

Avelino Sala's imaginary nomad at the time of dislocation...

Fernando Castro Flórez.

"The immense zone –writes Lyotard—whispers thousands of muted messages. Including its violence, wars, insurrections, mutinies, ecological disasters, famines, genocides, assassinations, are disseminated like spectacles, with the following reference: Does he realize? That is not right, it demands new regulations, new forms of community must be invented, and it will happen. Despairs are understood as disorders that must be corrected, never as signs of an absence without remedy"¹.

There is something pathetic about thought. In their treatise on nomadology, Deleuze and Guattari state two pathetic texts as key figures of thought: "The text of Artaud, in his letters to Jacques Riviere, explains that thought is exercised from a *central decay*, that can only live from its own impossibility to create a form, emphasizing only traits of expression in a material, peripherally developed, at a mid point of outwardness, in function of non-universal singularities, of circumstances that are unable to be internalized. And, also Kleist's text, "Concerning the progressive elaboration of thought when speaking": Kleist denounces in himself the central internalness of the concept as a means of control, control of each word, of the language, but also control of affections, of circumstances and even of chance. He is opposed by a thought as both process and development, a curious anti-platonic dialogue, an anti-dialogue between the brother and sister, where one speaks before knowing and the other takes over before understanding: it is the thought of *Gemüt*, says Kleist, which proceeds as a war machine should, or as a body charged with electricity, with pure intensity"². As Chatwin pointed out in *desperate times*, the nomad alternative was an irresistible temptation. Avelino Sala points out that his images have a "transversal root" that he associates with the idea of *rhizome*³, of Deleuze and Guattari, his sculptures moving between different architectonic environments reveal an *imaginary nomad* when a desire to imbue the work with a *contra-monumentality*. "Memory –writes Avelino Sala– at the same time, photographic work that also functions under the premise that displacement throughout the city and the contemporary social scene, and the idea of the personal voyage that is life, forming a work that we could call the nomad identity". *Nomad art* is defined, according to Deleuze and Guattari, by the closeness of vision and the háptic space that respectively oppose the distant vision and the optic space of the striated territory. In his movements, the nomad has to follow the tracks, know which are his, if he recognizes them, to avoid going in circles: in the desert the paths are constantly changing direction. But the eyes have a tactile quality, "it is an animality that one cannot see without touching it spiritually, without the spirit yielding a finger, even through the eye"⁴. The rebellion of the material forces the artist into nomadism. The journeys are not differentiated by the objective quality of the places, or by measurable amount of movement, but rather by *mode of spacialization*, by means of the way one relates to *places*.

The maps of the pathways, as Freud himself points out, are essential for psychic activity, using them the nature of the itinerary is expressed and that of the road traveled, in the last instance in the libido, there are no metamorphoses but only pathways. Deleuze remembered how the Australian aborigines join together nomadic itineraries and journeys in dreams that together form a framework of the distance covered, located in an immense area in space and time that one must read like a map. At the limit, the imaginary is a virtual image that sticks to the real object, and inversely, to construct a crystal of the unconscious. It is a process of exchanges in which the real landscape is altered, in the case of Avelino Sala by the introduction of his disturbing sculptures of adhesive cellophane tape, and frees a possible image, produces a short circuit in the expected sequence. It's wise to keep in mind that a cartographic conception of the subconscious processes and, therefore, of the psychoanalysis, is very different from the archaeological conception. This deeply links the unconscious to memory, tending towards the monumental or commemorative. That is, to the domain of objects or persons that can identify or guarantee its authenticity. The development is, in this case, vertical and descending; where, on the contrary, the maps are superimposed allowing a degree of touch ups that exceed truth as localization at the origin: "from one map to another, we are not dealing with a search for the origin, but rather an evaluation of the *movements*. Each map is a distribution of dead-end streets, gaps, thresholds and enclosures that go from the bottom to the top. It is not just an inversion of the direction, but rather a difference in nature: the unconscious no longer has to do with persons or objects, but rather with pathways and occurrences; it no longer is unconscious commemoration but rather a mobilization, whose objectives, more

¹ Jean-Francois Lyotard: "Zona" in *Post-modern morality*, Ed. Tecnos, Madrid, 1996, p. 29.

