

2

ATTACKING OBJECTIFICATION: JERZY BEREŚ IN DIALOGUE WITH MARCEL DUCHAMP

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What was the relationship to the historic avant-gardes of the new forms of systemic critique proposed in the heterogeneous action-based practices that became so prevalent in the 1970s? Was the relationship between these differently inflected in a late socialist context than in a capitalist one? If so, how? And if the same theoretical frameworks cannot adequately illuminate both historical contexts, then which way should we look to find new models for thinking through these problems? In answer to these questions, this chapter analyses how a dissident artist in East-Central Europe forged an unexpected dialogue with an artist of the western historic avant-garde whose work can be read as an early critique of capitalism. To trace such dialogue is still to follow a new trajectory in Anglo-American art history which continues to exclude from its canon the neo-avant-garde of the former 'Eastern bloc', and would reluctantly admit that these marginalized, ephemeral and sometimes underground practices could produce any significant dialogue with a figure so paradoxically embraced by the canon as Marcel Duchamp. The focus of the chapter will be the unlikely set of conceptual exchanges orchestrated by the Polish action artist Jerzy Bereś with what was undoubtedly Duchamp's key strategy: the readymade. Bereś's five polemical 'dialogues' and later 'disputes' with Duchamp were a series of what the artist called manifestations that explored the wider ramifications of Duchamp's strategy for art but also for politics and people caught in particular political situations. Although these manifestations, which Bereś carried out between 1981 and 1995, all referred to the specific character of the Polish situation, they used the specificity of the local as an anchor for the exposition of general concerns. This universalizing ambition may explain the diverse locations for the five events: Lublin, Oxford, Warsaw, Bochum and, finally, Alma, Quebec.

Bere's called his actions manifestations largely so as to distance himself from the Happening phenomenon, claiming his works had a 'programme, purpose, and range of meaning', which he found altogether lacking in happenings. Bere's was not a *happener* then (although he was involved with the hippies), nor, he was equally keen to stress, was he a performance artist. And although he trained under one of Poland's most important sculptors, Xavery Dunikowski, he said he was not a sculptor (Bere's 1978: 50). When, in the 1950s, his teacher made a project for a fifteen-metre-high monument to Stalin, intended to stand in front of the vast Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, Bere's made up his mind to avoid at all costs this sort of 'entanglement' (the project was a fiasco as Dunikowski faced the complexities of state disapproval). Bere's recalls deciding that the most important matter for an artist working in these times was 'finding a conception, a formula that will be sufficiently independent that the artist will not become entangled in anything' (Bere's 2001: 23 [my trans.]). However, this did not mean that Bere's followed suit with the overwhelming majority of artists in Poland under Gierek, who steered well clear of politics so as to profit from the tolerance the state gave to any form of a-political art. He did say that he was not a political artist – but then nobody ever seems to admit outright to having been a political artist in East-Central Europe. Although Bere's's insistence on terminological distinctness came with the (neo) avant-garde territory, his choice of the term manifestation was more generous and revealing of the practice it defined than most. *The Oxford English Dictionary* definition points up three main registers of meaning: perceptual, political and spiritual.¹ These are, absolutely, the threads woven together in this work, Flux. Although Fluxus artists had previously appropriated this word (Flux-manifestations), they had not attempted or intended anything like the sustained investigation of its multiple dimensions that Bere's had embarked on in 1968, when he first began working in this form. Although the first Duchamp-related manifestation was carried out in the dramatic context of Polish realities of the Solidarity period, the series continued in much the same vein after the end of communism through to the aggressive capitalism of the 1990s a continuity that highlights further methodological challenges posed in writing an integrated history of post-conceptualist, action-based practice from both sides of the Iron Curtain.

As part of the first manifestation, Jerzy Bere's stood in front of a small fire, naked, with a sign around his neck, which read, in Polish, 'readymade' [Figure 1]. Bere's's expansion of Duchamp's strategy to include his physical self, framed in a socialist context, is an intriguing transposition. And it is one that requires a parallel expansion of our critical framework to accommodate it. Readymade translates into Polish as 'ready object'. This translation links the strategy more explicitly than the English does, to the condition of objecthood. By wearing the sign around his neck, Bere's proposed himself as a readymade; transforming himself from subject to object. Having kindled a fire on entering the room, and then hung the board around his neck, Bere's provocatively burned the sign in the fire. After this, he invited a young woman from the audience to join him in a game of chess. This sequence of events suggests a symbolic re-enactment of Duchamp's perhaps more mythic than actual 'giving up' of art for chess. If so, then Bere's began at the end; this was to be a dialogue less with the man than with his legacy, in relation to which the game of chess was the



