Title: Hyper-Despotism of the Bullet: Post-Bardo Tunisia and its (Unforgiving) Memorial Communiqué

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Abstract: This paper is occasioned by my personal experience of the Bardo National Museum in Tunis immediately after the 18th March 2015 attacks that claimed twenty-four lives, dealt a blow to the burgeoning political morale of post-revolutionary Tunisia, and etched an unprecedented mark in the memory of Tunisians of all persuasions. The bullet holes and fractured vitrines in and around the famed Salle de Carthage, where this country’s fabled antiquity meets its effort to bring about a cultural and political modernity, invite reflection on what Fredric Jameson has termed the ‘irrevocable’ function of historical trauma – and especially its modes of inheritability and transmission in a socius that is itself at a delicate crossroads of political transition. In such a fraught context, Lyotard’s ‘immemoriality’ must be read in light of what Jean Laplanche characterises as the ‘enigma’ that structures the retrospective quest: the ‘enigmatic’ retains itself as such since it always already embodies the noumenal essence of historical violence as a ceaseless question: “What does the dead person want? What does he want of me? What did he want to say to me?” (Laplanche). Reflecting on the fractured vitrine (and bullet-dented statue) of the infant Bacchus at the Bardo, and drawing on W. Benjamin’s and P. Ricoeur’s thought, this paper recalls the notion that time itself, as the fabric of retrospective or memorial passage, necessarily registers as the tension that obtains between an object and its accidents (G. Harman). This tension is what occasions the moment at which the ethical imperative of cultural rhetoricity – including the literary itself – becomes that of returning the representational principle to the materiality of history. Finally, I read Tunisian poet Moncef Ghachem’s poem “Cent Mille Oiseaux” (“A Hundred Thousand Birds”) in this light – as a poem whose “internal motor schema” (A. Lingis) is intended to subvert the poem’s own overt rhetoricity, hence making possible the installation of the communal memorial trauma as its ontological kernel.

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More protests against the deadly attack at Tunisia’s Bardo national museum are planned for Thursday, as the prime minister said one of the two gunmen was known to security services. The country is in shock after two Tunisian gunmen killed 18 tourists and three Tunisians on Wednesday in the deadliest attack on civilians in the country for 13 years. Five Tunisians were killed, including two attackers. Aidi said all the injuries came from bullet wounds, and that several victims were brought in without identity documents. As well as three Tunisian nationals, the gunmen killed four Italians, three Japanese, two Colombians, two Spaniards, an Australian, a Briton, a Pole and a French national. Its brutal colonial past, staunch secular policies and tough-talking president who is seen as insensitive toward the Muslim faith all play a role,” the offending message screamed from the official AP Twitter account. It also linked to an article which gave the AP’s analysis of why France has so frequently been the target of Muslim extremists. The AP subsequently published a watered down version of the post and issued an explanation for its use of the word ‘incites.’ However, it stopped short of an apology and the article remains on its website. Let me correct that headline for you; “Why do religious nutters think it’s ok to behead people because they got upset at some cartoons? ” — (((Colin Wight))) (@colwight) November 1, 2020.

The BBC’s Aidan Lewis in Tunisia reports on the security challenges faced by the country in the wake of the deadly attack at the Bardo museum, which left 23 people dead. The attack at Tunisia’s famed Bardo museum on Wednesday exposed an extremist threat that reaches to the heart of the country’s capital. It was an attack in a highly symbolic place, next to the parliament, and against a key industry - tourism. The presidency said Tunisia was facing “exceptional circumstances”. But the attack was also an escalation of militant violence in Tunisia that had long been feared. As such, it was met with statements of resilience and determination that the country would not be thrown off course. Members of the Tunisian police force take up a position near the country’s parliament after gunmen reportedly took hostages, outside the Bardo Museum. EPA/MOHAMED MESSARA. In pictures: Bardo Museum shooting. The incident marks the first attack on a tourist site in years in Tunisia, since its shaky young democracy was founded in 2011. The Bardo Museum in Tunis where eight people have been shot dead. (Getty Images). It is unclear who the attackers are. However, a researcher at the Quilliam think tank has tweeted a message from a prominent Isil supporter that today’s attack is the start of a wave of terrorism in Tunisia. Hyper Disc is an item introduced in Loomian Legacy - Veils of Shadow. It can be purchased for 1,500 Loomicoins at any Loomian Goods store after reaching level 49 in Trainer Mastery. It can also be obtained from item boxes and as a Trainer Mastery reward. Similarly to Capture Discs, it can be thrown at an opposing wild Loomian for a chance to capture it. It has a higher catch rate than the Adv. Disc.