² Jean-Francois Lyotard: "Zona" in *Post-modern morality*, Ed. Tecnos, Madrid, 1996, p. 29.

³ "Make the map and not trace one. The orchid does not reproduce a tracing of the wasp; it makes a map of the wasp in the Herat of the rhizome. If the map is different from the tracing, it is precisely because it is totally orientated toward the experimentation that acts upon the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself, it constructs it. It contributes to the connection of the fields, to the unblocking of bodies without organs, and to the maximum aperture in a plan of consistency. It forms part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions. It is dismountable, alterable, and susceptible to constant modifications. It can be broken, altered, adapted to different schemes, and initiated by an individual, a group, or a social contingent. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived as a work of art, drafted as a political action, or as an act of meditation" (Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari: *Mil Mesetas. Capitalismo y esquizofrenia*, Ed. Pre-Textos, Valencia, 1988, p. 18).

⁴ Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari: *Mil Mesetas. Capitalismo y esquizofrenia*, Ed. Pre-Textos, Valencia, 1988, p. 500.

than remaining buried under ground, take flight"⁵. The lightness of the materials used by Avelino Sala contrast with the architectonic environments in which he places the "statues", like those scattered dogs at different levels of a building that has been *overtaken* by ivy, returned to a rare state of "naturalness". The *photographic derivation* of this lucid creator takes into account the expanded sculptural field that Rosalind E. Krauss⁶ spoke of, without remaining anchored in the obsessive nominalism of minimal orthodoxy, thus creating a micro-narrative where the "symbolic burden" of the settings in which the *intervention*⁷ occurs. Virilio has lucidly affirmed that, nowadays, the interest in landscapes takes more into consideration the landscape of events and not necessarily the helpful case of the "museal" occurrence of *land art*. The dramaturgy of the landscape must be reinvented, a landscape scenography with actors and not simply with spectators"⁸. Avelino Sala, most certainly, *builds that dramaturgy*, without baroque extravagance, in a contained way, making his transparent characters introduce, wherever they may "pose", an enormous *strangeness*.

