On Cosmogony

Katarina Petrović
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1. Introduction
2. *Lexicon Liber Novus* and *Cosmologicus* / context and main questions
3. Methodologies
4. Instead of the conclusion / Synthesis and further research
5. List of references
Whatever may be the plays on words and the acrobatics of logic, to understand is above all to unify.  
- Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus

The birth of order. The origin of the cosmos and the origin of our consciousness. The first dawn or the Big Bang. An occurrence of the idea or of fire. Conception or creation. Mythological accounts on the creation of the world, although varying in their description, all share one common trait. The unknowable origin. They either describe it as infinite, emptiness, oneness, void or chaos; or in the conclusion that it is unknowable leave the origin unaddressed entirely. In philosophy, for instance, the search for a tangible and adequate terminology and theory to describe the origin of our consciousness has yielded many different approaches, being altogether a speculative endeavour. In science, on the other hand, cosmogony aims to provide proofs for the cosmological model(s) of the origin of the universe based on observations, not on speculations. And even there, in the example of the most commonly accepted theory of Big Bang, we have singularity — an infinite gravitational field as the point of origin. What came before, or how did the creation came about, brakes the rules of our established logic and physics, and the very terms we use to describe it, are yet again left to speculation. Infinity, chaos, limitlessness. Convincingly, it seems that we cannot agree on what is this unknowable origin, but we all do agree that it is there. The logical implications are conclusive.

There is a certain logic in the creation of an artwork that doesn't necessarily follow the established logic of reason or the logic of the medium with which the work is realized. I would argue that the emergence of an artwork (prior to its materialisation) follows the same path of emergence as most creation myths, and even some scientific theories. It is equally obscure and saturated with unpredictability. However, there are striking similarities. To quote Mircea Eliade, distinguished twentieth century historian of religion and philosopher, there are two propositions that always hold true in every mythological narrative: First is that “every creation repeats the pre-eminent cosmogonic act, the Creation of the world.” and consequently, “whatever is founded has its foundation at the center of the world (since, as we know, the Creation itself took place from a center).”(1) What follows is that the work of art bears all the elements of mythological and metaphysical coming into existence. The chaos from which it arises, the origin at the center — the artist, simultaneous independency and embeddedness in the world, specific formal order and the time it enfolds on its own. It is the creation of the world anew made from an interaction of the two
worlds, one centered in the artist and the second, centered in the (conceptual) object of one’s research.

In this paper, I will trace the path of emergence of the two works, which jointly make my graduation work — an algorithm generated book *Lexicon Liber Novus* and an installation titled *Cosmologicus*. By doing so, I hope to provide insights on how the methodologies I have used lead me to create a unique symbolic world, one which is equally embedded in, and independent from, the world it stemmed from. In the attempt of representing an infinite process, such as the case of the generative book, or trying to grasp and convey the feeling of all-connectedness, the very elusiveness, impossibility and seeming absurdity of the tasks led me to inquire into the inquiry itself. Perplexed by the paradoxes to which pure rationalisation brought me and staring at the ungraspable Absolute I sought to investigate, I have found myself in the centre of the *mise en abyme*. (2) Once again, the limits of the cosmos came to be the limits of seeing and the following emergence of the symbolic order, a kind of a logical aftermath, can best be described by Sol LeWitt’s first sentence in the *Statements on Conceptual Art*: “[Conceptual] Artists are rather mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach.” (3) After all, to understand is to under-stand, breach under the concept brought forth by logic and unify rational and irrational in a common ground.
The unknowable, unrepresentable origin has always been of a particular interest to me. The “mute
ground upon which it is possible for entities to be juxtaposed,”(4) as Michel Foucault terms it, has
played a strong and informative role in both conceptualising and materialising my works. It is
perhaps the very reason why I became an artist. Furthermore, in consideration of the fact that
logic alone cannot breach the gaps of our understanding (we are always cornered with
paradoxes in our rational analysis), I have sought a different method of representing that which
lays beyond our immediate comprehension, beyond what we can rationally explain. A method in
the domain of sensing. Intuition, feelings and altogether subconscious materials have been
equally illuminative to my processes as other cognitive methods of acquiring knowledge. Finally,
the unrepresentable is at the center axis of an artistic practice — attempting to say (with all
available means) that which cannot be said. Thinking the unthinkable.