Figure 1. *First Dialogue with Marcel Duchamp* (6 November 1981). Bureau for Artistic Exhibitions (BWA), Lublin. Photograph by Andrzej Polakowski. Courtesy of Andrzej Polakowski.

first of a number of challenges. Bereś's was naked and his female opponent clothed, in a pointed reconfiguration of the sexual politics rehearsed in Duchamp's notorious 1963 game with twenty-year-old Eve Babitz. Duchamp and his opponent reportedly played three games in quick succession (all of which he is said to have won in a few moves without once looking up from the board). Bereś's game, on the other hand, was drawn out. Whilst playing, he was also busy painting something on his body, a stroke for each move. He interrupted the game (with a prematurity that showed contempt for the competitive spirit of the game) as soon as he had painted on his torso a green question mark. If the aim of chess, as is often pointed out, is to 'mate', then Bereś deliberately failed to deliver. Taking charcoal from the fire, he crossed out the question mark on his body and made one under the name of Duchamp on the board on the wall, which he then signed and dated, in a provocative parody of the process of inscription.

Through this manifestation, Bereś positioned himself in critical opposition to that branch of the neo-avant-garde which conducted its formal

enquiries across the bodies of women (think only of Manzoni's *Living Sculptures* of 1961). However, this was partially incidental, for he stood opposed to objectification of every kind. In the *Second Dialogue with Marcel Duchamp* at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford on 17th September 1988, this time wearing a wooden board with the word 'object', he made a programmatic statement announcing that he was going to put an end to what he called 'the objectifying line in art', which, he argued, could be traced through Yves Klein's anthropometrics to Joseph Beuys's 'proposal of his life as a work' (Hanusek 1995, 142). He maintained that this tendency had begun with Duchamp's 'irresponsible' 'playing' with the object in the form of the readymade, and stated that Duchamp had been either short-sighted or irresponsible for failing to foresee, or just failing to care, that his irreverent gesture would end by institutional acceptance.² According to Bereś, the fetishization of Duchamp's readymade originals and other objects served as a pretext for the further spread of an 'objectification' that seemed (particularly to anyone not well versed in the intricacies of Duchamp's insistence on the 'indifference' of his selection process) to suggest that anything, including a person, could become art. However, behind the Dadaist spirit of irreverence and the immediate humour of a proposition such as

Fountain (1917), and arguably behind the replicas, lay the crucially serious message about the unnameable fetishism in art and society. It was this, I believe, that really interested Bereś. It was not a matter of being 'influenced' in any conventional sense, though. Bereś's engagement and disengagement with Duchamp was a way of waging his own war on fetishism.

Whilst acknowledging the obvious difficulties with applying the philosophy of Alain Badiou to a late socialist context, there may be a productive friction in reading Bereś's continuation of Duchamp's critique of fetishism as a sign of fidelity to the encounter with the readymades as Event, in the sense elaborated by Badiou in his most important work to date, 'Being and Event' (1988). I mean by this that the readymade can be read as being the first dimension in a truth process. An event, Badiou wrote, 'brings to pass 'something other' than the situation, opinions, instituted knowledges; the event is a hazardous [*hazardeux*], unpredictable supplement, which vanishes as soon as it appears' (Badiou: 67). (At least two of the readymades inadvertently fulfil Badiou's condition of 'vanishing' without attracting much interest, soon after being exhibited in 1916. The rest, arguably, never really appeared, having been left behind in Paris and lost, or just hung idly from the ceiling in Duchamp's New York studio – shadows. Although these were immortalized in a number of photographs, they remained un-curated for decades: the degree to which the readymade strategy is usually narrated as dependent on the legitimizing context of the gallery, from this point of view, becomes something of a misnomer.) Whether it was by virtue of 'choosing, designating, signing, inscribing, encountering, [or] exhibition', it was certainly on account of an action that the readymades were accomplished (Ades 152). And this action constituted, I would suggest, what Badiou has called an 'immanent break' which 'meant nothing according to the prevailing language and established knowledge of the situation' (Badiou 43). New challenges to the production of values were implied: systemic critique appeared on the table, arguably, for the first time. To continue with Badiou's schema, a new truth process was under way. For a truth process to develop, 'fidelity' had to follow: there needed to be a 'sustained investigation of the situation' in order to attain the end point: the production of a 'multiple truth' (Badiou 68). If the ontological characteristics of an event are, as Badiou says, 'to inscribe, to name, the situated void of that for which it is an event' then, in the case of the readymade, this void must be the negation of industrial production by the art market, or, more broadly, the reified heart of capital (Badiou 69). As Bereś showed, however, this critique could equally be brought to bear on the conditions of late socialism.

