

THREE 1930'S DISCOURSES: THE DAY OF THE LOCUST BY NATHANAEL WEST, THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM BY WILHELM REICH AND THE PENTAGON OF POWER BY LEWIS MUMFORD.

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[RESUMEN]

La propuesta en el ensayo que sigue a continuación es la de integrar tres discursos de disciplinas distintas, en una visión de la crisis del hombre moderno en las primeras tres décadas del siglo XX. No estamos argumentando que es la primera crisis de la era moderna; existieron otras tantas desde el siglo XVIII; pero la contemplada en estos tres discursos representa la línea de la deshumanización del hombre, y su relación con el poder, el dinero, las realidades ilusorias, la pasividad y violencia. *The day of the locust* (*El día de la langosta*), de Nathanael West, es una novela que se narra y argumenta desde la perspectiva de un diseñador Tod Hackett que se va a Hollywood, con el propósito de trabajar para la industria cinematográfica y con la idea del «sueño americano»: la tierra de las oportunidades que permite alcanzar el triunfo y la felicidad. En lugar de este sueño, Tod encuentra una realidad muy perversa de hombres y mujeres infelices y mediatizados, que no han alcanzado y nunca van a alcanzar esta promesa implícita y permanente en la concepción de «América» y del viaje hacia el oeste: California. West nos revela una realidad de espejismos y monstruosidades a través de una serie de personajes que se convierten en el objetivo pictórico del joven diseñador, quien previamente se hallaba satisfecho con representar imágenes convencionales de la realidad americana; y es cuando nos dice el narrador que Tod dio un giro en su concepción estética y recurre a Goya y a Daumier. Las perversiones de esta sociedad hollywoodense y sus habitantes van a ser cruzadas con las posturas de Mumford y su teoría de la afluencia irracional, así como la del hombre sirviente de la máquina; y con la teoría de la manipulación de las sociedades autoritarias y patriarcales, que a través de una serie de rituales y adoctrinamiento inhiben al individuo alienándolo de su propio cuerpo y emociones, argumentado por Wilhelm Reich. La novela de West, la teoría psicológica de Reich, así como la perspectiva cultural de Mumford, formalizan y epistemologizan la crisis de la sociedad occidental, sus valores, creencias y aspiraciones, desde disciplinas distintas que coinciden de una forma extraordinaria. De ahí el título: *Tres discursos de los años treinta*.

[PALABRAS CLAVE] Gentes-máscaras, sueño americano, tipos apáticos

[ABSTRACT]

The proposal implicit in this essay is the integration of three discourses stemming from three different disciplines that represent a vision of modern man crisis during the first three decades of the 20th century. We are not arguing that it is the first crisis for modern man; there have been many others since the 18th century; but the one contemplated in these three discourses represents the line of man's dehumanization, his relationship with

modern power, money and illusory realities conducing him to passivity and violence. *The Day of the Locust*, is narrated from Tod Hackett's perspective, a young designer that goes to Hollywood in order to work for the film industry and pursue the American dream. On his path he realizes that the dream is and has been distorted; and it is precisely at this point, where *The Day of the Locust* meets the other discourses: irrational affluence and the man servant to the machine argued by Mumford and the authoritarian and patriarchal society that alienates the individual revealed by Reich. Thus, the title of this essay: Three 1930's discourses.

[KEYWORDS] Masquerade people, American dream, Apathetic types

Among the *papier mâché* temples and edifices Tod Hackett discovered people "of a different type". It was a disconcerting discovery because he did not expect to find angry people, filled with hatred and resentment in the land of dreams and magic. But soon, his bewilderment would give place to a sentiment of certainty: those were the ones he wished to paint.

The angry people with unsatisfied eyes, who caught the imagination of the young designer, are the counterpart of the "masquerade" dwellers whose appearances fit perfectly with the plaster houses. Both types, Wilhelm Reich would say, belong to enslaved men and women. The apathetic but potentially violent and even barbarous man who is submissive to an order and a way of life which are killing him: "At this time Tod knew very little about them (the angry people) except that they have come to California to die". (West, 1978: 10)

The masquerade people who crowded the streets, shops and cocktail bars of the citadel are also slaves, dreamers who have not come to terms with reality or with their reality; and therefore "act contrary to their own material interests". (Reich, 1978:19)

Hollywood, as perceived by Tod, is a citadel of automatons and clowns; of freaks and dreamers, all of them unsatisfied with their lives, playing a game, trying to realise the "American Dream".

