

EDITORIAL

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Slowly, objects in relation to surfaces and symbols (i.e. appearances and representations) give way to objects that are compositions beyond the eye's or hand's reach. These compositions, we are told by specialists, are more complex and more prepared for this world than they seem to communicate in the first instance. We are told, as well, that it applies even to things we have ourselves made, since these things are made of other things, often those predating us. On microscopic and cosmic levels things collide similarly. Banks (for the sake of a global example of global scale) are institutions making millions of financial operations a day, but on the street, however, they are *symbols* of labor and prosperity set up as advertisements taking up real space. A Midtown avenue is a prototype of such contradictions, or rather an exchange between function and surface, reality and representation, a world and its model at a 1:1 scale.

But this would be all too-easy to get away with. Lets go deeper (the metaphor uniformly employed when surfaces are to be traversed). To say that something that was drawn to fit intellect's skill to read representations does not produce reality is clearly not true. Here lies a predicament for which a language (among most widely used constructions) is often attacked. Though the problem here, we thought, is not linguistic if one takes sounds, characters and words to be an organic form that grows, changes, gets modified and even disappears if not used. In other words—words are materials that have beautiful, idiosyncratic properties organising, administering and informing reality as much as anything else. And what a minute ago was a mere biological metaphor applied to language, becomes real, from which both biology and linguistics benefit and learn.

History should emerge at this moment, as imagination and tools with which we traverse general attributes of a given question. Historically, decisions and entities are quick to connect to a variety of actors (again, it is a carnival of singular decisions, processes and formulations) that were in one way or another responsible for a given outcome. These entities become factual synonyms despite their traditional meaning or traditional areas of application. Language is no exception—English, the language of international trade and discourse (and this publication), is a conglomerate of peasant slang, Latin word roots and set of circumstances in which it was negotiated until it reached us as grammar. It is a form we inherit and use, and using it means making connections between diverse (non-linguistic) materials, influences as well as institutional decisions and so, more importantly, it means making the form itself.

Now, there does not seem to be much difference between a language and, say, economy anymore. Or between color and politics (except if we take them separately never to be applied to one another and safeguarding autonomy of each for long enough as to fill the air with permanence and similar fictions). We think of two names—UBS and RZA—as two overlapping colors, or words in an open alphabet, using exactly the same tool of speech, on one hand, to instigate trust and, on the other, to verbalise (and so make) ‘impossible’ connections as reality.

This is where we are trying to drive this issue of *The Federal*, since what Lucy Skaer is proposing in the centerfold, consists of only a work written down and yet to be realized, a call for response.

Lucy is known to make objects ‘speak’ on their own behalf or exchange their position with different object-peers. This is a great ability considering how far the use of language has shifted from materiality to general meanings and canons of use. That, however, we say without sentiment as there seems to be more entities capable of expression than ever before. Now reading itself becomes quite a complex skill, requiring new accuracy and precision.