Bereś dramatically enacted his termination of what he called the 'objectifying line' in art through the symbolic smashing of an empty vodka bottle against a stone during the *Third Dispute with Marcel Duchamp* at the Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw (24th April 1990). By smashing the bottle, and insisting that it would never become a work of art, he took issue with Duchamp's sardonic remark that if he were to toss aside a bottle, people would be sure to call it a work of art. The errant narrative Bereś symbolically ruptured was, however, more interestingly tied to the problem of performative objects. In a performance scenario, Bereś claimed performer and audience objectify one another and, therefore, themselves. He declared his own aim to be to nourish 'a situation of partnership on the basis of subjectivity'

(Bere's 1990: 47 [my trans.]). (In Badiou's terminology, this amounts to an invitation to spectators to become 'subjects of truth'.) Bere's saw that this is a difficult path: a body artist, whether he wished it or not, faced a dilemma which he called an 'entanglement' – entanglement in, as he put it, a 'whole conglomeration of fetishisation, idolisation, from which there is no way out' (Bere's cited in Hanusek 1995: 147). Bere's's manifestations laid bare the power relations in which the performer is embroiled, but they also explosively attacked the dichotomy of subjects and objects that effects situations globally. Whilst a film or theatre director, Bere's suggested, could *perhaps* justify his instrumental treatment of his actors in the name of creating a perfect work of art, the 'creation of empires', as he pointed out in the address he made as part of the *Second Dialogue* (1988), at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, involves the 'objectification of millions of people', whilst paradoxically standing no chance whatever of becoming a 'perfect work' (Bere's 2002: 51). The analogy highlighted the aesthetic dimension of large-scale political projects. Towards the end of the same action, Bere's, again naked – this time with the word 'shame' painted on his body in the colours of the Polish flag – referred to the example of the objectification of the Polish nation by the politicians at Yalta (Hanusek 1995: 142). Margaret Thatcher was to visit Poland later that year, and Bere's provocatively said in his manifestation that he thought she would do well to bear this historical event in mind as she toured.

Bere's repeatedly drew attention to the objectification of nature in industrial societies. So much so, that the affirmation of nature was the end point towards which the dialogues seemed to proceed. The *Last Dispute with Marcel Duchamp*, at the Galeria Langage Plus, Alma, Quebec, 14 March 1995, was structured around the signing and dating of a stone. Bere's's readymades were not mass-produced objects but elements excised from the natural world. If Duchamp's inscriptions of indifferent everyday objects were intended as less than invested reflections on the aesthetic capability of the industrially produced, Bere's's action with the stone was a disavowal of this potential. Holding the stone in the air, he declared: 'what is natural, is stronger than what is artificial' (Hanusek 1995, 160 [my trans.]). The word he painted on his torso on this occasion was 'sense'. Bere's's commitment to nature had begun under Dunikowski. Bere's's early works deviated from the smooth surfaces of his teacher in all but material. The wooden sculptures he made, which he called 'phantoms' were rough trunks and branches, often virtually un-changed or re-assembled in crudely anthropomorphic forms and inserted into new situations. In 1966, whilst at a state-sponsored Symposium of Artists and Scientists in Puławy, Bere's found an impressive oak, uprooted and dumped by industrial machinery so as to clear space for a factory. His contribution to the exhibition that followed the symposium was to transport the tree to the site of the factory and put it upright once more. He called it his *Great Phantom* (*Zwid wielki*). A number of Bere's's ramshackle sculptures, or 'material documents', as he preferred to call them, disappeared soon after their exhibition on the instructions of the censors. Whilst Duchamp's *Bottle-Rack* (1914) looked too much like a 'product', Bere's's 'material documents' did not resemble products enough. It was clear to those with the power to decide that neither 'belonged' in a gallery.