French philosopher and aesthetician Jean-François Lyotard, in many of his writings stressed the
importance of art in demonstrating that the unrepresentable exists. By placing his trust in the
works of the avant-garde, and some of the abstractionists, to convey the notion of
unrepresentable, he designated a specific feeling to transfer the message. The sublime, he writes
is the delight, “a negative pleasure which is contradictory,” and yet capable of representing the
infinite might and absolute magnitude, referring to Kant here. Notably, what he saw in the potency
of sublime was a method, abundantly used by the avant-garde, to negatively indicate that which
cannot be represented. However, the first description of the sublime - Longinus’s treatise On the
Sublime,(5) and the subsequent elaborations that took place in the seventeenth century onwards,
most notably in the works of Kant and Burke, place the feeling of sublime in poetry, in written
language. Indeed, there are many examples of the modern literature — l’écriture blanche,
nonsense and absurd literature to name a few, that use the potentiality of language to fully realize
the elusiveness and sublime feeling which follows the medium of words. Lyotard’s contribution
was thus to expand the theory of sublime to include other modes of representation in arts,
particularly painting, which he thought can represent the unrepresentable by noting the
(paradoxical) idea of beginning — a dream-work, an occurrence, the passage of time.

Language takes a vital role in my research of the “mute ground.” I use it as a medium, to both
carry the negative representation and the sublime feeling of the unrepresentable — much like the
literary works do. Moreover, with the use of visual mediums, such as printed matter, drawings,
software and projection, I strive to indicate language’s hidden symbolic structure which can (and
does), have a manifestation in the real world. Resembling the works of magic, where words are made flesh, or the beginning of Christian genesis, the Word epitomises cosmogony. First occurrence of the world, a symbol ungraspable as infinity or cosmos, nevertheless capable of inflicting order as any occurrence in the physical world.

The work Lexicon Liber Novus represents an inquiry into the world of words and the fundamental questions of linguistics and semiotics, if not the logic itself — how do we understand the meaning of words, that is, how do we create meaning? With the use of a simple algorithm, designed to display all dictionary definitions of words available, I attempted to outline the limits of this world. Subsequently realising that the potential to generate meaning is essentially infinite, even though there are finite amounts of words and people using them, the very idea of exhausting the entire lexicon became an absurd one. Lexicon Liber Novus stands as a negative representation of inherent generative infinity of language, an indication of infinite interpretability of words specific to each and every one of us.

In the installation titled Cosmologicus, the database of word meanings, that is, the encoding of words into numbers brought forth in the Lexicon, is used conversely. If words have the potency to generate order, then the opposite should also hold true. Here, the words stem from the ‘order’, a cosmic radio signal emitted by the planet Jupiter. In brief, what I set to investigate with both of these works was the symbolic structure of language and its self-referential quality — word indicates that word and not necessarily an ‘external object.’ In other words, no matter how we use language there is no such thing as a meaningless word. There are no meaningless occurrences either. We are meaning machines.
Lexicon Liber Novus is an algorithmically generated book that starts with a verse from the Two English Poems by Jorge Luis Borges in 1934 - “We talked and you have forgotten the words.” Following a rule that every word is unknown, the algorithm indexes and explains all the words in the given sentence, all the words in the explanations, all the words in those explanations and so on. The indexation is done with natural numbers consequentially following the emergence of ‘new’ words. The explanations, loaded from a shortened version of Oxford English Dictionary, are following the order of the natural flow of integers. The entire book encompasses 47,152 indexed words and more than 2 million processed words overall, where in order to explain the initial eight words another 47,144 other words needed to be explained as well. In the printed version, the book contains almost four thousand pages. [Image 1-2]

When I first had the idea for the Lexicon Liber Novus book, I was living in France and was investing a lot of energy in learning French. I was apprehending new words with remarkable efficiency and often times without the use of a dictionary. The meaning of words and sentences just came to me. Aside from the fact that I was learning quickly because of the given circumstances, what puzzled me the most was: how did I understand the meaning if I haven’t encountered the word before? Based on what did I grasp the meaning of the sentence? Additionally, if somehow you knew all the words and all their meanings, as explained in a dictionary, would this help you to understand what was being said any better? While meditating on these questions, it became clear to me that there is an overarching system in language that we don’t necessarily learn from grammar, semantics or even pragmatics, and I became very interested in uncovering it. Clearly, not from the perspective of a linguist or a philosopher. What I was interested in was the form that structure could take. Never prior working with language as a medium and being classically trained as a painter, I envisioned the Lexicon as a play of logic that could yield a visual morphology of the structure that was hiding in the words themselves. Furthermore, having the feeling that learning a new language is somewhat similar to learning a new city, I imagined the structure to resemble a map and have its own specific geometrical rules. This, I later realised, is the same metaphor philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein used to describe language. He writes in his later work Philosophical Investigations: “(...) ask yourself whether our language is complete; whether it was so before the symbolism of chemistry and the notation of the infinitesimal calculus were incorporated into it; for these are, so to speak, suburbs of our language. (And how many houses or streets does it take before a town begins to be a town?) Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new
houses with additions from various periods and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs.” (6)