There is not doubt that one of the most characteristic trends of the beginning of the last century is the teenage aesthetic or *new puerility*⁹ that attempts to mix the primitive that criticizes the contemporary and eroticism that is inclined towards the perverse. "On the one hand, the nostalgic, no longer apocalyptic, even though Warhol would have thought so. On the other, the new puerility expresses more often and with greater urgency, how the artifice is the key condition in the dominant constructs of all sexual or social identity"¹⁰. Today there is a peculiar fascination for that which is filthy and abject, those remains and the hangover that form part of so-called *slack art*. Let's remember that the *slackers* are those students who spent weekends rooming around the large cities, in between boredom, vertiginous drunkenness or the mimicry of musical groups that are made up of fetishes or totemic figures: given in to vandalism, prepared for violence (that desire to beat or, even, to be beaten), with their backpacks full of prejudices, defining an anarchy that never reaches a full boil. But together with the archaeology of waste, in that new calling together of "rag pickers", with a proliferation of the grotesque (in an ornamental sense) appear the experts in *marketing stupidity*, those that put on the infantilism of transcendentalism, showing solidarity with those who have turned cybernetics into the promised land: a monument to naïf thought sets the stage. Avelino Sala distances himself from that banal aesthetic violence of thought, in the same way that he is opposed to stylistic approaches of ornamental tendency: "This artistic production –he says in a recent text– fulfils, to a certain degree, an *obligatory* exercise of reacting to certain artistic practices that are inclined towards the decorative, giving importance to a function of art that is based more on being a reflection of those realities, present as well as past, that man wants to forget"¹¹. We know there is no reason to swing back and forth, when the worst of nightmares come to pass on the daily newscast. Catastrophes and terrorist attacks end up repeating themselves as if they were a *video-loop* or the promoting of a typical cathartic film. It's really the only relief we have is that of a new way of drugging our senses: the horrific has to be repeated several times or its scale increased so that the pain ends up becoming "familiar". The water table level of the conscience is at a drought stage, the traditional formula of when it rains, it pours, should be replaced by that horrible image of the mined fields of Afghanistan where the so-called "humanitarian aid" fell. Our desire is to avoid, at all costs, that collateral victims near our paradisiacal territory, while the limit of bellicose visibility is sufficiently ethnicized or religiously satanized, the situation will be bearable, even though it obliges us to unfold a camouflage of compassion. Never has there been an era willing to withstand everything and, at the same time, find everything so intolerable. "People that have to tolerate the inadmissible every day always have this word on their lips every time they have to give their opinion about any problem. Only when someone dares to come up with a definition do they realize that the intolerable in the end is only "human bodies being tortured or broken into pieces", or in other words, everything else can be withstood"¹². There will always be someone who asks what relationship can there be between our *mined world* that is dominated by real terror and exorcisms of the ghostly, with *aesthetic handiwork* and the shameful culture of the *souvenir*. If, on the one hand, it is true that tons of pseudo-decorative paint, *pompier* installations, "politically correct" photographs and (post) performances in the "traumatic" style, reveal almost exclusively what Worringer would call *spiritual agoraphobia* (an abstraction that is incapable of facing that which is Real), I also believe that there is no lack of examples of artistic approaches that try to be at a level (or better situated in the abyss) of a time of destitution. I am referring to, without specifying any particular work, to a plastic and theoretical attitude, like that of Avelino Sala, that part of the *contemporary dislocation* in order to propose *other cartographies*, testimonials or reports that do not necessarily have to be transformed into "norms", but rather they are

⁵ Gilles Deleuze. *Crítica y clínica*, Ed. Anagrama, Barcelona, 1996, p. 92.

⁶ Cfr. Rosalind E. Krauss: "La escultura en el campo expandido" en *La originalidad de la Vanguardia y otros mitos modernos*, Ed. Alianza, Madrid, 1996, pp. 289-303.

⁷ "The project is centered on all that relates to photographic research linked with certain forms of tri-dimensionality that are like sculptures in the expanded field, fluctuating between architecture and landscape, where other types of two dimensional supports are generated. An integration process of these sculpture like forms is undertaken that, with great symbolic importance, make the relationship between the works and their media generate different fields that are close to a certain poetic visual, within the framework of the ideology of that which is new in post-modern culture, with a narrative use of the photographic medium after a construct that proceeds the scene" (Avelino Sala: text on *Inquietud I* (2002) in *Generación 2003*, Premios y Becas de Arte Caja Madrid, La Casa Encendida, Madrid, 2003, p. 32.

⁸ Paul Virilio: *El cibermundo. La política de lo peor*, Ed. Cátedra, Madrid, 1997, p. 108.

⁹ Cfr. Tania Ragasol: "Arte adolescente" en *Poliéster. Toys Juguetes*, n° 21, México, invierno 1997-1998, p. 6.

¹⁰ Brandon Taylor: *Arte Hoy*, Ed. Akal, Madrid, 2000, p. 151.

¹¹ Avelino Sala: text on *Inquietud I* (2002) en *Generación 2003*, Premios y Becas de Arte Caja Madrid, La Casa Encendida, Madrid, 2003, p. 32.

