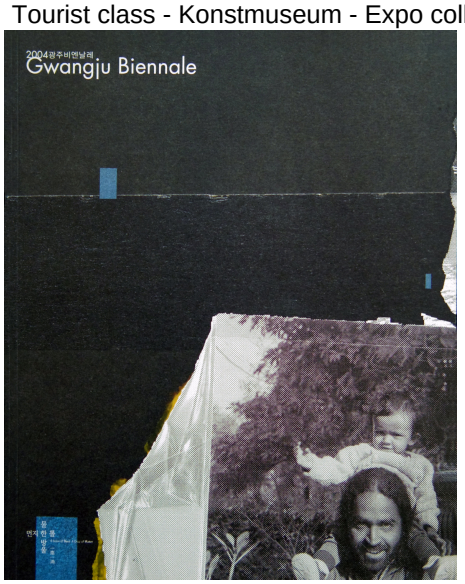
This is My Body - Art Bärtschi & Cie - Solo show

2006

Courants alternatifs - Le Parvis, Ibos & CAPC musée d'art contemporain - Expo collective

2005

Tourist class - Konstmuseum - Expo collective



Gwangju Biennale, 2004

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Rain making

Against a background of chants and prayers, the image of a minaret, emerging from amongst satellite-clad roof terraces, is repeated in a swift staccato montage. Accelerated clouds cross the sky behind it, and gradually envelop and overlap the sacred building. Pre-Islamic Arabs thought that rainfall came from the movement of stars.


God controls everything. If we make a mistake,
he stops the rain so we have to supplicate,
kneel and seek his help.
Dieu contrôle tout. Si nous commettons une
faute, il arrête la pluie, et nous devons
implorer son aide à genoux.


Rain making
Faiseurs de pluie

Rain making

Rain making requires critical reflection on the fatalistic understanding of phenomena, and on the relationship and the resistance of the believer to science, intertwined with which are economic and political considerations.

Rain making

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