The possibly infinite structure of the “ancient city” with which we are all familiar with, no matter what language we speak, is by the very logic that it is a structure — representable. Infinity, as we know from sciences and philosophy, can be represented as a “negative sign.” Using the finite elements of the infinite structure, whether those elements are celestial objects, mathematical symbols or words, the “mute ground” can be revealed indirectly by exposing the ‘buildings’ and ‘passages’ of the “ancient city.” Wittgenstein, contributing immensely to the so-called “linguistic turn” in philosophy of the twentieth century and to numerous related fields, pointed to the baseline logic and the apparent **calculus** in the language we operate with. Furthermore, by showing the application of modern logic to metaphysics, via language, he provided new insights into the relations between world, thought and language. (7) His contribution to the nature of language has directly impacted the way we understand language today. Notably, and with the work of Noam Chomsky, distinguished linguist, philosopher and father of cognitive science, language is understood as a computational system which developed fairly recently in our evolutionary history. This evolutionary hypothesis made the notion of universal grammar, a long-anticipated feature that all languages are structurally connected, a widely accepted one today.

On the other hand, the notion of an underlying, hidden structure of the reality we experience with our senses, has been capturing the imagination of artists since the beginning of the previous century and significantly with the development of the Albert Einstein’s Special Theory of Relativity in 1905. In her seminal work *The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidian Geometry in Modern Art*, Linda Dalrymple Henderson, provides extensive materials on how developments in mathematics in the nineteenth century and subsequent theories in physics on the turn of the century, inspired imagination of artists working in all fields, across Europe, Russia and America. From the early work of cubists to Marcel Duchamp, Russian futurists and suprematists to the avant-garde, Henderson shows the impact of discoveries of non-euclidian geometries or hyperspace and the space-time or the four-dimensional continuum, had on re-considerations of form and representation styles in all disciplines. In a somewhat late take of the fundamental changes these scientific discoveries had on art, a painter Charles Sirato wrote and published a *Manifeste Dimensioniste*. (8) This document was signed by many artists including Joan Miró, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Wassily Kandinsky among others. Here, Sirato writes: “(…) the constructivist tendency compels:

I. Literature to depart from the line and move in the plane…
II. Painting to leave the place and occupy space (…)
III. Sculpture to abandon closed, immobile, and dead space (…) in order to conquer for artistic expression the four-dimensional space…”
The significance of the modern science and art developments is poignantly clear in the view of the nature of reality and artistic practice we have today. However, there is another aspect of these advancements that is oftentimes overlooked in the historical analysis. The rise of the new spiritual and philosophical practices, most prominently Theosophy and Anthroposophy, that came along with the reconsiderations of reality as we know it. Rudolf Steiner, one of the most prominent figures in the early twentieth century mysticism, was an Austrian philosopher, social reformer, architect and the founding father of the Anthroposophy society. This esoteric spiritual movement that captured the interest of many artists of the era, a “spiritual science” as Steiner termed it, is still a very active society today with education centres across the globe. Deriving his teachings from the personal spiritual experiences, writings of Goethe and other authors and philosophers, as well as the new scientific discoveries, Steiner advocated a holistic approach to sciences, humanities and the arts. Moreover, his direct influence on number of modern and near-contemporary artists is well documented and includes letters he exchanged with Piet Mondrian for instance, appropriation of his teachings evident in the writings and talks of Joseph Beuys as well as many others. His extensive work in the form of writings, lectures and designs, in the fields as varying as philosophy, education, art and architecture, agriculture and medicine, make an immense legacy to both academic and non-academic world, and are available online in a well kept archive.(9)

What I find important to note, is that Steiner’s work revived the proto-scientific worldview of the ancients where man is seen as a mirror image of the cosmos, a microcosm. In addition to this neoplatonist view, the regenerated romantic ideal where the struggle to save “a mode of human experience and activity which progress of society seemed increasingly to deny,” has been established without the reactionary desire for the pre-modern condition which the Romantics of the previous century had maintained. (10) This is important because it allows the human to be equally progressive in search of techno-scientific advancements as in spiritual ascending. In my opinion, not only has the work of modern mystics contributed to the wild proliferation of spiritual practices today, so called new-age spirituality, it indirectly informed the interdisciplinary practices and the studies of systems which were coming to prominence at about the same time. General Systems Theory (GST), originally proposed by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1928, had no direct connections to the “spiritual science” whatsoever. Nevertheless, there are remarkable similarities between the two approaches which jointly propose a paradigm for observing the human and all living and non-living world at large, as systems with shared principles. Correspondingly, in the recent years, an effort was made to bring spirituality closer to the theories of GST, and the overall synthetic approach to science, spirituality and arts is becoming a norm today.(11)