¹² Giorgio Agamben: *Medios sin fin. Notas sobre la política*, Ed. Pre-textos, Valencia, 2000, p. 104.

pertinent and have contextual adjustments, that is, they put us on *the front line of the conflict*¹³. We know that modern democratic society wants, at all costs, to erase from its horizon the reality of misfortune, death and violence, trying to integrate in a unique system the differences and resistances. “In the name of globalization and economic success, it tried to abolish the idea of social conflict. In the same way, it tends to criminalize the revolutions and de-heroize war in order to substitute ethics for politics, and the judicial sanction for historic wisdom. Thus the age of confrontation turned into the age of avoidance, and from the cult of glory to the revaluation of cowards”¹⁴. We have reached a surprising *stasis* (oblivious, of course, to what is going on in our world, even the fissures that are closer to us), in a type of singular *violence of the calm* that gives way, undoubtedly, to a cult of small differences, the valuing of what is empty and stupid. The violent reality that we do not want to face takes us from a post-modern imaginary to a camouflage of impotence in place of complicity with the negative¹⁵.

The dogs, the babies or the man of adhesive cellophane tape that Avelino Sala constructs, introduce into the disjointed everydayness the *transparency* as well as the *obstacle*, that allude – from its strong sensation of silence, to the traumatic, they are a form of the Real that do not resort to sublimation. Avelino Sala’s interest in generating unrest is apparent, reflecting, without rhetoric nor literalism, human behavior at a moment of radical crisis, with an explicit intention to “question from a critical stance, the social, geographic, political context in which we find ourselves”¹⁶. Surely it must be necessary not to fall into total amnesia, a type of *ecology of images*¹⁷, in an attempt to establish a line of resistance (another trench) to current situations where voyeurism is not needed. “There are situations and places that escape exhortation of the profound, that conform to being on the surface and, thus, to be reservoirs of a global nature, of the qualitative. The everydayness and its “presentism” are good examples. The affective ambiance that characterizes it, is based on the appearance, in a life to be seen. In this sense, “voyeurism”, in the best and the worst of cases, is a good vector of sociality. The everyday or commonplace does not exclude emotion or affection, and does not isolate them in the sphere of the private. It dramatizes them, making them an *ethic of the aesthetic*”¹⁸. While, on the one hand, Avelino Sala escapes from the aesthetic of velocity it generates, in terms of Virilio, *picnolepsia*, without falling into a kind of domiciliary inertia¹⁹. On the other hand, his sculptures, powerfully illuminated on those strange pedestals, communicate a *photographic displacement*, alluding to a *conspirative imaginary* or, rather, drifting through the ruin of the present. The decisive question is the *demolition*, you know, as Berger narrates, even the street dogs: “*Humare*, King, the Latin word for *inter (bury)*, is no longer used. The new word is to demolish. Demolish, demolition, without a trace. Demolish so that nothing can be seen”²⁰. The characters of Avelino Sala watch over *the spaces of absence*: next to the trash cans in a ruinous architecture, supported on a heap of tires in a trash bin, in an extreme imagine disseminated throughout the cemetery; they engage in dialogue with the *remains*, without excluding human remains, hidden in an obscure of the imaginary, that make the *post-human* imposes a logic of the anti-monumental²¹.

¹³ “Today we find particularly abstract and Eurocentric to the point of saturation all that which interested us forty years ago, at the end of the western vanguards and its last moments: above all its highly elaborated strategies of theory and criticism in the extreme self-consciousness of literary and musical forms. Presently we confide more in the reports that come from the first line battle: there where the battle between local tyrants and the idealists opposition, the hybrid combinations of realism and fantasy, the archeological and cartographic descriptions, all investigations of mixed forms in which experiences of exiles without end are described (essays, videos and films, photographs, memoirs, stories, and aphorisms)” (Edward W. Said: *Cultura e imperialismo*, Ed. Anagrama, Barcelona, 1996, p. 507).

¹⁴ Elisabeth Roudinesco: *¿Por qué el psicoanálisis?*, Ed. Paidós, Barcelona, 2000, p. 17.

