

**CRYPT, MAUSOLEUM, CENOTAPH; SEPULCHRE: Metaphors of encryption***CRIPTA, MAUSOLEO, CENOTAFIO; SEPULCRO: Metáforas de la encriptación**Angus McDonald<sup>1</sup>*

Staffordshire University

**Abstract:**

Sanin-Restrepo's theory of encryption is taken here as an instance of a practice of critique by allegory; thus the productivity of the theory can be developed and demonstrated by working through the allegorical meanings of encryption, one interpretation of which can choose to focus on the crypt. This allegorical meaning is distinct from symbolic meaning, using Benjamin's distinction. We focus on the body and the structure, working through the instances of the visibility of the site and the presence or absence of the body. The question of visibility is significant since encryption deals with the hidden: is a crypt, then, a hiding place? We find four combinations: the concealed presence of a body, in a crypt; the publicised presence of a body, in a mausoleum; the publicised absence of a body, in a cenotaph; the concealed absence of a body, in a sepulchre. This four-way combination allows consideration of Agamben, Deleuze, Negri, and a critical Hegelianism that revisits Feuerbach, Stirner and Marx on alienation, mapping the four metaphors in turn onto these four theoretical positions. This study of the theoretical implications of studying different modes of commemorating the corpse thus exemplifies the re-thinking possible by way of critique by allegory.

**Key words:**

Crypt, Mausoleum, Cenotaph, Sepulchre, Allegory, Critique

**Resumen:**

La teoría de la encriptación de Sanin-Restrepo se toma aquí como una instancia de una práctica de crítica por alegoría; así, la productividad de la teoría puede desarrollarse y demostrarse trabajando a través de los significados alegóricos de la encriptación, una interpretación que puede centrarse en la cripta. Utilizando la distinción de Benjamin entendemos que este significado alegórico es distinto del significado simbólico. Nos centramos en el cuerpo y la estructura, trabajando a través de las instancias de la visibilidad del sitio y la presencia o ausencia del cuerpo. La cuestión de la visibilidad es importante, ya que la encriptación se ocupa de lo oculto: ¿es una cripta, entonces, un escondite? Encontramos cuatro combinaciones: la presencia oculta de un cuerpo, en una cripta; la presencia pública y publicitada de un cuerpo, en un mausoleo; la ausencia publicitada de un cuerpo, en un cenotafio; La ausencia oculta de un cuerpo, en un sepulcro. Esta combinación de cuatro vías permite considerar a Agamben, Deleuze, Negri y un hegelianismo crítico que revisita Feuerbach, Stirner y Marx sobre la alienación, mapeando las cuatro metáforas en estas cuatro posiciones teóricas. Este estudio de las implicaciones teóricas de estudiar diferentes modos de conmemorar el cadáver ejemplifica así el replanteamiento posible a modo de crítica por alegoría.

**Palabras clave:**

Cripta, Mausoleo, Cenotafio, Sepulcro, Alegoría, Crítica.

Situating Sanin-Restrepo's theory requires first a decision as to the appropriate framework. The critical legal theory tradition provides one such framework. In the broader territory of critical theory of constitutions, Sanin-Restrepo has proposed a theory of the encryption of power. In responding, we have to consider what is new in the theory, and how it relates to the pre-existing territory. It is noteworthy that that work is the primary focus of the book *Decolonizing Democracy* – the work of situating his theory in relation to, primarily, Deleuze, Agamben (Agamben 1998) and Negri (Sanin-Restrepo 2016). The book is not primarily a work of proposing a theory with which to, at least in this book, interpret and change the world. The empirical referent remains largely absent. Instead, the book concentrates on the impact the new theory can have on disrupting and

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor Emeritus, Staffordshire University, UK. ORCID: 0000-0003-0454-3208

exposing flaws in the work of the other theorists under discussion – those mentioned, and the sources they have in common, entailing fresh readings of figures such as Aristotle and Spinoza. In responding to Sanin-Restrepo's theory, therefore, one option is to follow the encounters he has with these theorists, and to express agreement or disagreement with his readings of traditional and newer, contemporary philosophy. Or, alternatively, to look for real world applications of the theory. In either case, the underlying direction would be a discussion of the interpretation of the theory, or its application, aimed in some sense at a consensus as to its meaning and truth value, which would take us in a Habermasian direction, one not followed here (Habermas 1987). In doing so, I by no means disparage or diminish the task I am abjuring, of asking, "Is the theory true?", but I will move in a more Foucauldian direction, at least at first, towards questions more akin to these: what are the effects of the theory? What, ultimately, is the productivity of this theory? (Foucault 1970).