Moreover, the proposition of the GST that all systems share common principles and are in essence isomorphic, is visible in the notion of unrepresentable which lurks in every system of formal reasoning. In 1931, an Austrian logician, mathematician and philosopher Kurt Friedrich
Gödel, published his famous two Incompleteness theorems that shook the foundations of mathematics. Gödel’s theorems proved that any given definitive system of axioms has always one axiom which cannot be proven — the one containing all the denominated axioms. Henceforth, in order to prove the validity of that whole system, one must step ‘outside’ of it, into a bigger system. And to prove that one valid, one must again step outside into a bigger system, and so ad infinitum. It follows that the concept of infinity can be found in any formal structure if we look closely enough. After all, even the ancient Greeks had the knowledge of the ‘hidden’ infinity, trying to work out the mathematics of the infinitesimals. Sometime referring to infinity as horror infiniti and ad absurdum, the Greeks pioneered but did not keep up the rigorous investigation put forward by the work of Archimedes, Apollonius and Diophantus.(12) It was only a thousand years later, that sciences again took the problem of infinity as the subject of value.

The system Gödel developed, usually referred to as Gödel’s numbering, is much alike the one I have made in the Lexicon Liber Novus book. I only came to realise afterwards that superimposing an infinite set of symbols onto another definite set, (Gödel also used natural numbers) is vital in proving incompleteness of any formal language. However, as I noted before, I was not only interested in negatively presenting the infinite generative potential of language, I also wanted to construct a visual representation of the “mute ground” on which these separate symbols are standing. Approaching the generated word-numbers as elements of visual representation, and not as a literary, meaningful symbols, I made a series of 2-dimensional drawings. Here, I will briefly reflect on the two more important ones which consequently informed the work Cosmologicus.

Spiral diagram [Image 3]. Working through different representations styles and looking for a structure which can represent infinite propagation, I explored the possibilities of representing the data in graphs, grids, maps and a circle. The decision to use a spiral and not a circle, which also has the potential for infinite expansion, was a fairly simple one. The way the indexation was done was implying that the time of the appearance of ‘new’ words was determining the numerical value they would get. Therefore and by following the logic of the data, the structure needed to keep the positions fixed, that is, to attest to the passage of time in this collection of material. Spiral was the only figure I have found that could both propagate infinitely and provide fixed positions for the number-nodes. Unlike the circle, where the expansion of the form would contribute to subsequent shift in all positions and connections between number-nodes (for example, the small-world network diagram), the spiral attests to the passage of time. Using an Archimedean spiral of equal propagation and the number-node positions equally distributed on the arc, the stream of numbers is represented as a circular path leading to and from each of the nodes. Remarkably, the relationships between the words — the lines connecting the nodes, proved to be spirals in a spiral. The book, a self-referential world where every word is intrinsically connected to every other, appeared to resemble a self-similar mathematical structure, a fractal.
Black grid [Image 4]. Drawing by hand has been a very informative process. In many attempts of building the visual structure and especially the spiral diagram, I realized how the limits of visual representation equal the limits of logic. Moreover, the conclusions I drew from these attempts in representation revealed a twofold duality embedded in the Lexicon’s self-referential system. First, the numbers propagate in two streams, one being the newly indexed words and the other, the words already indexed. This is easily observable if you read the numbers linearly, where excremental values of the ‘new’ words are frequent in the beginning and start to subdue somewhere in the middle of the process. Secondly, the duality of the number-nodes is visible once they are mapped and their relationships drawn. Each node, or a number-word, has a path leading to it and from it. In this second diagram, I chose to work with a grid divided into 144 fields. This structure of fixed positions allowed me to investigate the dual stream of propagating data. The drawing is made out of three panels. In the first one there is an empty grid and a grid populated with the stream of numbers starting from the number one, that is the first word. In the second panel, there are four grids where the upper ones show the two streams, the ‘new’ and ‘old’ numbers, separately. The lower part is an abstraction, where the given values are replaced with a simple notation of presence — a black field. Finally, the third panel shows the two abstracted streams merged as they were in the beginning, resulting in a black square grid.