Hollywood is, then, a new exploration. The expansion of the dream of a promise land, a manifestation of the curiosity and cupidity of man upon a "land of abundance"; but abundance as defined by Mumford: irrational affluence, lack of choice and selection (the opposite of plenitude). It offers to fulfil the needs and yearnings of the people but presents them, instead, with delusive images. Tod realised the need for beauty and romance which was imprinted on the eyes of the people and on the plaster walls of Egyptian temples and Tudor cottages; but also perceived the monstrosity of the substitution: thus, movies fed the empty lives of the people only to intensify their hunger; made them sophisticated without a conscience. The citadel lures thousands of men and women to its very core. People who are searching for their dreams and expect to find them there, in the form of success and riches, fame and romance just to become dwellers of the city which has within its boundaries a realm of false magic and hollow hope.

Boredom and disappointment make their way to a permanent abode in the lives of these dreamers and turn them into an angry crowd whose "rebellion is coupled with acceptance". (Reich, 1978:23)

The main characters of the novel are representatives of either type of the city's dwellers: the dreamer-masquerade type and the apathetic one.

These two types are, actually, one in the end: the masses which will turn demonic and will shift from apathy to hysteria. Reich says that the apathetic individual has an enormous potential for destruction and violence; being apathy simply a defence mechanism, a mask he wears similar to the one worn by the masquerade kind.

Faye and her father Harry are dreamers. Harry moved to Hollywood searching for a long-yearned recognition of his histrionic skills. Instead he, after some years, ended as a door-to-door salesman or as a supplier, for horror films, of a terrible laughter, a sound of a frustrated man, a madman. This laughter is his means of punishing his daughter; the only weapon he has to deal with his exasperating reality. He is a failure, a loser, in the city that does not forgive failures. He is a poor man in the land of abundance and extravagance. He responds to this with his horrible laughter, but goes on believing in the promises of Hollywood although he has never come near them.

Faye inherited Harry's dreams. Hollywood's reality was imposed upon her. Her extreme artificiality, her silly songs and the storage of countless romance stories she bears in her mind and to which she resorts in her day-dreaming experiences, constitute the means of dealing with that artificial reality to which in spite of everything she desires. She is guarding her virginity for an idealized conception of a husband: that is to say a man either rich or very handsome or preferable both. Instead she becomes a prostitute at Mrs. Jennings' house. Faye's sexuality is distorted due to the series of impositions she has suffered. Being extremely vital and sensual, she inhibited herself sexually submitting to the idea of required virginity to achieve an ideal marriage; therefore she has not got a true sexual awareness. After her father's death, she realises her situation and throws herself into the perverted world of prostitution. As Tod perceived, she becomes tough: "The change that has come over both of them (Faye and Mary) startled Tod. They had suddenly become very tough". (West, 1978: 84-85)

Faye becomes a prostitute because in this kind of society, like any other authoritarian, patriarchal society, sex is thought of as a commodity. Faye's sexuality is distorted as her whole life is distorted. If day-dreaming in adolescents shows sexual inhibition, according to Reich, Faye who is seventeen is a fitting instance of a sexually frustrated and inhibited youth. Her natural sexuality has been modified to meet the aims of a given society. There is no balance. There is no responsible sexual behaviour. There is no normal awareness in a patriarchal society. Sexuality swings between self-imposed but externally induced "chastity" and "prostitution". Even when Faye chooses to sleep with the Mexican, what should be seen as a natural sexual behaviour in other contexts, is in this case, tinged with a sense of the inordinate: a clandestine sexuality. Tod himself in a conversation with two cowboys commented upon the Mexican sexuality: "Mexicans are very good with

women". (West, 1978: 110-111) The mystification of a given race's sexuality is another trait of a distorted idea about sex.

In an authoritarian, patriarchal society; where sexual interests are placed in "the service of economic subjugation sexuality becomes diabolical and demonic" (Reich, 1978:170-177), the superior races are those that can control their sexuality through religious practices, ethics and institutions. On the other hand, a label of inordinate sexuality has been attached to some races considered as "inferior": black people, Latinos, etc. The Mexican has been described as a dirty, semi-barbarous individual. When sexual power and vitality is related to him, sexuality, then, becomes distorted and inordinate.