A theory is a way of looking at things. In an image Sanin-Restrepo also deploys, theories are like Spinoza's lenses, machines for bringing things into sharp focus. This usage is of course supported by the etymology of theory, from the Greek root meaning "to gaze upon". But immediately we hit a paradox. The theory of encryption: that would mean to try to gaze upon something hidden from view, an impossibility. Can there coherently be a theory of encryption, a gaze upon something hidden? We need to consider the notion of encryption, of hiding (and also, as I have discussed elsewhere, steganography, the hiding of the fact of hiding (McDonald in Sanin-Restrepo, ed 2018, 27-47). What is being encrypted, hidden; what is the theory putting before the gaze, "unhiding", exposing to view? Is the theory of encryption a practice of decryption, and what happens next when the hidden object or hidden practices are exposed to scrutiny? There is a certain ambivalence in Sanin-Restrepo's approach regarding the answer to the question, what is it that is encrypted? Our main title here answers "power", but it is not difficult to find other objects – the constitution encrypts democracy by way of liberalism, the "hidden people" of the demos are encrypted by the liberalism of the constitution which functions to encrypt, to hide, power. As best I can, I unpack these layers as follows: first, the people, the bearers and subjects of democracy, become hidden, the hidden people; this is also the operation of coloniality. This concealment is made operative by the constitution, which speaks openly of a distribution of power (that is what constitutions do), map power, but also esoterically conceals the actual distribution of power, hides its mode of operation, the effect of which is to hide the people. Is this perhaps a theory of ideology by another name? After the people, and the constitution, the third encryption is the encryption of power. Power is encrypted insofar as the constitution hides the distribution of power in a language of legitimation (This can be challenged - the constitution in liberalism legitimates power, thus

acknowledges it rather than hides it.) What is encrypted then is not power as such, but illegitimate power, the illegitimacy of power. This triple-layered process of encryption is the object of the theory, the object to be decrypted. Even with this taxonomy, an attempt at clarification, the would-be user of this theory still stumbles over the paradox of a theory of encryption. The gaze focused upon the hidden. It is a theory, self-described, because its author's intent is to do with, to contend with, other theories, identify blindspots (what is hidden from their view, what they fail to see – primarily coloniality) – but is theory the best name for this practice of critique? Does the critique of theory necessitate the production of a new theory? The theory of critique works by working within the theory under discussion immanently, undermining its assumptions, practicing immanent critique in the Frankfurt tradition, or, equally, deconstruction or psychoanalytical readings in the practices of Derrida and Lacan and their followers. If at this point I question the self-description of the theory of encryption as a theory, I do not in any way mean to diminish the innovative significance it holds when I suggest that it is not so much a theory as a metaphor. Encryption is productive more as a new metaphor than as a new theory. (Musiol in Sanin-Restrepo, ed 2018, 157-178). The distinction is not watertight, nor is it meant to be. Both a theory (a gaze) and a metaphor (the transfer of a phrase to bear upon an object or action not literally accurately to spark awareness of a resemblance) produce new ways of looking. If we accept a metaphor as working, in this case, we accept that a whole vocabulary of encryption, carrying with it notions of hiding, encoding, concealing and so on, makes us look at our subject – power, constitution, democracy – differently. And as we are here to discuss a theory, our level of discourse here is already metatheoretical. But if I reposition my engagement as not theoretical or metatheoretical but an engagement with the metaphorical (hopefully not thus meta-metaphorical), how then does our object come to look, when looked at this way? With hindsight, my own first engagement with encryption, in the *Decrypting Power* collection, already moved in this direction. It took encryption as a metaphor and looked for ways to extend the fruitfulness of the metaphor by adding other vivid illustrations of what the metaphor of encryption looks like – by way of the cryptic messages of the witches in *Macbeth*, the unavowable awareness in Rivette's short film *Le Coup du Berger*, and in Poe's short story *the Purloined Letter*. I see now that what I was doing was pushing the metaphor of encryption through a focus on the cryptic, the encoded, into a string of metaphors, achieving a kind of narrativity. This narrativity of multiple metaphors is nothing more than a practice of allegory, and in the rest of this paper I plan to repeat the practice, with a different emphasis. Before getting there, I'll conclude this methodological explanation by offering a little more theoretical ballast in support of a practice of critique by allegory.