Black. An absolute presence and pure potentiality. The saturation of space and the saturation of meaning, represented as the carbon pigment saturating the white paper. It is at once nothing and everything. The abstraction process which lead to the black square is simply a rendition of two possible states of words, presence and absence. The duality which we find in all mythological, religious, philosophical, scientific accounts (dual nature of particles) and generally in all formal systems, is in mathematics, among other ways, represented by a binary code. There is a long tradition of binary calculus in mathematics that aims at explaining coming into existence or all the possible states a system can have, not to mention its central importance to digital technologies. (13) The grid fully populated, became fully black. Moreover, this black, unlike the Malevich’s black square, is the creation, an attempt to understand and unravel, not to destruct. It is more of a romantic interpretation, where black yields a space of pure potential, space of subconscious projection and understanding beyond language. Conversely and in accordance with Malevich, the black is a destruction set to repeat indefinitely but for the reasons of simultaneously opening new ways of seeing the process of becoming. Black is an infinite becoming.

Meditating on the potency of black, on its duality of being both alien and familiar to our senses, signifying both presence (of notation) and absence (of light), led me to think of its materiality in addition to its rich symbolical legacy. In the following work Cosmologicus, black became ink saturated water, a projection screen for the linguistic decoding of cosmic signals.
Cosmologicus is an audio-visual installation in which the radio emissions from Jupiter are translated into language as a form of an automated poetry. An invisible order of electron particles coming from a distant planet, a kind of a message coming from the mythological Jupiter, is deciphered with the use of the Lexicon Liber Novus book and its word-number database. The signal is obtained from NASA's amateur radio community Radio Jove, and analysed by measuring the amplitude of 144 central frequencies, analogue to 144 fixed fields in the black grid diagram. Subsequently, the sampled numerical values are linked to the corresponding words in the Lexicon database, resulting in a semiotic stream. Sculpted as a quatrain, the stream is then projected into the black water cube. Original audio recording can be heard on the headphones. [Image 5-6]

Jupiter is the largest planet in our Solar system. Referred to as a gas giant, its vast magnetosphere, surpassing even the Sun's, protects the Earth from potentially dangerous objects entering the Solar system. If we could see its magnetic trail from the Earth, it would take more then a quarter of the entire celestial hemisphere. Jupiter holds 67 (known) moons in its orbit and
stands as a powerful source of radio waves in the spectral region stretching from several kilohertz
to tens of megahertz. The radio emissions are so strong that they penetrate our atmosphere
allowing for the signals to be registered on the ground. Jupiter is the only planet we can
effectively hear from the Earth and we have been listening to it for over 60 years now, since the
discovery in 1955. When in good position (not coinciding with Sun's trajectory) and when our
atmosphere stops ionising in the wail of the night, we hear Jupiter. In a way, Jupiter is the sun of
our night sky. The sun of the dark.

The third brightest object and one of the largest ones on our night sky, Jupiter was known since
the ancient times. In accordance with its dominance, the Romans named the planet after their
king of gods. Jupiter, being the equivalent of the greek god Zeus, was by the same token the god
of sky and thunder, a central deity holding the highest position in the Roman Capitoline Triad,
along with Juno and Minerva. Having counterparts in almost all major mythologies, ancient and
modern, Jupiter god is known (with essentially the same characteristics) as Thor in Nordic
mythology, Perun in Slavic, Indra in Hinduism and Amon in the ancient Egypt, among others.
Furthermore, Jupiter is frequently depicted in the Chaoskampf motif, a widespread myth
originating in the Proto-Indo-European religion, in which the storm god conquers chaos — the sea
serpent.

In the light of the “spiritual science” and the General Systems Theory paradigms, where all
processes are analogue by the fact that they share common principles, the association of the
phenomenological and mythological Jupiter, is but a logical progression of inquiry. Although
science appears as the conqueror of myth, the struggle with its shadow can, in fact, never be
concluded. They are in essence two different languages, two symbolic systems, with the same
object of inquiry — the cosmos. If myth propels central reality or represents a “contraction or
implosion of any process”(15) then our attempt to overcome myth as such, is but a replacement.
McLuhan articulates this very clearly in his book Understanding Media, and many other authors
have reflected on this apparent fact, including Bruno Latour’s popular stance that we have never
been modern. Science, just as myth, or any other language, is yet another form of limiting that
which is limitless. Religious and magic paradigm being replaced with the one of science means
the replacement of the word for a number. In our techno-scientific quantised society, the language
of number is the symbolic order we believe in. In the work Cosmologicus, my intention was to
subvert this trust by translating numerical values back into words (as opposed to translating
words into numbers in the Lexicon), purposely not making a distinction between Jupiter as
mythological entity and the scientific object.

