

Transpose

Mixed Media

Salmo salar jawbone, saltpetre crystals, coal

2016

"...while bone allowed the complexification of the animal phylum to which we, as vertebrates, belong, it never forgot its mineral origins: it is the living material that most easily petrifies, that most readily crosses the threshold back into the world of rocks."¹

Thanks to the invitation to respond to this paragraph, I started to explore the framework of the fishing industry in Norway, specifically the Atlantic salmon aquaculture, in which Norway is the leading exporter followed by Chile. The relationship between these two countries in this regard and their current challenges in sustainability on nature's terms, has revealed a series of notions regarding the exploitation and manipulation of maritime living resources, and thus possible inconsistencies in relation to geopolitical games and environmental goals.

Transpose is a series of compositions that bring together three natural resources, swapped in time, from geographies marked by maritime motion. The head of an Atlantic salmon is dissected here in order to preserve and crystalize its jawbone using saltpetre, an ambivalent nitrate imprinted in the history of maritime navigation and geopolitical power. Power that is in the current days something of a paradox, given the uncontrollable environmental changes ahead, due to—among so many other factors—the reduction of the Arctic sea ice, allowing an increase of Northeast Arctic shipping route strategies, but also creating multinational tensions due to the closing of the coal exploitation industry in the archipelago of Svalbard.

The bone of the salmon is a reminder that after all, living and non-living resources are constantly transposed in our Gaian biosphere, impacting each other in a determinant way, in order to become part of the same geological testimony.

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¹ Manuel Delanda, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, Swerve Editions, New York, 2000