¹⁵ “Just like we rummage within ourselves both within and outside of modern and post-modern dilemmas regarding appearance, representation, “appropriation” and “false knowledge”, we are as much in as against that which is real”. Modernity not only fell in a great abyss called problems of representation. The modern has tried to come to terms with the modernity of the modern world and with modernization in general, and that which implies, such as the utopic possibility (as well as anti-utopic hopes). [...] We take events (on the streets of New York, on the streets of Managua, on the streets of Soweto); seriously enough, but often we refuse their entry into the sacred spaces of art. [...] The paintings of the white patrol are as real for that which occurs around us as is the latest car model, post-modern architecture [...]. These miserable events are more “real” than ever because we find ourselves in a framework of information that in spite of censure brings us horrific tales of violent actions against individuals by self-constituted authorities with prerogatives to decree such mandates. This is the real face of the modern world (Leon Golub as quoted by Juan Carlos Pérez Gaudi: *El cuerpo en venta. Relación entre arte y publicidad*, Ed. Cátedra, Madrid, 2000, p. 81).

¹⁶ Avelino Sala: text unpublished text on *Inquietudes/Restlessness*, 2003.

¹⁷ “Grief over a lost world in which the ecology of substances offers a generally weak idea, because the loss of terrestrial distances and *concrete appearances* will make an ECOLOGY OF IMAGES necessary if we seek to flee from madness and delirium and fight against the loss of reality”. (Paul Virilio: “El crepúsculo de los lugares” in *El desierto*, Fundación “la Caixa”, Barcelona, 2001, p. 55).

¹⁸ Michel Maffesoli: *El instante eterno. El retorno de lo trágico en las sociedades postmodernas*, Ed. Paidós, Buenos Aires, 2001, p. 127.

¹⁹ “The era of intense time is no longer that of the medium of physical transport. As opposed to the concept of *extensive time* of the past, today we function in an exclusive era of telecommunications media; put another way: that of not moving from one place and of domestic inertia” (Paul Virilio: “El último vehículo” in *La inercia polar*, Ed. Trama, Madrid, 1999, p. 40).

²⁰ John Berger: *King. Una historia de la calle*, Ed. Alfaguara, p. 204.

²¹ Mario Perniola has underscored the link between the aesthetic of the *Posthuman*, which transcends the barriers that separate art from reality, and the rest as something that does not respond to the current processes of normalization and standardization in society “ [...] The remainder of art would be that where artistic experience resists and is opposed to

Avelino Sala is aware that there are no rules in art; his *hybrid* approach allows him to break away from rigid plastic disciplines, maintaining his preoccupation with *man* or, to be more precise, with the *processes of subjectivization*. For this artist “the ego” is not something given, on the contrary, it is something that is narrated from complexity, a displacement from a constant sense or awareness, like the movement around the territory of the nomad. The nomad’s habitat has an infinite patience (converting a pause into a process) and is conceived in terms of the pathway that constantly takes them from one place to another. Compared to the striated space of the sedentary (walls, boundaries, and roads), the space of the nomad is smooth; “it is only marked by “lines” that are erased and that move as they move”²². Avelino Sala does not reach, like Chatwin, in *Los trazos de la canción*, a vision of a totemic geography²³, but rather his groups of dogs or babies are *allegories of a time where (once again) the desert expands*²⁴, constructions *inscribed in polemic spaces*, like those adhesive cellophane tape dogs that he places next to the tomb of his father²⁵. What forms of criticism – Benjamin Buchloh asks- can arise from sculpture or the intervention in public spaces, giving a voice to transgression and to opposition and to dissent, when the collective experience has been lost?²⁶. Most certainly, that question cannot paralyze, in the way of Medusa, the artist, but rather it must spur his imagination, bringing him to think about our *anxieties*, from the certainty of our universe that is, to use a Freudian term, *sinister*²⁷. Avelino Sala takes his sculptures to marginal zones, but he also takes them to commercial areas (McDonald’s or El Corte Inglés) or recreational areas such as the beach that end up being equivalent to municipal garbage dumps, the *zone* that is removed from *poetics of melancholy*²⁸.

What we derive from the work of Avelino Sala is from the enigma of the remains, without losing sight of *contemporary dislocation*, in that moment in which the abstraction reveals the agoraphobia or, in other words, the disunion and the anxiety²⁹. Avelino Sala places on a large pile of broken glass a red neon light with the word ANXIETY, placing anxiety in a space where it logically cannot live.