A part of the common apparatus of language enumerated in Lexicon, in the quest of Jupiter
signal deciphering, is again placed into the subjective perception of an observer. Almost arbitrary
sequences of words, generated by Jupiter's signal are not language we commonly, or individually,
share. The semiological stream is autonomous, foreign and expressive only when reflected in the interpreter. Informed by the dreams and serendipities I have experienced as well as with the scientific and mythological narratives about Jupiter, the cosmos of *Cosmologicus* could have only been represented in its indeterminacy, in an infinite set of negative signs and readings. The totality of Jupiter, the same totality found in any definite part of the world in perpetual flux, unrepresentable as it is, is made (re)present in the black waters of words. In the instant of sudden revelation, recognition of the meaningful occurrence — the viewer interprets the message of Jupiter, the conqueror of chaos, by performing the “mysterious recursive operation.” The creation of meaning, the unison of the signifier with the signified, opens the infinite generative potential of symbolic order thereby rupturing the void.

Words are a peculiar symbolic structure and their very emergence, as noted before, is as obscure as the origin myth itself. In fact, language and myth share an unbreakable bond being the first and second order semiological structures respectively, according to Roland Barthes. Their potency to give order to chaos, to stand as central referents, is intrinsically linked to the infinite generative potential of symbolic systems which we all individually have capacity for. Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles S. Peirce, the fathers of linguistics have both pointed to the “arbitrariness, differentiation” and “associative total” in creation of the ‘sign,’ that is the symbol. It is the “operation merge” in Chomsky's terms that is unique to everyone. The meaning of words, the creation of the symbol is the base concept of creation. Seen by some as the death of thing, a virus, an uttermost limitation to the human understanding or the work of magic — words, just like the myths, have had to face their modernist deconstruction. Vertical logic could never suffice to explain for their existence. They lay beyond what can be grasped. Language holds both destruction and infinite potential; it is both universal and uniquely composed, resting to be realized to its full symbolic power in all of us.

“There is a single secret to the world, and this secret is held in one word; the universe is a safe of which humanity seeks the combination,”(16) writes Barthes in reminiscence of the old esoteric science of finding a universal key-form and Einstein’s mythological attempt at doing so. Indeed, from Pythagorean ideas and theory of forms to Renaissance ideas of harmony; from gematria, the Assyro-Babylonian-Greek system of alphanumeric code to Kabbalah and Ramon Lull’s *Ars Magnum* to modern day code analysis tools, word and number have been inseparable in decoding the totality. Florian Cramer, theoretician and writer, in his text *Words Made Flesh* makes a connection between the use of symbolic systems of language and algorithm as equally potent in transcribing symbolic to physical. Technology is magic in its roots, he attests, but so is any other symbolic structure. As Bertalanffy explains, “There can hardly be a doubt that the origin of symbolism is intimately connected with magic; be it word magic — the word giving power over the thing named, or manipulative magic — the clay image is the enemy, and he is killed when the image is transfixed by a needle.”(17) Moreover, If we take into an account the contemporary view
of language as a computational device that rests on the "simplest recursive operation imaginable," that is to "take two units that have already been formed, and make up a bigger unit"(18), then language itself presents the origin of the calculus and all subsequent symbolic systems. In this respect, the Judaeo-Christian notion of creation — “In beginning was the word”, certainly appears true. Words are magic in their essence, with symbolic effectively changing the physical.

Computation of totality, representation of the unrepresentable, is always just one possible reading of the whole, destruction of the concept of Absolute and simultaneous creation of the form. It is on these premises that Cosmologicus stands, There is no one reading, no one meaning, no stable form, as the words become unleashed. Just as in William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin cut-up prose or the concept of l’écriture blanche.(19) Indeed, Burroughs could have been right calling the word and image viruses.(20) However, not because of their manipulative potency but rather because of the analogy with some of the evolutionary theories, that point to the genetic mutation and subsequent development of symbolic structures (signs are frequent in animals, it is the symbols that made the cognitive difference). This genetic mutation, if we were to speculate, could have come from a virus, even from outer space. Nevertheless, the realm of words is as redundant as it is unescapable and even Burroughs himself did not find another way out of but through. Human is an animal symbolicus.(21) We rationalise even when we sleep.
The first dream that I remember having was being on a little boat surrounded by the sea. I was very young, maybe 3 or 4 years old, and the images from this dream are the first visual information that I still vividly remember. The first image of the dream rendered in my memory is the perspective from above. I am overlooking the person sitting in the little boat surrounded by the sea. Then, I am that person in the boat. I am not afraid, rather I am calm and in awe. I had no thoughts while I was staring at the vastness around me. I remember this dream to this day, as I have found it an exceptional experience then and have repeated it in my memory ever since. It could be that these images resided with me from something I’ve seen on TV or maybe something I have read or imagined, but I am certain that they were a dream. Irrelevant of the case being, any experience or any profound emotion, changes you and becomes a part of you. In this sense, it is not important if this imagery was a dream or not, but that it left a permanent mark. It is a sublime feeling being alone in the open sea. Without any winds, the sea is just a line dividing the land from the sky. A horizon dividing the world of the living and the world of the dead in Borges’s words. Greatness with the potential to swallow you, limitlessness which you grasp by the limits of your gaze. In this ‘space’ of no reference, the only reference is yourself and the references you chose to create.