Adore, the eight-year old boy is another instance of sexual inhibition in young people and children. He is extremely malicious, restless and cruel. These are reactions against his mother impositions. She has robbed him of his childhood by pushing him into an unnatural world; and imposing upon him type-cast, rigid roles: the star-boy, the perfect boy who bows before adults. He inhabits and unnatural world and therefore his sexuality is distorted and he perceives sex as something low and dirty:

He seemed to know what the words meant or at least his body and his voice seemed to know. When he came to the final chorus, his buttocks writhed and his voice carried a top-heavy load of sexual pain. (West, 1978: 102-103)

Abe, the dwarf, belongs to this world of pornography, brothels, bars and gambling. The degradation of this world seems to offset his own monstrosity; moreover, he seems to be aware of this fact. He approaches all women in the same manner: he can have them because in that city of delusions and lies, money buys everything.

This homunculus is one of the freakish "citizens" of Hollywood. The frustrations brought about by his abnormality finds compensation in the moral aberration of the other dwellers.

We have argued that the main characters of the novel are representatives of the paradigmatic types of the city's residents that we chose to call the masquerade and the apathetic types. We have already dealt with the main characters that responded to the masquerade kind. Let us proceed with the second category.

Homer Simpson represents the best example of this apathetic kind. When Tod met him for the first time, what struck him the most, was Homer's resemblance to the people he referred to as "the people who came to die". At that time he thought this resemblance was only physical since Homer's eyes were devoid of hatred and his manner was very gentle. Before coming to Hollywood Homer Simpson was a book-keeper in a hotel for 20 years. He had to get sick for his life to change; otherwise he would have stayed at the hotel. He is a man profoundly unsatisfied and this discontent is only matched by an immense apathy. Homer is terribly afraid of his sexual desires and he shields himself behind a self-impose chastity which produces him a "basic and permanent anguish". (West, 1978: 105-106)

The first time that he needed protection from his sexual needs was in the incident with Romola Martin; when he was still working at the hotel:

He was right. There are men who can lust with parts of themselves. Only their brains or their hearts burnt and then not completely. There are others, still more fortunate, who are like filaments of an incandescent lamp. They burn fiercely, yet nothing is destroyed. But in Homer's case it would be like dropping a spark into a barn full of hay. He had escaped in the Romola Martin incident, but he wouldn't escape again. (West, 1978:42-45)

Homer cannot come to terms with his sexuality. It must have been distorted early on, since his childhood. He resorts, then, to chastity. In the Romola Martin incident he took refuge in his job. He tired himself so badly that wanted nothing but sleep. He is incapable of interfering in any situation or with anyone. He rented the house the estate agent imposed upon him; and once settled in the house did not make any change in the rooms and furniture. He did not dare to order the Mexican and the cowboy (Earle) out of his home and did not even interfere with the lizard that fed on flies. Homer is a submissive man burning inside. His profound apathy, his mask and self effacing manner makes of him an automaton.

According to Reich's work-democracy theory, Homer's job contributed to his oppression and incomplete life. It was an enslaving job which denied him any kind of leisure and the ability to feel pleasure. The next step in Reich's theory is sex-economics. He says that the first move towards freedom is making people aware of their sexuality. Homer has to understand his sexuality, realise the normality of it to get free of what he feels is demonic. But the dwellers of the city and the city itself do not allow this.

Homer's apathetic mask continues concealing his frustration and the natural aggression finally becomes violence. Faye made him feel alive for a while, but when she leaves he does not want to return to a living-dead existence. Alas! It is already too late for a natural opening of his sexual inhibitions and a terrible explosion of hatred and violence comes out of the shy man. Homer jumps several times on Adore's body and kills him; and is himself killed by the mob which is waiting for the celebrities to appear in a première.

Homer did not come to Hollywood in search of a dream. He was an extremely distorted man, sexually inhibited, apathetic, meek and had been denied his right to pleasure and to life itself, by his alienating job and society imposition upon him. His apathy swiftly turned to hysteria, as it was the case with all the other apathetic men and women in the city.

The day of the locust is about the automaton inhabitants of a city which trades in false illusions and hopes and presents a distorted reality to its dwellers¹. Thus, Homer's relation with "the people who came to die" goes beyond the apathetic mask which conceals violence and horror. They are bound together by an eternal acceptance which deprived them of a meaningful life and made of them mere mechanisms. There are several references in the novel about an automaton condition of the characters, or about natural processes and

feelings conceived as mechanical activities: "Love is like a vending machine. You insert a coin and press home the lever. There's some mechanical activity inside the bowels of the device". (West, 1978: 96-97)

With the speed of a machine, the automatons switch from a passive behaviour to a violent one. But this outbreak cannot be explained in terms of machines. A machine breaks down, not breaks out in pain and anger. There has been some miscalculation about the behaviour of the automatons on the part of the central power or hasn't there?