In his study of *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Benjamin contrasts the practice of the Tragic (and here the English title translation is unhelpful and misleading) with that of the *Trauerspiel* or Mourning-Play (Benjamin 1985). As Steiner's introduction to the English translation has it, the contrast between the Tragic and the Sorrowful/Mournful *Trauerspiel* is a contrast between a grounding in myth, and a grounding in history respectively. The Baroque drama of the *Trauerspiel* is emblematic/allegoric and the expressive modes of the two genres also take opposing directions, with the Tragic deploying the symbolic, the *Trauerspiel*, the allegorical. The *Trauerspiel* is a spectacle in a way the Tragic drama is not, being a matter of interiority and ultimately silence. Of necessity over-schematic, the point is the contrast between the symbol and the allegory, and the superiority of the allegory for our critical purposes, thus justifying a view of encryption as allegorical, a concatenation of the metaphorical as working against a reading of democracy, constitution and power through the idea, concept and notion of the symbol. In Benjamin, the symbol is described as "the very incarnation and embodiment of the idea" whereas the allegory is "a general concept, or an idea which is different from itself" (Benjamin 1985, 164) The symbol is "self-contained, concentrated and steadfastly remains itself" while the allegory is "successively progressing, dramatically mobile, (a) dynamic representation of ideas which has acquired the very fluidity of time" (Benjamin 1985, 165). Benjamin asserts that "The measure of time for the experience of the symbol is the mystical instant in which the symbol assumes the meaning into its hidden.....interior" (Benjamin 1985, 165). This is contrasted with "the violence of the dialectic movement within these allegorical depths". (Benjamin 1985, 166) "The allegory of the 17<sup>th</sup> century is not convention of expression, but expression of convention. At the same time expression of authority, which is secret in accordance with the dignity of its origin, but public in accordance with the extent of its validity." (Benjamin 1985, 175). Hopefully, we can discern here an allegorical method, but also object, subject-matter. As Benjamin expresses it,

(...) the allegorization of the physis can only be carried through in all its vigour in respect of the corpse. And the characters of the *Trauerspiel* die, because it is only thus, as corpses, that they can enter into the homeland of allegory. It is not for the sake of immortality that they meet their end, but for the sake of the corpse (...) seen from the point of view of death, the product of the corpse is life. (Benjamin 1985, 217-18)

But we must not halt the movement here. "Ultimately, in the death-signs of the baroque the direction of allegorical reflection is reversed; on the second part of its wide arc it returns, to redeem." (Benjamin 1985, 232).

Allegory, of course, thereby loses everything that was most peculiar to it, the secret, privileged knowledge...all this vanishes with this one about-turn....and this is the essence of melancholy immersion: that its ultimate object....turn into allegories, and that these allegories fill out and deny the void in which they are represented, just as, ultimately, the intention does not faithfully rest in the contemplation of bones, but faithlessly leaps forward to the idea of resurrection. (Benjamin 1985, 233)

Note that Benjamin finds faithfulness in the contemplation of the materiality of the bones, and faithlessness in the contemplation of the ideality of resurrection, where we might expect the inverse, that resurrection would be the crux of faith. In this reversal we can understand how allegory becomes, in its own reversal, redemptive.