Dream, Foucault claims, is the birth of the world, the origin of existence itself. The domain of thinking through the unthought, that happens in the moment of vision as Heidegger describes. The stream of subconscious that attests to the world in becoming. A clearing, a vacant space of any meaning, the tzumtzum in Kabbalah or the Śūnyatā in Buddhist and Hindu scriptures. The problem of representing the unrepresentable origin, the totalised whole for which science searches the key and art seeks to experience is always the creation in the domain of symbolic order, creation of the associative total. Unlike the natural processes, human creativity is mediated by consciousness,(22) and consciousness being an internal relation to the whole,(23) once turned inward, implodes on the self. The states of meditation, dream or a strike of the “poetic image,” that is “a sudden salience on the surface of the psyche”(24) reveal the cosmos in man, the play of cosmogony acting through our every moment of consciousness.

Indeed, it is in these states that I find the direction on the open sea and exactly those which I attempt to re-create in the work. Language being “the endless reinscription of the null point, that is the condition of the possibility of language and at the same time the condition of the impossibility of its transparency,”(25) have taken the leading role in conveying the sublime feeling of
elusiveness and the *mise-en-abyme* when in search of origin. The *creation* at the degree zero, be it an image or the idea, in sciences or in arts, will find its way into language only to escape it again. Therefore, it is in language that I look for my mediators, which Deleuze holds in such a high regard. (26) Them being the four elements — the four referents in the traversing of the sea of Absolute.

The four c’s (seas) that make up one, stand as the four elements in any classical and even modern division of ordering of the world. Like the four cardinal points in geographic orientation, the four seasons or the four states of matter, carbon, calculus, concept and creation — the bolded words across this text, have been the mediators in both my research and my work. The inexhaustible symbols, inseparable from any process of coming into existence, can be seen as *Magnum Opus*, an alchemical stages standing for the process of becoming. Equally like the classical elements of the Platonic theory of forms, pertaining to everything which exists. The fifth element, which I uncovered the last, but which is nonetheless present in all of the four, is the fifth c — the cosmos. As the limited space and time do not allow for the further elaborate of the symbolic worlds the notions of the five elements have opened, I will only relate them by what made them visible to me. Carbon appeared as the material principle of black, calculus proceed from the investigations in language, concept followed as the epitome of the symbol itself, conveying meaning through an (empty) form(27) and finally creation, the infinitely replicable cosmogony, stands as the central pole of the research. The cosmos came from the human, from the consciousness and the sensing self. For it is the cosmos that is in continuous becoming, and our grasp of the life in flux, is the grasp of the cosmos in us.

Conclusively, it seems that there is a certain urgency in finding the way to represent the unrepresentable and the infinite. As our “affinity to infinity,” visible in the plastic inventions, technoscientific knowledge and capitalist strivings for realisation, (28) takes an ever greater hold on us, finding the way to step ‘outside’ and to present the infinite as in-finite — is the critical one today. The urgency is not only found in the search for a critique to the established systems in society, but also in the human inability to valorise his/hers existence outside of these systems. In the postmodern world where the real and the virtual are constantly shifting places, where the human and the cosmos are becoming quantified at an extraordinary rate and where the utter value is assessed and not given *a priori*, human is evermore incapable of stepping outside of the given logos. Looking beyond the systems he had created, thus constructively leaving the established logic behind.

In my considerably mystical search of refiguring the world, I have aimed at refiguring the human. Placing the infinity in the language we universally use and in the images that escape definite conceptualisation, the human became the mirror image of cosmos, that it once was. Ever infolding and enfolding cosmos appears whether we look inwards or outwards, and this fact
alone — a sharing principle, implies the domain of spiritual, including the associative potential of myth and philosophy. And if the spiritual is the mediator between the personal and the political, (29) then our individual considerations of representing the unrepresentable have the potency for radical socio-political change in the world.
We're talking and you're repeating the words.
5. List of References


(2) An attempt to represent infinity or all-connectedness, an absurd task inseparable from the finite and separate *self*, is but a projection of ones' own limits, a reflection of the *self*. Mise-en-abyme, french term literally translated as 'placed into abyss' is often times found in literature, arts and critical theory describing a phenomenon reflection. Often times associated with the relationship between Microcosm and Macrocosm, it represents an infinite recursive reflection of the whole image in one or more of its parts. A vivid example is an infinity mirror — a pair of parallel mirrors, which creates a series of smaller and smaller reflections that appear to recede into an infinite distance.