Let’s remember the existential self-comprehension rising out of an allegory of anxiety in the thought of Martin Heidegger, in the summer semester of 1925 in Marburgo, that made reference to a fable by Higinio that may be worthwhile recovering in relation to the radical work of Avelino Sala: “The fable transforms anxiety into an allegorical figure and tells us that, on a certain occasion, when crossing a river, she came across some sandy clay and took a piece and give it shape and form. While reflecting on what it was that

homogenization, to conformity, and to the processes of the production of massive consumption, presently existing in contemporary society, and more in general to the tendencies to reduce the magnitude and the dignity of art. Nevertheless, this orientation is not, in absolute terms, directed at the rehabilitation of the work we understand as a *monument*. In this notion of *rest*, there is a position which can be considered anti-monumental and anti-classical” (Mario Perniola: *El arte y su sombra*, Ed. Cátedra, Madrid, 2002, p. 99).

²² Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari: “Tratado de nomadología: la máquina de guerra” en *Mil Mesetas. Capitalismo y esquizofrenia*, Ed. Pre-textos, Valencia, 1988, p. 385.

²³ As if citing from the *Metamorphosis* of Ovid, Chatwin narrates with that which he knew of the Trazos de la Canción, and it occurred to him to think that perhaps all classical mythology represented the vestiges of a gigantic *map of songs*: “that all the comings and goings of gods and goddesses, the caves and sacred springs, the sphynxes and quarrels, and all the men and women that once were transformed into nightingales or crows, in echo or narcissi, in rocks or stars... all of them could be interpreted in terms of a totemic geography” (Bruce Chatwin: *Los trazos de la canción*, Ed. Península, Barcelona, 2000, p. 142).

²⁴ “The war machine was the nomad invention, given that in its essence it is the constituent element of smooth space, of the occupation of that space, of displacement within that space, and of the corresponding composition of men: this is its only and true and positive object (*nomos*). Making the desert and steppe grow, not to depopulate them, but quite the opposite” (Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari: “Tratado de nomadología: la máquina de guerra” en *Mil Mesetas. Capitalismo y esquizofrenia*, Ed. Pre-textos, Valencia, 1988, p. 417). “Any nomadic tribe is an embryonic military machine whose impulse consists in combating other nomads or, if not, in attacking or threatening the city” (Bruce Chatwin: *Los trazos de la canción*, Ed. Península, Barcelona, 2000, p. 245).

²⁵ “The works of cellophane tape integrated in space, *polemic spaces*, politically incorrect, related to current topics, debatable. Photographs of pieces in crowded spaces with an extreme symbolic strength, for example, in the commentary, where my father’s **tomb** is, one can read Avelino Sala, bringing to life a game based on the experience of the past, on memory, remembrances, painful at times and producing that double reading, they are the Doberman watch dogs of dreams and premonitions of the future? Do they represent a threat or security? (Avelino Sala: unpublished text on *Inquietudes/Restlessness*, 2003).

²⁶ Cfr. Benjamin Buchloh: “Ripensare la scultura. Il pubblico e la povertà dell’esperienza” en *Flash Art*, n° 202, Milán, Marzo 1997, p. 63.

²⁷ The familiar, the comfortable, but hidden and disguised, the strange that is homely or, to be more precise, the *inhospitable*, form part of the *sinister*, an ambivalent reality that also relates to duality (something that is frequent in the work of Avelino Sala that has a bit of “speculation”) and with the obsessive idea that to be left without eyes, a terrible motif in childish anguish. “The sinister would not be anything new, instead it would be something that was always familiar to physis life and that only became strange due to the process of its repression” (Sigmund Freud. “Lo siniestro” preceded by E.T.A. Hoffman: *El hombre de arena*, Ed. José J. de Olañeta, Barcelona, 1979, p. 28).

²⁸ Cfr. Fernando Castro Flórez. *Nostalgias del trapero y otros textos contra la cultura del espectáculo*, Ed. Regional Extremeña, Badajoz, 2002.

