

# Nika Radić Moramo se razgovarati

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## Moramo se razgovarati.

I znamo da razgovori koji tako počnu obično ne idu dobro, ali to je valjda i dalje osnovna potreba. Nadamo se da će nas sugovornik razumjeti a onda nam se čini da nas drugi razumiju samo ako su to, o čemu govorimo, već i tako i tako osjetili i sami. Katkad mislim da se radi o rezonanci, a ne o slanju poruke.

N.R.

**We need to talk.** And we know conversations that start like that usually don't go well, but it still seems to be our basic need. We hope the other person will understand us and then we think that others can only understand if they have already felt what we are talking about anyway. Sometimes I think it is about resonance, not sending a message.

N.R.

because they, at least, take the conflict for what it is—*militarily*. They have no complex about sending in elite antiterrorist units to subdue riots, or to liberate a recycling center occupied by its workers. As the welfare state collapses, we see the emergence of a brute conflict between those who desire order and those who don't. Everything that French politics has been able to deactivate is in the process of unleashing itself. It will never be able to process all that it has repressed. In the advanced degree of social decomposition, we can count on the coming movement to find the necessary breath of nihilism. Which will not mean that it won't be exposed to other limits.

Revolutionary movements do not spread by contamination but by *resonance*. Something that is constituted here resonates with the shock wave emitted by something constituted over there. A body that resonates does so according to its own mode. An insurrection is not like a plague or a forest fire—a linear process which spreads from place to place after an initial spark. It rather takes the shape of a music, whose focal points, though dispersed in time and space, succeed in imposing the rhythm of their own vibrations, always taking on more density. To the point that any return to normal is no longer desirable or even imaginable.

When we speak of Empire we name the mechanisms of power that preventively and surgically stifle any revolutionary potential in a situation. In this sense, Empire is not an enemy that confronts us head-on. It is a rhythm that imposes itself, a way of dispensing and dispersing reality. Less an order of the world than its sad, heavy and militaristic liquidation.

What we mean by the party of insurgents is the sketching out of a completely other *composition*, an other side of reality, which from Greece to the French *banlieues*<sup>2</sup> is seeking its consistency.

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# Niklas Luhmann. KOMUNIKACIJA

## NIJE VJEROJATNA.

Bez komunikacije ne može biti ljudskih odnosa, zapravo niti ljudskoga života. Teorija komunikacije zato se ne može ograničiti samo na određena područja života i društva. Nije se dovoljno upustiti u iscrpne diskusije o određenoj tehnici komunikacije, koliko god te tehnike i njihove posljedice, zbog toga što su nove, privlačile posebnu pozornost u suvremenom društvu. Jednako je neadekvatno početi s diskusijom koncepata<sup>1</sup>. To bi služilo nekoj korisnoj svrsi samo kad bismo unaprijed znali što bi taj koncept trebao postići i u kojem teoretskom području bi ga trebalo primijeniti. Međutim, ne može se početi niti od konsenzusa o tim pitanjima i zato ću početi s određivanjem razlika dvaju različitih teoretskih pristupa na osnovi kojih se može konstruirati znanstvena teorija.

Jedna vrsta teorije traži moguće načine poboljšanja statusa quo. Ona je vođena mišlju o perfekciji ili zdravlju ili optimalnim uvjetima u najširem smislu riječi. Na taj način su razmišljali Bacon i njegovi sljedbenici. Znanstvena spoznaja prirodnih principa i izbjegavanje pogrešnog mišljenja nisu baš nužni da bi se spasio svijet, kao što znanje optike nije nužno da bi se dobro vidjelo. Ali ona pomaže da se poprave manjkavosti i postupno poboljšaju uvjeti u kojima ljudi žive.

Druga vrsta teorije zasnovana je na pretpostavci nevjerojatnosti. Kao i prva, ova je teorija nesklona pukom održavanju statusa quo i odbacuje rutinska očekivanja i izvjesnosti svakodnevnoga života, te se prihvaća objašnjavanja toga kako su odnosi, koji sami po sebi nisu vjerojatni, ipak mogući i kako se, štoviše, može s velikom vjerojatnošću očekivati da će se pojaviti. Suprotno od Bacona, Hobbes je svoju političku teoriju zasnivao na takvoj pretpostavci nevjerojatnosti a, za razliku od Galilea, Kant se nije više oslanjao na mogućnost empirijske spoznaje prirode nego je posumnjao u sintetičku spoznaju kao takvu, te istražio preduvjete za takvu spoznaju. U tom slučaju, dakle, glavno pitanje nije kako postići praktična poboljšanja, nego kako se može odgovoriti na teoretsko pitanje koje se javlja prije bilo kojeg poboljšanja, to jest, kako se može stvoriti sustav koji nemoguće pretvara u moguće i nevjerojatno u vjerojatno.