By insisting that Sanin-Restrepo's theory is rather a metaphor, that this metaphor can be proliferated into a practice of the allegorical, it should be clear that this method of engagement and discursive response operates differently from a dispute on the field of theory. Here we find identified the typical subject matter of the allegorical, namely the corpse, the bones, and a timely ultimate inversion, and can propose a tracing of these themes through another reading of what is at stake in encryption. I have read encryption on an earlier engagement as the disguising of messages in language, encoding and defeating transparency. On this occasion, a different allegorical tack will be taken, developing from the metaphor of the crypt which is contained in the notion of encryption. In encryption, we put something – the body, the corpse – in the crypt. Encryption is a sort of hiding of the body in burial. And we have observed already that one of the objects hidden in encryption is the people, the hidden people of democracy. Then, let us look allegorically at the body of the people, encrypted, and the role of the dead in the life of the people. This gives this paper its title: Crypt, Mausoleum, Cenotaph, and, adding the fourth term, Sepulchre. From these four terms, metaphors of encryption, will be derived a certain narrative pertaining to the body of the people, its encryption, in a combinatory form which links presence and absence, enclosing and disclosing, hiding and proclaiming. (All features of the encryption theory's analysis of the constitution, its operation on the people, the work of/for power). In four stages, as follows:

- 1) The Crypt refers to the act of placing the body in an inconspicuous place – not unknown, not precisely hidden, but requiring sometimes permission, sometimes knowledge, to achieve access. The Crypt is a concealed place for enshrining the presence of the body.
- 2) The Mausoleum is a public monument which presents to an audience a conspicuous structure which places the body in a framework which commemorates and amplifies its significance. The Mausoleum is the opposite of a Crypt, a revealed place for enshrining the presence of the body.

3) The Cenotaph likewise performs the same function as a Mausoleum, again a public monument of commemoration, a permanent performance of significance and memory, but with the essential difference that the body or bodies commemorated are absent, remembered in absence not presence. The Cenotaph is a revealed place for enshrining the absence of the body.

The remaining, fourth possibility, the final combination of concealing or revealing, and presence or absence would be a concealed place for enshrining the absence of the body. The Easter story is the clue. This must be the Sepulchre, specifically the biblical Holy Sepulchre, from which, on the third day, the body had absented itself. For which there are these words: “they came unto the Sepulchre .... and they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body....And...two men....said unto them, ‘Why seek ye the living among the dead?’”(Bible, Luke 24:1-5)

Taking these in turn, the core metaphor is the Crypt as the site of the body of the people’s encryption. The crypt of a church lies beneath the floor, originally a storage place for relics, later a burial vault for revered corpses. Although not prominent, the crypt can be the *raison d’etre* of the church; it is the presence of the body in the crypt which makes the church a holy place. The crypt is the site kept out of sight. The exacerbation of this is found, inevitably, in an Edgar Allan Poe short story, the Black Cat. In the story, the protagonist/narrator kills his wife as she seeks to protect the black cat of the title from the narrator’s violence. He hides the body: “I set myself forthwith, and with entire deliberation, to the task of concealing the body” (Poe 1982, 186) “I decided to wall it up in the cellar”. (Poe 1982, 186). Crypts in cellars were a feature in large family estates in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Not content with a simple burial, he encrypts the body behind a false wall. The cat has meanwhile disappeared. When the police arrive to examine the cellar, suspicions having arisen, they notice nothing until “through the mere frenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily with a cane which I held in my hand upon that very portion of the brickwork behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom”. The consequence: “ I was answered by a voice from within the tomb – by a cry, a scream, a howl, a shriek” (Poe 1982, 187). The denouement – “the walls torn down, and upon the corpse’s head sat the hideous beast whose informing voice had consigned me to the hangman” (Poe 1982, 188). What the Poe story highlights is the *presence* of the body in the crypt, that encrypting the body is not an exercise of hiding the body, as it is the acknowledged resting place (or in the Poe story, if hiding is the intent, it fails by the cry of the intended victim, figure of the survivor of abuse revealing the abuser’s victim.). It is nonetheless, in a place of ambiguity, not prominent, there, but not the focus of attention. If we take this as a figure of the hidden people, what can we conclude? The hidden people, upon whose presence the edifice is constructed, are at