²⁹ “Abstract tradition does not in any way presuppose the existence of that man who feels one with the world. It is characterized by its sense of disunion, for the intranquility that the phenomena of a changing nature cause him and by the desire to redeem himself by means of a rigorous –or “crystalline”, in the words of Worringer- vision of a space governed by laws, the impulse to “translate that which is changing and that which is contingent in necessary and absolute terms and values [...] given that such abstract forms, liberated from all that is finite and decorative, are the only, the most elevated in which a man can seek repose and forget the confused image of the world” (Dore Ashton: *Una fábula del arte moderno*, Ed. Fondo de Cultura Económica-Turner, Madrid, 2001, p. 171).

she had shaped, Jupiter arrives. Anxiety asks him to give spirit to the clay image and Jupiter did so immediately. She wanted to give the figure her name but Jupiter forbade it and insisted that the figure be named after him. While both of them are discussing this, Tellus arises, the Earth, and demands that her name be used being that she had given a piece of her body. It is decided that Saturn be appointed arbiter, and he justly renders his verdict: "You, Jupiter, should recover the soul after death, being that you who gave it a soul, you Tellus, given that you have provided the body, you should reclaim the body once again. But, Anxiety, nevertheless, given that it was she who first envisioned this image, should embrace it while it's alive. But when it comes to the actual discussion about the name, he should be called *homo*, because he was made of *humus*"³⁰. The characters of Avelino Sala do not reference the earthly but the realm of artifice, made of cellophane tape, the material that we use to adhere things and to join pieces together, skin, and at the same time, the entire body, a *mold of nothing*. Dogs, children and men, identical to his "seminal" figures, but absolutely different, fragile and mysterious, objects in which anxiety is based or reflected that anxiety which wanted to name *man*. The statues that Avelino Sala introduces in the *expanded territory* offer allegories without falling into the realm of the melodramatic to disaster: "The photographs – writes this Asturian creator- intend to achieve the objective of being a detonator of human conscience, seating itself in those spaces of our mind where the senses are annulled by a saturation and bombardment of information, especially in these times of our inability to reflect. Through these transparent representations of dogs utilized by the Nazi regime –symbolizing anxiety, repression, the visible-invisible threat, the intent in creating these photos responds to the possibility of provoking, searching out a reaction from the human genre in our comfortable and bourgeois lifestyle and supposedly normal within the contemporary social context"³¹.

³⁰ Hans Blumenberg: *La inquietud que atraviesa el río. Un ensayo sobre la metáfora*, Ed. Península, Barcelona, 1992, pp. 165-166.

³¹ Avelino Sala: text on *Inquietud I* (2002) en *Generación 2003*, Premios y Becas de Arte Caja Madrid, La Casa Encendida, 2003, p. 32.

Among other terrible experiences, the demolition of the New York skyline seems to have obliged us to enter the *crypt*. There is no journey that is not susceptible to becoming a projectile, there is no safe refuge. It is curious that Perniola has defined radical contemporary art beyond the situationist experience or of conceptualism, as in a *crypt*³².

