

**Stevan Vuković**

## ***Topologies of Death***

'Topoi' as places of spatialization. Localization. Places for visual representatives of the always missing representations. *Vorstellungsrepräsentationen*. In his *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*, written during the First World War, Freud noticed: 'My death is unimaginable. Even the unconscious is convinced of its immortality.' Lacan later extended on that observation claiming that no person can truly consider its own death because 'neither death or birth has a solution in the signifier.' But the silence of the drives always speaks in some way, and the death drive manifests itself in a perceptible way. Even visually. Through its spatial representatives. Revolving around the effects of identification, identity formation, repetition, melancholic, depressive and paranoid reactions to the loss of the primal object or some of its equivalents or metonymic substitutes. The topologies of those manifestations constitute the thematics of this project.

### *the primal object, malaise, split*

The body. Always in singular. Memorial to the fantasy of the lost wholeness. Of the unobtainable unity. Inevitably invoking the mythical body of the mother. Depicted both as threatening and destroyed by one's aggressive impulses. Raising anxiety out of guilt of aggressiveness. The malaise at the heart of life, caught into the ongoing process of losing the primary object. The process sliding down the metonymical chain including the breast, the feces, the voice, the gaze, the phallus, the phoneme, the urinary flow. Every loss of the loved external objects reactivates earlier depressive anxieties, in which the mourner fears it will lose its good internal objects as well. The possibility of loss of its good internal objects leaves it exposed again to the primitive paranoid fears of persecution. The bad breast comes back. With a vengeance. In a destructive fury. The first object of desire. Turned to anxiety-generator. The libidinally infused part of mother's body, which in the child's mind once becomes split into a good (gratifying) and bad (frustrating) breast. It threatens to appear as the ultimate death-bringer. An uncontrollable, overpowering object. The topos of impregnated horror. The container of abjectivity. Death drive reflected outwards. The ultimate symbol of the time of war and death. The cause of the split in subject itself.

Stevan Vuković, from the text *Topologies of Death*, *Topologies of Death* exhibition catalogue, Belgrade Gallery, Belgrade, 2001.