

Ana Iwataki
Performance Score
*A Plural Singular: How to Live Together**

The One

The world of art has been translated into the world of the body — and the original text has been abandoned. Hunger is not a metaphor; it is the very crux of the problem itself.

You cannot write on an empty stomach, no matter how hard you try.

The Two

There is a communion of more than our bodies when bread is broken and wine drunk. And that is my answer, when people ask me: Why do you write about hunger, and not wars or love?

The Many

If jealousy were a dance it would be a pattern of placement and displacement. Its emotional focus is unstable. Jealousy is a dance in which everyone moves.

The One

To be a writer is to construct a big, loud, shiny centre of self from which the writing is given voice and any claim to be intent on annihilating this self while still continuing to write and give voice to writing must involve the writer in some important acts of subterfuge or contradiction.

The Two

Imagine, as we read these translations, that an affinity is being articulated. We are not reading cold print, but text warmed by direct transmission.

The Many

It's a fantasy of a life, a regime, a lifestyle, diaita, diet. Neither dual nor plural (collective). Something like solitude with regular interruptions: the paradox, the contradiction, the aporia of bringing distances together—the utopia of a socialism of distance...

(All this is still very imprecise.)

The One

It was, then, urgently important to be some person, to have always been some person; in all the world she was entering there was not anyone who was not some particular person; it was vital to be a person.

The most important thing she had learned so far—and it was something to know, after only twelve hours—was that she need not pretend, always, to be competent or at home in a strange atmosphere. Other people, she had learned, were frequently uneasy and uncertain, lost their way or their money, were nervous at being approached by strangers or wary of officials...

The Two

It's clear that the pair find each other unsettling, a form of mutual agitation of an erotic (rather than sexual) sort... We spend our lives getting agitated by something, by someone.

The Many

"Which body? We have several." I have a digestive body, I have a nauseated body, a third body which is migrainous, and so on: sensual, muscular (writer's cramp), humoral, and especially: emotive: which is moved, stirred, depressed, or exalted or intimidated, without anything of the sort being apparent.

The One

When they began seriously to set about deciding on the location of the soul, they knew too much—and not quite enough. Was it in the heart, or the liver, or the gall-bladder? Was it in the breath? Was it in the steam that rose when hot blood was spilled? Was it in the inert slippery mass that filled the cranial cavity—the brain? Was it in the moisture that plumped out youthful flesh but gradually dissipated with age and vanishes altogether when the flesh withered from the bones?

The Two

I like a mutual ease.

For this reason I prefer not to have among my guests two people or more, of any sex, who are in the first wild tremors of love. It is better to invite them after their new passion has settled, has solidified into a quieter reciprocity of emotions. (It is also a waste of good food, to serve it to new lovers.)

The Many

How much we need to know, in order to.

The One

Don't fill up, don't gorge, don't be inspired, emotional, indulgent, be dry, as if you had fasted. —

Am I sure I can endure what I write eight days later, fasting? This sentence, this idea (this sentence-idea), which pleases me when I find it, who is to say that fasting it won't turn my stomach? How to question my disgust (the disgust for my own failures)?

How to prepare the best reading of myself I can hope for: not to love but only to endure fasting what has been written?

The Two

The process is inescapable: he must eat in order to write. But if he does not write, he will not eat. And if he cannot eat, he cannot write. He cannot write.

The Many

Yet there is a fundamental logic in the idea of absorbing back into a tribe the life essence represented by the flesh and blood of those of its members who have died. The wise man's genius is not lost, nor the warrior's strength, nor the cheerful man's humor...

The One

Where, she wondered, is Elizabeth? Where in the tightness of the skin over her arms and her legs, in the narrow bones of her back and the planned structure of her ribs, in the tiny toes and fingers and the vital plan of her neck and head...where in, all this, was there room for anyone else?

The Two

His Farness is the more Near.

The Many

Lemons: all freedom, all ego, all vanity, fragrant with scent we can't help but imagine when we look at them, the little pucker in the mouth. And redolent, too, of strut and style. Yet somehow they remain intimate, every single one of them: only lemons, only that lovely, perishable ordinary thing, held to scrutiny's light, fixed in a moment of fierce attention. As if here our desire to be unique, unmistakable, and our desire to be of a piece were reconciled. Isn't that it, to be yourself and somehow, to belong? For a moment, held in balance.

The One

And insofar as she can "annihilate" all these—her term—she can resolve the three angles of the dance of jealousy into a single nakedness and reduce her Being from three to two to one:

The Two

She told him in a letter to use the thoughts in the notebooks however he liked:

“So now they belong to you and I hope that after been transmuted within you they will one day come out in one of your works....I should be very happy for them to find a lodging beneath your pen, whilst changing their form so as to reflect your likeness...”

In the operation of writing, the hand which holds the pen and the body and soul attached to it are things infinitely small in the order of nothingness.”

The Many

When the gym is so full of bodies I can't see the instructor, I copy the woman in front of me, and the woman behind me copies me in turn. In this way we share the moves around. We get to dance them - the pleasure of actually getting to dance them! Someone else's moves, only this time made with my own body - falling in and out of sync with each other, with the music...

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Readers

The One: Ana Iwataki

The Two: Amanda Martin Katz

The Three: Naoki Sutter-Shudo

*Barthes, Roland. *How to Live Together: Novelistic Simulations of Some Everyday Spaces: Notes for a Lecture Course and Seminar at the Collège De France (1976-1977)*. Edited by Claude Coste. Translated by Kate Briggs. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. Print.