At the heart of the network of problems mobilized by the readymade strategy lay a profound anxiety about the fragility of identity; and it is this anxiety that links Bereś to Duchamp (and both of them, though differently, to Freud). Duchamp, through his readymades, investigated the distinction between the work that is not a work of art and the work that is, outrageously proposing that an object made by workers in a factory might have the rarefied value reserved for art (a distinction that would transmute, by the late 1930s, into the *infra-thin*). Bereś's archaic sculptures and his meticulously executed manifestations pushed back the horizons still further, to highlight the irresponsible abuse of nature at the root of industrial civilizations. His environmental commitment was threatening a threat embodied in the powerful, looming 'phantoms'. The pressing question of the day was no longer to tackle the lure of the commodity as a philosophical protest, but on a practical level, to address the environmental consequences of the industry that produces these commodities. Bereś commented bitterly on how the People's Republic of Poland 'measured its success by the number of smoking chimneys' (Bereś 1993: 181 [my trans.]). The rampant consumerism that followed the entrance to the free market has hardly improved matters. Although the chimneys were kept smoking in the People's Republic of Poland, the situation on the ground was at breaking point. The contradictions of reality became glaringly apparent by 1980: According to one contemporary account from that year, just 'driving from Łódź to Warsaw, one could find shops selling the same cuts of meat at four different prices – a novelty for the planned economy. At Huta Warszawa, the works' canteen alternated the new and old prices, sometimes several times a day' (Kemp-Welch 2007:159). Food prices had been frozen at 1960s rates by huge subsidies, and the government, on the eve of disaster, tried to tackle this economic time bomb by introducing, unannounced, a tiered system of pricing, giving better cuts of meat to 'commercial' shops, which sold for higher prices. These price increases were amongst the factors that mobilized the spread of strike action that provided the base for 'Solidarność'.

The Solidarity movement is explored from a theoretical perspective in Bereś's important essay 'The Work as Stimulator of Judgement'. He describes it as a 'creative fact', a term he generally used in place of the word 'art' (Bereś 1981: 43). The success of a creative fact was for Bereś measured by its capacity to interrupt the suspension of judgement that all too often is at the root of social as well as aesthetic stagnation. Bereś's description of Solidarity as a paradigm of a social 'work', which 'brought together millions of people', serves as an unexpected counterpoint to his dystopian comments about the dangers of the 'perfect work' (Bereś 1981: 52). His manifestations from the early 1980s were tied to the struggle to provoke judgement. As well as the *First Dialogue*, in November 1981, Bereś made his famous *Romantic Manifestation*, in which, arriving with his crooked wooden 'romantic cart', he lit a series of fires in the main square in Krakow [Figure 2]. Around these were painted the words: 'fire of hope', 'fire of dignity', 'fire of love', 'fire of truth' and 'fire of freedom'. That these words had been removed by morning is testimony of their power. (The same thing happened when he repeated the action in November 2000.) Such words galvanized popular involvement and attracted attention. Bereś also controversially incorporated into his programme religious terminology and ritual, calling some of his manifestations 'masses' and some of his wooden assemblages 'altars' and rehearsing actions that approximated practices such as transubstantiation and flagellation.

When martial law was declared in December 1981, many artists agreed to boycott official cultural institutions. Instead, churches became home to exhibitions. Bereś saw enormous potential: 'The spectators, who came to the church for patriotic or religious reasons and found an exhibition there, tended to overcome a certain reluctance, make a certain effort, to get to the art' (Bereś 1990: 43 [my trans.]). The Catholic Church and its rituals are a constant frame for his manifestations. If Duchamp appropriated for his own ends the 'language of industry', as Molly Nesbit has argued (see Nesbit), the language appropriated by Bereś has been that of Catholicism. The particular circumstances of Poland produced a situation in which, for a time at least, religion became the most effective medium for transgression: a pragmatic response to circumstances. Interestingly, though, religious symbolism is still prominent in the *Fourth Dispute with Marcel Duchamp* (which, Bereś mentioned in passing, had as its secondary theme a dialogue with Beuys) at the Museum Bochum, in the Ruhr (11 May 1991). But by this time, I think, the reasoning behind this language was different. Bereś entered the gallery naked with a rope around his neck, and waited whilst a series of officials gave introductory speeches (waiting long enough to make the bureaucracy seem jarring). He painted on his body the word 'geist' and, in a strange restating of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers, he tied knots in the rope and made of it a 'crown' which he put on his head. The manifestation culminated with Bereś standing on a podium wearing his crown and with the word *geist* on his torso, asking that the audience judge whether what they see is a good work of art. The Protestant Bishops, who made up the majority of the audience on this occasion (being gathered in the region for a symposium that had also become the occasion for an exhibition on the theme of Spirituality in Art), were eager to debate the questions Bereś had raised through his piece.