the vanishing point – the point towards which the whole construction tends but itself not visible, infinitely receding. When Sanin-Restrepo’s concluding words refer to “the banishing point of sovereignty” (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 207) I am not at all certain that this banishing point is not rather, or also, the vanishing point, indicating the seizure of the exception, the disappearance of sovereignty. Of the theories discussed by Sanin-Restrepo, Agamben is the figure most closely aligned with the metaphor of the body in the crypt – the encrypted body embodies “the passion of not being and not doing” (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 72-3) “the truly potent will be only those who, in the moment of the passage to the act do not annul their potency of not being”. (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 93, quoting Agamben 2015, 253) The hidden people remain not only encrypted but embalmed. This *stasis* indicates that in terms of allegorical narrative, the crypt is but the first of our locations for the body, and, until put in motion is eminently in danger of becoming a symbol rather than a step in an allegorical narrative (returning to Benjamin’s contrast). It also appears that the attempt to fix the crypt as an instance of a concealed place is becoming unstable – while the body is generally concealed, the crypt itself is inconspicuous, but clearly signposted by the church architecture. This cryptic character of the crypt is not, then, absolute, but relative, relative in relation to its opposite, to which we now move, the mausoleum.

The contested site for this transition is the *Valle de los Caídos*, the Valley of the Fallen. Everything about Franco’s burial site is contested, including the presence of Franco’s corpse there. The Valley is a mass burial site of the victims of fascism, also the burial place of Primo de Rivera and Franco, although the exhumation and transfer of Franco’s body elsewhere is a case study of the meanings that circulate around a mausoleum. That Franco’s body was refused by the present government of Spain an eternal monumental resting place of his own choosing, and even of a transfer to the dignity of a cathedral, but instead an exile from the public realm to a private familial tomb tells us much about the sensitivities of the mausoleum as display. Fascist monumentalism has been decisively rejected in favour of a removal of all reference to Franco’s public role in Spanish history, at least in the manner of his burial. The *Valle de los Caídos* site is a crypt, being hollowed out underground, but also a mausoleum, being a massive construction freighted with intended visible significance, a symbolism that contests the question of historical memory, generating a multiplicity of metaphorical meanings – it is the very contestation of meaning which moves the discussion from symbol to allegory, and it is clear in our move from crypt to mausoleum, from the inconspicuous to the bombastically imposing, that the mausoleum inhabits a quite different register of commemoration of the corpse – and as the Franco controversy reveals, that the presence or absence of the corpse is crucial to those meanings. We might also consider Lenin’s mausoleum, the visibility of the embalmed corpse, and the presence alongside Lenin of Stalin from 1953 until

its removal in 1961 as further evidence for the extreme signification given to the presence on display of the corpse, and what it means for historical memory and present regimes. Debate about replacing Lenin's organic remains with a synthetic resin copy also highlights the controversial status of the mausoleum.

This much is clear: the mausoleum is a spectacle, a place of theatre and performance, a show put on for an audience. In Benjamin's terms, the interiority and silence of the tragic belong to the crypt; the mourning-play, the *Trauerspiel* belongs to the mausoleum. Let us work through this theatre of the performance of mourning and death in the mausoleum by way of one of the greatest theatrical scenes set in a mausoleum – the drama that concludes Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The “ancient vault” or “monument”, clearly a mausoleum, where “all the kindred of the Capulets lie” (Shakespeare 1988, 1053-1088, Act 4 Scene 1 Line 112), becomes through Friar Lawrence's drug the place where Juliet's “poor living corpse (is) closed in a dead man's tomb” (Shakespeare 1988, 1053-1088, Act 5 Scene 2 Line 29). Romeo, unaware of the deceit, discovers, as he thinks, Juliet's corpse, and takes poison to end his own life, successfully. Juliet awakes, discovers Romeo dead, stabs herself and dies. “Never was a story of more woe” (Shakespeare 1988, 1053-1088, Act 5 Scene 3 Line 308), indeed. To recap: a feigned death, misread as a true death, inspires a suicide, which true death, which corpse, inspires another suicide, another death, another corpse. Aptly, all performed in a mausoleum. The theatre of death, where hidden bodies end their lives in despair, where a simulated death produces real death. This captures the essence of the mausoleum – that it is a second level framing and reproduction of the event of the corpse enclosed in the crypt, a magnified further exposition of the event of the corpse enclosed, a blown-up rhetoric which seeks to impose meaning, be a symbol, but so much less so than the crypt can it stabilise into a symbol, instead narrating multiple metaphors into the narratives of allegory. (Remember, however indirectly I may be speaking, I have never lost sight of the fact that the hidden bodies I am discussing stand for the hidden people of democracy – the whole process at stake here is one of allegory.) Just as the theorist of the body in the crypt was Agamben, the theorist of the body in the mausoleum is Deleuze. In his discussion of simulacrum (although Baudrillard's analysis goes further (Baudrillard 1994). Sanin-Restrepo summarises Deleuze thus: “the model can only be defined when identity is assigned to a copy as the essence of the model, and the representation of resemblance is marked within its body as the only way to attain sensitive representation in the world”. (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 55). “given the void and impossible place of the model, the copy erects itself as the model”, “a particular and finite version begins to fill the void place of the model” (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 54). This describes the process and reason of the mausoleum, and where the body in the



