

All of these expressions shed light on a single process: *depersonalisation by assimilation to space*, i.e., what mimicry achieves morphologically in certain species. The magical hold (one can truly call it so without doing violence to the language) of night and obscurity, the *fear of the dark*, probably also has its roots in the peril in which it puts the opposition between the organism and the milieu.

Minkowski's analyses are invaluable here: darkness is not the mere absence of light; there is something positive about it. While light space is eliminated by the materiality of objects, darkness is "filled," it touches the individual directly, envelops him, penetrates him, and even passes through him: hence "the ego is *permeable* for darkness while it is not so for light"; the feeling of mystery that one experiences at night would not come from anything else. Minkowski likewise comes to speak of *dark space* and almost a lack of distinction between the milieu and the organism: "Dark space envelops me on all sides and penetrates me much deeper than light space, the distinction between inside and outside and consequently the sense organs as well, insofar as they are designed for external perception, here play only a totally modest role."

The assimilation to space is necessarily accompanied by a decline in the feeling of personality and life. It should be noted in any case that in mimetic species the phenomenon is never carried out except *in a single direction*: the animal mimics the plant, leaf, flower, or thorn, and disassembles or ceases to perform its function in relation to others. *Life takes a step backward*.

## THE DEATH OF PIGS

from **ALBUM ZUTIQUE** (1871)

Paul Verlaine and Léon Valade  
trans. Radja Hopkins Kaylor

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We will sniff in the pissers,  
We will eat pussy from out the sinks,  
And we will lick the household water  
At the risk of getting tickets.

Treading at will to the last modesty  
We will suck the least beautiful old men,  
And stuffing our noses in asses  
We will inhale the candour of the bobos.

On an evening full of cum and cosmetics,  
We will go into an antique brothel  
Shoot a few long and anxious loads.

And the madam opening the doors  
Will sweep - bleary angel -  
The extinct sperm and dead rules.