Bereś materializes concepts: a word becomes a body. The artist acts as their vehicle exploring how they resonate: de-familiarizing them, singling them out for consideration in unlikely contexts, in an acknowledgement that any truth-process must pass through language. His manifestations frequently end with an invitation to open discussion and to share a drink. Social and supernatural collide in a ritual of communion/consumption. The artist repeatedly states that his aim is 'open dialogue', suggesting the usual neo-avant-garde rhetoric of desire for audience fusion and the erasure of the presumed subject/object relations of spectatorship. Jacques Rancière has recently suggested that the problem lies in the terms of this equation rather than in relations themselves: 'one condition typically thought necessary for the politicization of art is the becoming-active of the spectator' (Rancière: 264). Rancière contends that the premise upon which such an assumption is based that 'to be a spectator means to be passive' is false (Rancière: 264). He argues that 'to look and to listen requires the work of attention, selection, reappropriation, a way of making one's own film, one's own text, one's own installation out of what the artist has presented' (Rancière: 264). Emancipation begins, therefore, 'when we dismiss the opposition between looking and acting' (Rancière: 264). Although his humble invitation to dialogue shows he intuited a solution, Bereś himself, as previously mentioned, could not see his way out of the problem of the performer's 'entanglement'.

Badiou's particular definition of the subject, as *induced* by the process of truth, may provide a way out of the dichotomy by which Bereś was confounded. He gives as a model 'the subject

of love': 'the subject induced by fidelity to an amorous encounter [...] the lovers as such enter into the composition of one loving subject, who exceeds them both' (Badiou: 43). In the same way, works of art are not 'objects' any more than their 'authors' are their 'subjects', they become, rather, 'subject-points' into whose composition the artist enters (Badiou: 43). Bereś's manifestations might then become part of the 'evental' chain proposed by Duchamp stages in the same truth-process. Therefore, it is not a case of Bereś merely adopting Duchamp's strategy and applying it to his situation. The dialogues were a polemical continuation of the same project that, I would argue, took advantage of their altogether different perspective not only to point out weaknesses of the 'original' strategy, but also to salvage what was most radical from within the strategy and use it to explore the possibilities of constructing a new mode of collective subjectivity.

In view of the scepticism and cynicism brought about by the monumental failure of communism's utopian aims and the stagnant consensus as to the 'end of grand narratives', it is perhaps surprising, if, in the end, refreshing to find Badiou returning to unfashionable concepts such as truth. In the debate over what forms of action/activism are appropriate to the situation of globalization, the voice of Jerzy Bereś shares this uncompromising simplicity. He is undaunted by exposing his ageing, naked body to public scrutiny. Bereś is widely considered one of the most poetic of twentieth-century Polish artists, a true Romantic; this unfortunately serves to obfuscate his radical capabilities. Piotr Piotrowski, the foremost Polish art historian of post-war art, has constructed the following argument around Bereś's perceived Romanticism:

Referring to the grand narratives of Polish culture, the romantic myth of the artist-prophet and the sense of national mission, he did not put tradition into doubt or propose any kind of critical discourse. On the contrary, Bereś explored the national heritage as a source of authority to criticise the reality of Communism (Piotrowski 2002: 233).

Although this assessment of the relation between tradition and the contemporary situation in Bereś's manifestations is undeniably correct, Piotrowski is, I think, mistaken in suggesting that Bereś therefore proposes no critical discourse of his own. He contends that this 'tradition and its related identity politics [cannot] match the danger of globalisation' and may not be able to 'resist the temptation of nationalism, trying to defend the local against global cultural developments' (Piotrowski 2002: 233). And this might certainly be the case if, indeed, this sort of romantic and prophetic 'national mission' were an adequate summary of Bereś's project. I would contend, however, that this description does not do his strategies justice. His project is far broader: more complex, more self-reflexive and more interesting. Bereś is well aware of the dangers of fetishization of the nation. In the *Third Dispute* (1990), he issues the following warning: 'the tragedy begins in the situation when a given nation considers itself to be the chosen nation. And I would like to warn my nation, that is to say the Poles, us, against making of ourselves a chosen nation...This is the source of nationalism' (Bereś cited in Hanusek 1995: 147 [my trans.])