The *cryptic compositions* of Avelino Sala are *heterotopias*, spaces with figures that function in a time of exception and crisis, which demonstrate the power to juxtapose in one same place various spaces and locations that are, in and of themselves, incompatible. One of the aspects of the modern project is to organize the chance of a perpetual accumulation of time in a place that does not move such is the case of a museum or a library. But, on the other hand, there is an advancement of time in the feast that is chronic heterotopias, in which one returns to an awareness of immediacy. It is wise to keep in mind that heterotopias have a function in relation to the remaining space that unfolds between two extremes: "either they play a role in creating an illusionary space which denounces all real space as illusionary, all of those space where human life is compartmentalized. (...) Or, on the contrary, they create another space, another real space, as perfect and meticulous, as ordered, as disordered, as poorly arranged and as complicated as ours. This would not be a heterotopia illusion but rather of compensation"³³. This has nothing to do with a place that is nowhere, but of another space, inserted in the real but present in the form of a reserve, something apart whose internal structure is singular: a real of possible encounters. The space of transit or, better yet, a zone of filtering and infiltration, a cross-roads of collisions and backtracking, of appearances and disappearances, a time of contamination, a place of anamorphosis; heterotopias introduce the aberrant in the heart of the real, in the same way that the works of Avelino Sala intend to impose anxiety, the feeling of danger, as in the video-installation of the Rottweiler posed for battle: "A cabin – affirms the same artist- for the relief of restlessness, a space in which the double image exercises an all encompassing anxiety, and threatening presences on a monumental scale"³⁴. The dogs bark furiously or are transparent moulds, strange forms of vigilance, and allegories of an atrocious hunt. In modern times, even though it is not recognizable, one takes on an immense raid against the singular man³⁵, while it seems as if we forget pain and misery³⁶. Without a doubt, the work of art is an expedition that can take us, once again, to places where we have been years ago, and suddenly, we realize that we have forgotten; it can take us to the inhospitable, to that land where, as in a fable, emerges *human anxiety*, in an era where one manages to feel even a nostalgia for the old and rusty, of that bitter taste that surrounds that which before was "natural"³⁷. One has to learn to survive with very little; perhaps with a handful of thread-bare stories, one has to understand what is essential, in the same way that sometimes I feel that there is more truth and life in the *clima* than in the greater part of the speeches that are thrust upon us. "The *zone* is simply the *zone*. It is life that men must cross in which he either succumbs or endures. And that he endures only depends on the conscience that he has of his own worth and of his capacity to distinguish the substantial from the accidental"³⁸. In that territory trash, rabid dogs, transparent sculptures, the sounds of sirens or mobile telephones, shots and noises produced by machines, the remains of a disjointed world, regions that have to be crossed, with lucidity, without fear, the *imaginario nomad* can appear.

³² "The phenomenon of cryptic incorporation, described by Abraham and Torok, has been revised by Jacques Derrida in the text *F(u)or*, in which he sheds light on the singularity of a space which is simultaneously defined as internal and external: the crypt is, therefore, "a place compressed in another, and yet rigorously separated from it, isolated from general space by means of walls, an area, an *enclave*": that is the example of a "internal exclusion" or a "clandestine inclusion"" (Mario Perniola: *L'arte e la sua ombra*, Ed. Einaudi, Turin, 2000, p. 100).

³³ Michel Foucault: "Espacios diferentes" included in *Toponimias. Ocho ideas del espacio*, Sala de Exposiciones de la Fundación "la Caixa", Madrid, 1994, p. 37.

³⁴ Avelino Sala: unpublished text on *Inquietudes/Restlessness*, 2003.

³⁵ "Suffering grows up until the point that the heroic is, by force, excluded. [...] The defeat of the human being has been prepared for a long time, a defeat from which no escape is possible" (Ernst Jünger: *La emboscadura*, Ed. Tusquets, Barcelona, 1988, p. 53).

³⁶ "¿Is misery, with all that it entails, commonplace in megápoli? [...] The megápoli is in all cases perfectly organized to ignore and to make these questions be forgotten, that question. And, nevertheless, nevertheless, the forgetting of forgetting continues to demonstrate sufficient signs so that writing –art, literature, and philosophy confused- is obstinate in offering testimony that there is something more" (Jean-Francois Lyotard: "Zona" in *Moralidades posmodernas*, Ed. Tecnos, Madrid, 1996, pp. 29-30).

³⁷ I think about a product called *Hollywood drops* (Gotas de Hollywood) whose manufacturer affirms in a report that "everybody adds it to everything" that tastes like a tin can. It seems that parents use it so children will not reject the natural taste of fruits or vegetables, being accustomed to downing all that canned food.

³⁸ Andrei Tarkovski: "Sobre la responsabilidad del artista" in *Esculpir el tiempo*, Ed. Rialp, Madrid, 2000, p. 237.