Lewis Mumford in his book *The Pentagon of Power* argues that these outbreaks of violence in all its forms: sexual violence, racial violence, gender violence etc. Are foreseen and allowed by the ruling elite of the mega-machine:

Did not Augustus Caesar ensure the popularity of his imperial regime by restoring the Saturnalia and did not Lorenzo de Medici stage delirious carnivals through whose sexual indulgences the citizens of Florence could forget the loss of their freedom? Huxley, anticipating Hitler, saw that such corruption might be made more systematic and universal, with a gain in effective power to those who directed the system. (Mumford, 1971:431-432)

The patriarchal society plays with the sexual needs and desires of the population, manipulates them in order to strengthen its power. It imposes a sexual conduct through some institutions such as the church and the family to coerce the people, the citizen, the individual, and deprive him/her of their sexual freedom. Then, it pretends to be magnanimous and allows them "a day, a moment of madness, a very small interstice". This is what Reich calls "Purity in ideology and disintegration and pathology in actual practice" (Reich, 1978:100-101). The disintegration and pathology are present in the day of the locust in the form of brothels, pornography and clandestine sexuality which are the passive symbols of the apocalyptic eruption of the mob at the première. The apathetic inhabitants, the people who came to die joined their individual pain and anger and became a "mob".

Like Homer, Tod Hackett is also bound to the "people who came to die". He realized this from the first moment he saw them and felt that he had to paint them. Something made him recognize himself in these people, in their eyes, in their sombre appearances. When he decided to turn to Goya and Daumier, departing from his former concepts and ideas on art and painting, he became a sort of chronicler of the city and its dwellers. His main concern was to record and register those faces, those lives, each individual limb and contorted gestures and project them on "the burning of Los Angeles" a picture he was to paint:

He was determined to learn much more. They were the people he felt he must paint. He would never again do a fat red barn, old stone wall, or sturdy Nantucket fisherman. From the moment he had seen them, he had known that, despite his race, training, and heritage, neither Winslow Homer nor Thomas Ryder could be his masters and he turned to Goya and Daumier. (West, 1978 10-11)

Tod realized he was also and apathetic man to a certain extent. But that realization, made him change his attitude towards painting and his work—a new vision—came upon him; though his attitude towards his sexuality did not change. His sexual inhibition is intensified by a hesitating nature. He does not dare to act decisively towards Faye and resorts to clandestine measures when he tries to get Faye through Mrs. Jennings. He loves Faye but has nothing to trade with to get her. After Faye moved with Homer, Tod kept offering her the thirty bucks (\$ 30 dollars), usual Mrs. Jennings fees- to convince her to sleep with him.

We have awarded him a chronicler's mission. His relations with Faye, Harry, Homer, Claude and Abe; his discoveries about the city and its people constitute a preparation for "the burning of Los Angeles". We could be more precise and say that "his" is an eschatological mission. He started gathering pieces of fire for his painting; he dealt with the flame; he translated misery, degradation, oppression, boredom, disappointment into flames. At the end, the city itself, translated its miseries into flames and the apocalyptic fire Tod discovered in the eyes of the men and women who came to die got loose².

The dreams of a given people, at a given moment, in a given place become—after some time—realisable aims and though they do not get to be realised, or are partially realised; they are already integral part of the ideology and the thought of that people(what Mumford calls materialization). The American people inherited the dream of expansion and exploration which was the one in the first place responsible for the conquest of the American continent. The dream of expansion contains in itself many dreams. It supposes freedom and mobility and it also supposes an inherent happiness that comes along with the very notion of expansion and exploration. After the American west ceased to be a frontier land, the dream of expansion and exploration lingered in the minds of the American people. Instead of correcting the errors made in the possession and settlement of the western lands which depleted a territory that according to Thomas Jefferson would continue to exist unmolested and untouched by human hands and the machine for more than a hundred years; they threw themselves desperately into new expansions—this time machine-orientated expansions. The possibilities were strengthened in and by the machine and unlashd without control or restriction. Hence the idea of abundance, of plenty took another meaning: irrational affluence, lack of choice—real free choice not manipulated by a consuming-orientated society. People started to be fed on this conception and their lives became empty 'spaces' in the land of plenty.