(5) Translated by French poet and critic Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux in 1674. Longinus, sometimes referred to as Pseudo-Longinus, was a Greek teacher of rhetoric or a literary critic who may have lived in the 1st or third century AD. The original text has not been accurately dated, although some authors believe that it originated in the first century AD.


(8) Manifeste Dimensioniste, Revue N + 1, 1936

(9) [http://www.rsarchive.org/][Accessed on 15 May 2016]


(13) “[…) Leibniz saw in the mystic elegance of the binary system zero and one the image of Creation. The unity of the Supreme Being operating in the void by binary function would, he felt, suffice to make all beings from the void.” Marshal McLuhan, *Understanding Media - Number*, Routledge Classics, (1964) 2001 [124]

(14) Jupiter signal translated into poem, 7 Jul 2016

(15) “For myth is the instant vision of a complex process that ordinarily extends over a long period. Myth is a contraction or implosion of any process, and the instant speed of electricity confers the mythic
dimension ordinary industrial and social action today. We live mythically but continue to think fragmentarily and on single planes.” Marshal McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, Routledge Classics, (1964) 2001 [27-28]


(18) “What is this mysterious recursive operation that somehow entered into our evolutionary history? Simplest one imaginable. What is simplest one imaginable? Any recursive procedure, any algorithm that is going to create a system of digital infinity, is going to have embedded in it somewhere an operation that says: take two units that have already been formed, and make up a bigger unit. Operation: merge.” Noam Chomsky, 29 May 2010, Campus des Cordeliers, Paris 6e; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urrNTVxuCxs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urrNTVxuCxs) [Accessed: 10 Jul 2016]

(19) “Blanchot, following Sartre and anticipating Barthes, labels writing degree zero “l’écriture blanche.” In a manner reminiscent of a Malevich or Ryman white monochromatic painting, l’écriture blanche inscribes a withdrawal that opens the space of form(ation).” Mark C. Taylor, *Refiguring the Spiritual*, Columbia University Press, 2012 [46]

(20) “I have frequently spoken of word and image as viruses or as acting as viruses, and this is not an allegorical comparison.” William S. Burroughs, *Electronic Revolution*, Expanded Media Edition, Bonn, 1982 [59]

(21) “So important is symbolic activity in human life that one of the outstanding contemporary philosophers (i.e., Cassirer) has urged: “Instead of defining man as an animal rationale we should define him as an animal symbolicum. By doing so we can designate his specific difference. (Kaplan, 1961)” Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *Organismic Psychology and Systems Theory*, Clark University Press, 1968 [13]


(23) “Consciousness is internal relation to everything, not externally related. Consciousness is an internal relationship to the whole. We take in the whole and we act towards the whole. Whatever we have taken in determines basically what we are.” David Bohm, Art Meets Science and Spirituality in a Changing Economy conference, Stedelijk museum, Amsterdam, 1990

(24) “The poetic image is a sudden salience on the surface of the psyche, the lesser psychological causes of which have not been sufficiently investigated.” Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 1994 [xv]


(26) “Mediators are fundamental. Creation’s all about mediators. Without them nothing happens. They can be people — for a philosopher, artists or scientists; for a scientist, philosophers or artists — but things too, even plants or animals, as in Castaneda. Whether they’re real or imaginary, animate or inanimate, you have to form your mediators. It’s a series. If you’re not in some series, even a completely imaginary one, you’re lost. I need my mediators to express myself, and they’d never express themselves without me: you’re always working in a group, even when you seem to be on your own.” Giles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, Columbia University Press, 1995 [123]
“Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Emptiness is not separate from form, form is not separate from emptiness. Whatever is form is emptiness, whatever is emptiness is form.” The Heart Sutra, Prajna-paramita (Perfection of Wisdom) Sutra, Mahayana Buddhism

Continuing the line of thought previously put forward by the French philosopher and sociologist Jean-François Lyotard, Eric Kluitenberg, a media theoretician and a writer, searches for this ‘outside’ to be able to offer a critique to the ongoing digital mediation, technoscientific rationality and the utilitarian logic of commodification. He writes: “[…] avant-garde, the technosciences and advanced capitalism share a deep affinity to infinity. The avant-garde demonstrate the infinity of plastic invention, the technosciences demonstrate the infinity of knowing and advanced capitalism demonstrates the infinite ability to realize.” Eric Klutenberg, Delusive Space - A Sublime Encounter, NAi Publishers, Rotterdam, 2008 [348]

“The mediator between the personal and the political is the spiritual as it comes to full expression in the life of the artist and the work of art.” Joseph Beuys, quote from Mark C. Taylor, Refiguring the Spiritual, Columbia University Press, 2012 [21]