mausoleum is the body of the hidden people, the architecture of the mausoleum holds forth the rhetoric of democracy. So many mausoleums in the classical architecture of the Capitol.

The presence or absence of the organic body takes us into the transition from Mausoleum to Cenotaph, our third structure, differing from the Mausoleum by the absence of the body. Indeed, the etymology is “empty tomb”. In the case of the Cenotaph, the metaphorical function has broken free from the connection to the organic corpse and floated free into the abstraction of “The Glorious Dead”. The Cenotaph, (and to complicate matters, we might also mention the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – where “a body, anybody, takes the place, fills the space) is often a memorial to military loss, a place of patriotic remembrance, a commitment to eternal recall. From Crypt to Mausoleum to Cenotaph, the direction towards abstraction and away from concretisation is clear. The Cenotaph abstracts itself so far from the concrete character of the corpse, as to be all idea, all generality, no specificity, no instantiation. The Cenotaph is the realm of the ritual performance of obsequies to an idea performed before an absence, but an absence made visible by a monumentality. One sees the idea of death, without the presence of a body. As befits the level of abstraction now attained, although a narrative thread has brought us here, unlike the Crypt and the Mausoleum, there is no “story” (only history) to associate with the Cenotaph. There is however another parallel, allegorical, with the theorists under examination in Sanin-Restrepo’s analysis, for the Cenotaph is surely the metaphorical image of the theory of Negri, as critiqued by Sanin-Restrepo (Hardt & Negri 2000). Negri’s multitude comes to be in the gathering at the Cenotaph. The clue is in the centrality of the notion of *pietas*, bringing the multitude together, a *pietas* which is the very atmosphere of the Cenotaph. “Pietas is neither an aggregation nor an internal trait of the multitude, rather it is the catalyst, the active element that dislocates the problem of the absolute and liberty by shifting its perspective” (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 158). This is the Cenotaph, akin to the monolith in Kubrick’s 2001. The Cenotaph, memorialising death “yields a subsequent division of life into forms of dependence on universal values” (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 171). There is another comment to make about the Cenotaph before moving on, and that is the observation that it is the metaphor for all political movements which seek to embody the idea of the people (or the nation, the proletariat, humanity) while losing any connection with the organic substance of the subject invoked – the alienation embodied in the transfer of attributes to an alienated image of the source in the Party, the institutional Cenotaph of the people. Here, I set myself against the authoritarian, Leninist strand in Negri, more pronounced in Hardt’s Maoist take, and present also in works in the critical milieu which nonetheless eulogise the Crowd’s need for the Party, the unifying function of the Comrade – as in the work of Jodi Dean, for example (Dean 2016).