What models of subjectivity should art purvey in the post-socialist situation? Piotrowski rightly acknowledges that a paradigm shift away from the opposition national/international is needed. In the end, he proposes the model of feminist, gay and ethnic-minority cultures that, he claims, through a 'deconstruction of the imperial subject (...) point to distinct places from which they speak and to specific values which they affirm, formulating distinct identity politics' (Piotrowski 2002: 233). In the ex-West, however, there is growing feeling that such identity politics, whilst important, may itself mark an abandonment of a larger political project. One of the main challenges faced in the twenty-first century is how to overcome the collapse of radicalism into 'identity politics' (see Eagleton 1990: 5-7). For Badiou, 'minorities' are defined externally and, therefore, not the subject of truth. Their political meaning is problematic. He asks: 'Can this identity, in itself, function in a progressive fashion - that is, other than as a property invented by the oppressors themselves?' (Badiou 2001:107). I would argue that Jerzy Bereś may provide a more flexible model, if we see in his extraordinary dialogue with Duchamp, a crucial acknowledgement of how singularity and universality intersect. Bereś's example seems to propose a new mode of being that refuses the problematic of individual versus collective in favour of convocation to a multiply conceived truth, in which communication, even if much of this must be in the form of a multitude of opinions, is the key. And if Bereś seems at times ridiculous, this may well be because 'the power of a truth is also a kind of powerlessness' (Badiou 2001: 85). This is so because there must always remain 'at least one point that truth cannot force': this Badiou calls the 'unnameable' of a truth. In political truth, one such unnameable is 'community' (Badiou 2001: 85).

'One just has to have contact with authentic reality', Bereś once wrote, 'Our post-war struggle could be decoded on the principle that there exists authentic reality and artificial reality, built through propaganda, ideology' (Bereś 1990: 46-47). This, though, turned out not to be exclusively a problem of Stalinism, or of the Gierek era. The fact that Bereś continues to repeat many of his earlier manifestations today is a sign that we need to be on our guard still. Bereś did not stop with the regime change. Repeating his Romantic Manifestation in 2000, Bereś commented that 'the moral exultation which was synonymous with those times [the early 80s] seems to be petering out and perhaps bringing it back at this moment will be significant' (Bereś 2000). As Jerzy Hanusek observed in the mid-1990s, although one might suppose

...that after a systemic revolution, which we have just experienced, [Bereś's manifestations] would lose much of their relevance [...] the reverse is the case. Intensifying certain processes and slowing down others, the communist system let the artist have insights into the nature of social and political phenomena which in the democratic system are disguised and alleviated, or seem as natural as air and hence do not provoke reflection (Hanusek 1995:2).

Bereś's rituals, quite simply, cause us to pause and reflect. In the end, the role they claim for art is surprisingly humble; perhaps it is no more than to provoke discussion about how we form our material and spiritual values about reality and its transformation. Still, to achieve such discussion would be a great deal.

Notes

1. i).
 - a. The action of making manifest; exposition, explanation; the fact of being manifested; the demonstration, revelation, or display of the existence, presence, qualities, or nature of some person or thing.{...}
 - b. An instance of making manifest; the particular form in which someone or something is manifested; that by which something is manifested.{...}
 - c. *Christian Church*. The action of making known to another the state of one's conscience. *rare*.{...}
 - d. *Demonstration*.{...}
 - ii). *Spanish Law*. A process by which an accused person might be protected from the animosity and precipitate action of judges and removed to a special prison out of their reach. *Obs. rare*.{...}
 - iii). A public act on the part of a government intended as a display of its power and determination to enforce some demand. *Obs. rare*.{...}
 - iv). *Spiritualism*. A phenomenon or collection of phenomena by which the presence of a spirit is supposed to be rendered perceptible. *Freq. in pl.*{...} *Oxford English Dictionary Online* accessed 2001.
2. Art historians continue to disagree as to whether the 1964 editions of replica readymades that Duchamp authorized undermined his critique of authenticity or reiterated it when questioned by Joan Bakewell about his decision to permit the replicas, Duchamp replied: 'repetition is good and you know why, because the collectors can collect'.

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