Hollywood is a symbol of this new kind of expansion. On the one hand, it represents a great achievement in terms of the development of American technology and the positive uses of a film industry. On the other, it constitutes the means of perpetuating and already distorted dream³.

Hollywood sells dreams that are meant to be taken as realities, that is, it creates a false reality and offers it to the people who take it instead of their own reality and life. People become wise in cinemas and auditoriums; but their wisdom obeys and responds to a hollow reality and truth.

At night, this citadel that has sold images of love and romance, through countless films and narratives; discloses the reality of the Hollywood people. Pornographic films are

shown in Mrs. Jennings' house. The sophisticated brothel becomes the replacement for love and romance. Hollywood people find in these surrogates (of true feelings, beauty, and love) a link with the reality they have distorted and transformed. But dreams and hopes have been betrayed and perverted many times and in many ways. So, the Hollywood dwellers live in a world of mirrors where they have become mere images and reflections. By now irrational abundance has taken the place of what Mumford calls plenitude. An instance of irrational consumption by the Hollywood people, who have the economic means to indulge in it is 'the dead-horse sculpture' on the bottom of Claude's pool: "We were looking at the pool one day and somebody, Jerry Appis, I think, said that it needed a dead horse on the bottom, so Alice got one. Don't you think it looks cute?" (West, 1978: 22)

The other Hollywood-inhabitants "the people who came to die" have to be contented with wishing both: the pool and the "dead-horse" on the bottom of it. The distorted dream of expansion and extension which is imposed upon them in many ways is represented in *The Day of the Locust* along with many other symbols already discussed-in 'the little house of horrors': Homer's cottage, an atrocious mixture of styles which produced a sense of strangeness and unreality; and served as a perfect setting for Homer's somnolence. Uncontrolled abundance and thoughtless expansion, along with a maddening speed reduce man to a mere corpuscle. The Dutch, Spanish, Mexican, New England styles represented in the cottage annihilated the sense of home, of safety and integration. And as Homer himself put it, gave the house a sense of "queerness".

The celebrity's life-style is the main commodity "sold" in this society and the response it produces, among many, but one of the most pernicious ones takes the shape of mothers selling their children's talents at any or all cost⁴. Mrs. Loomis deformed her child's life and turned him into a frustrated boy, a "masquerade" child. This society, then, manipulates its people through myth and mysticism. Mysticism of any kind: religious, national, racial mysticism is a powerful tool in the hands of an authoritarian society. The American dream (land of plenty, expansion and mobility without limits) is preserved, now, mystically through the cult of Hollywood. Actors and actresses become heroes and heroines worthy of worship and adulation. The population, thus, accept passively its present fate without questioning their rulers and elites because they are subjugated through this mysticism. But apathy, as it is the case in this novel, is just a masquerade: the passive people become violent and let their anguish and resentment out in front of the eyes of many of their idols. Religious mysticism, in its most distorted form is epitomized in the Hollywood churches: the church of Christ Physical, the church of Invisible, The tabernacle of the third coming, "the temple modern". They are an extension of the deformed and perverted American dream, where irrational rules are linked to the making-money business. Tod perceived the fury and anarchic power of the church-goers: "they wanted to destroy civilization". Having realized their subjugation, they now turn against that what oppresses them; and this anarchy and violence are as harmful as the passiveness into which they were pushed. In these churches, "a new millennium" is being announced. These people are forced, pushed towards this kind of outbreak. They are sexually inhibited; unsatisfied, oppressed by a system that society imposes upon them. They resort, then, to superstition and irrationality. The only way in which they can come to terms with their reality is

through the formula God-Sin-Punishment. The end of the world is coming. But they are prepared. The gentle among them will welcome the Saviour; the rest are prepared to take into their own hands the destruction of "the corrupt world and civilization". Victims of an exalted mysticism they will take 'divine' justice and action in their own hands.