Thus far I have traced a line through Crypt, Mausoleum, Cenotaph, shadowing Sanin-Restrepo's discussion of Agamben, Deleuze, Negri, allegorising the stakes, elaborating the metaphors in a working through of the possible combinations. One more option remains, a departure from the orbit of Sanin-Restrepo's explorations, a different itinerary, one absent from Sanin-Restrepo's discussion, implicitly dismissed by it, but potentially, I'd like to suggest, an enrichment for it. This possibility takes me finally to the Sepulchre. The Sepulchre is an inconspicuous place for depositing the body of the crucified Christ, which more importantly achieves its significance by being the site of the absence of the body. The Sepulchre is the site from which the question reverberates, back to the Cenotaph, the Mausoleum and the Crypt, and forward too; "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The hidden body has departed in resurrection, the hidden people have departed the grave – "Only when the one that is inert and helpless before death occupies the position of deciding her own life will there be democracy, and only in such a synthesis will the requirement of a total exteriority that is always vulnerable to death disappear. With it, the authentic condition for politics and law will be replenished" (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 207) I may be showing my hand now. Sanin-Restrepo earlier described the theorists he discussed as "belonging to a tragic European generation" (Sanin-Restrepo 2016, 64), and even as he focused on their blind spot, nonetheless he limited his response to the horizon of this post-structuralist generation, even while discussing their forebears. In this focus there is a missed opportunity to engage with a different critical tradition, one seen by the post-structuralist generation as hopelessly compromised by universalism, Hegelianism, rationalism, logocentrism, humanism; I suggest that this dismissal of a Hegelian tradition, at least in the work of Adorno, Benjamin, and others, deriving insight from the young Hegelian movement, specifically Feuerbach and Stirner as well as Marx, is a neglected context for thinking through the problematic here sketched out. Further, that this tradition, through the Situationists (Debord 1995), leads to an oblique engagement with Baudrillard, Lyotard, even Agamben, which finds other accents to emphasise in their work. From this perspective, the Sepulchre, is the emancipation of the spirit, alienated in God, but read through Strauss's life of Jesus, and then Feuerbach, in which theology is encrypted anthropology, then humanity. As Marx put it:

The immediate task of philosophy ... once the holy form of human self-estrangement has been unmasked, is to unmask self-estrangement in its unholy forms. Thus, the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of the earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics. (Marx & Engels 1975, 176)

It seems to me that there is scope for the theory of encryption not only to generate new offspring but retro-actively to adopt new ancestors. It is impoverished by too restricted a genealogy. The rejection of teleology need not deny itself a certain eclecticism in its theoretical forebears.

But if that is what I wanted to say, you may ask in conclusion, was it necessary to lead us through a forest of allegory, a winding path of metaphors? But that would be to misunderstand my tactic as a choice. The allegorical mode of critique is what one resorts to when a plain-speaking, reasoning, consensus-building language game is not available, precisely because the terrain is not available – it is, from Sanin-Restrepo's perspective, colonised. The other element in which encryption has operated to remove the possibility of a people, a demos, gathering to speak, debate and hear, is the agora, the public sphere, where colonisation makes such a discourse impossible, turns democracy into simulation and spectacle, hides the people from themselves. But yet, a word of warning if the answer is thought to be simply the making present of the people, speaking their will clearly and unambiguously. From the land of Brexit, elsewhere in Europe and the US, Russia and India, we must hesitate in the face of populism before endorsing the fetish of the will of the people, or those who claim to embody and represent it. That majoritarian democracy is not the solution to be sought. Resolving this would take a longer detour through the possibilities of sovereignty, rather than democracy, but not the alienated sovereignty of the state, the people – here is where a nuanced reading of the self/unique sovereignty of Stirner (Stirner 1982), might have something to offer. With that warning in mind too, this supplies another reason for the oblique angle the allegorical offers. Not all cryptic speech operates to exclude, it offers instead a different mode of communication, one immunised from the commodification intrinsic in the symbolic language seeking common referents to unify. Let me finish with a possible justification for the tactic I have taken, from the Mexican writer, Octavio Paz.

Again and again I was obliged to return to the starting point. Instead of advancing, the text circled about itself. Is destruction creation? I do not know, but I do know that creation is not destruction. At each turn the text opened out into another one, at once its translation and its transportation; a spiral of repetitions and reiterations that have dissolved into a negation of writing as a path. Today I realised that my text was not going anywhere – except to meet itself. I also perceive that repetitions are metaphors and that reiterations are analogies; a system of mirrors that little by little have revealed another text...like an image of writing and reading like a metaphor of the path and the pilgrimage to the sanctuary like the final dissolution of the path and the convergence of all the texts in this paragraph like a metaphor of the embrace of bodies. Analogy: universal transparency: seeing in this that. (Paz 1989, 157/159)

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