The mass of angry people, the betrayed are the extreme actors of the apocalyptic end of this narrative. As we have sustained before, the apathetic individual, the half-dead man and woman join their anger and pain and become a "Mob": "a change overcame them as soon as they became part of the crowd". (West, 1978: 148) They are no longer alone in their misery. They can recognize themselves in other eyes; they can identify their laughs with others'. Though, this mass-communion is not a harmless one; they are not "celebrating each other" in a Whitmanian way. They are very dangerous, disappointed people. They have been denied their right to pleasure and the fulfilment of their desires through a series of manipulations: sexual fears, religious fears, and lastly they allowed themselves to be enslaved and subjected to a meaningless, dull, mechanical job. They have been tricked and deprived of a "real" life. After several years of hard work, they find themselves old, tired and the dream of the promise land which they know by now is out of their reach makes them resentful and bitter, responding more to "race inertia" than to the attractions of the city. They made the trip to California:

Once there, they discover that sunshine isn't enough. They get tired of oranges, even of avocado pears and passion fruit. Nothing happens. They don't know what to do with their time. They haven't the mental equipment for leisure or money, nor the physical equipment for pleasure. "Did they slave so long just to go on an occasional Iowa picnic? What else is there?" (West, 1978:145)

Lewis Mumford would call them "the serves of the Mega-machine". They allowed their leaders to dispossess them of their humanity. Incapable of enjoying their leisure time, incapable of realising their dreams they became "real" slaves at their hated jobs and meaningless lives.

A shy man, dragging his heavy body breaks out in a forty-year- old anger. His carcass has been torn off for the second time; and he knows he won't escape again. The crowd takes off the mask, and "the burning of Los Angeles", with authentic Goyan characters is set in motion. Reich's work-democracy and sex-economic theories; and Mumford's plenitude theory aim at the liberation of the individual. Along with *The day of the Locust*, the two discourses crossed the threshold of modern man crisis in the 1930's.

The type of "truth" inserted in all the historical, hermeneutical projects of Western Civilization, throughout the centuries, accumulation of knowledge, continuous progress limitless resources; ended up in 'modern man miseries. West's novel offers us a splendid representation of the kind of miseries Reich and Mumford are already detecting during the first three decades of the XX century. Reich argues that the root of these miseries is the sexual inhibition produced by an authoritarian society, which made sex a commodity and manipulates it to keep its power. Mumford affirms that man has surrendered to his

own invention: “the machine”, and therefore has become dehumanized. He also argues that the power complex whose “core” is the “machine” distorted and spoilt the natural frame of man’s needs and turned him into a mere consumer-mechanism. Both men are advocating, already in the 1930’s man’s return to a most natural and rational way of life; where work provides man with meaningful occupation and satisfaction, where man is capable of a real free choice.

We could say that the three discourses: West’s fictional discourse, Reich’s psychologist approach; and Mumford’s perspective as a science historian and cultural critic experienced the same process of formalization of their different and distinct points of view and ideas. We could also argue that the three discourses were regulated by a “historical a priori” a “positivity” in a Foucauldian sense of a discursive effect. What does this mean? We could venture to say that the crisis of Modernity as a process-experience of man dehumanization, the potential for total destruction of the planet, the emptiness of “modern man’s existence” in so far as he has forgotten and forsaken a natural or at least an easy connection with the planet; made man a very vulnerable prey for illusory theories, indoctrination, subjugation and extreme artificiality. Each and every one of these contentions is dealt with by our three authors in their different areas of knowledge or representation. To a certain extent, what we are proposing is that they belong together even though at a disciplinary level they cover quite diverse areas. But the perception of “modern man’s plight” is the same in the three discourses: they are fitting.

The dangers were all to clear then, in the 1930’s: war, totalitarianism (right and left) nuclear holocaust. But, are they passed? The emergency of a new fascist era with different hues and mannerisms—depending on the locust and time—and the destruction of our planet if we do not rationalise expansion and cupidity are a hideous an permanent threat, the sword upon our heads of which: ‘the burning of Los Angeles’ could be read as the ‘prescient’ symbol of an impending disaster.

[NOTES]

¹ A more recent instance of this distortion was patent during the 1990's as an after effect of the film *Pretty Woman*; hundreds of young girls poured into Los Angeles pursuing once more Hollywood's illusion: to evolve from prostitutes to princesses through marriage to Richard Gere-like millionaires.

² It's worth remembering the Los Angeles riots and plunders that burnt down part of the city after the police brutality incident in the early 90's.

³ This was not reckoned with by the exegetes of Marxism: in this technology the basis and the superstructure are united.

⁴ Was the same kind of perversion presented in Mozart's father showing off his son's talent. We do not think so. The similarity ends in human nature, not in the society that promotes the distortion.

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