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Rasprava koja slijedi ostaje striktno unutar okvira koji je upravo definiran postavljenim pitanjem i ima cilj da pronađe prikladnu teoretsku strukturu za područje komunikacije kao jedini prikladni način da se identificiraju principi univerzalni svim društvima. Međutim, postoje i praktični motivi koji se sve jače osjećaju u društvu usmjerenom k rastu i blagostanju. Ne može se više nastaviti s naivnom pretpostavkom da će poboljšanja uvijek „prirodno“ biti moguća, bilo da se radilo o fizičkoj ili ljudskoj prirodi<sup>2</sup>. Ako se pod prirodom shvaća nevjerovatnost koja je svladana, mora se primijeniti drugačiji standard da bi se ocijenilo što se postiglo a što se treba poboljšati; u tom slučaju barem postaje jasno da rasap postojećega reda implicira povratak nevjerovatnosti novih kombinacija.

**Komunikacija kao problem.** Zbog toga teorija komunikacije kakvu ja zagovaram počinje s premisom da komunikacija nije vjerovatna, unatoč tome što je svakodnevno proživljavamo i prakticiramo i što bez nje ne bismo postojali. Prvenstveno se mora razumjeti nevjerovatnost koje smo postali nesvjesni, a da bi se to napravilo treba uložiti kontra-fenomenološki napor tako da se na komunikaciju gleda, ne kao na fenomen, nego kao na problem; na taj način, umjesto da potražimo najprihvatljiviji koncept koji pokriva činjenice, moramo se prvo pitati kako je komunikacija uopće moguća.

Odmah postaje očigledno da treba savladati mnoštvo problema i prepreka prije nego se komunikacija uopće može dogoditi. Prva stvar koja nije vjerovatna jest da, budući da je ljudska svijest podijeljena i individualna, jedna osoba može razumjeti nešto što neka druga misli. Značenja se može razumjeti samo kroz kontekst, a kontekst svake individue sastoji se prvenstveno od onoga što joj nudi vlastito sjećanje.

Druga nevjerovatnost odnosi se na dopiranje do primaoca. Nije vjerovatno da će komunikacija doseći više osoba nego što je prisutno u nekoj određenoj situaciji. Radi se o problemu protezanja u prostoru i vremenu. Sustav interakcija među ljudima koji su prisutni u svakoj pojedinoj situaciji osigurava u praktičnim okvirima odgovarajuću količinu pažnje u svrhu komunikacije, ali se sistem urušava ako se primjetno komunicira želja da se ne komunicira. Pravila stvorena u tom kontekstu, međutim, ne mogu se više nametati izvan takvog sistema interakcije. To znači da, čak i ako komunikacija pronađe načine postojanja koji su mobilni

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i konstantni u vremenu, još uvijek nije vjerojatno da će pobuditi pažnju. Ljudi u nekim drugim situacijama imaju drugog posla. Treća nevjerojatnost jest nevjerojatnost uspjeha. Čak i ako se komunikaciju razumije, nema nikakve izvjesnosti da će biti prihvaćena. Pod „uspjehom“ smatram da primalac komunikacije prihvaća selektivni sadržaj komunikacije (informaciju) kao premisu za vlastito ponašanje, da bi se tako pridružio daljnjim selekcijama primarnog izbora i tijekom procesa utvrdio njezinu selektivnost. U tom kontekstu, prihvaćanje kao premisa vlastitog ponašanja može značiti ponašanje u skladu s odgovarajućim uputama, ali i procesuiranje iskustava, mišljenja i ostalih percepcija pod pretpostavkom da je određena informacija točna.

Te nevjerojatnosti nisu samo prepreke komunikaciji da dosegne svoj cilj; one također vrše funkciju pragova odvratanja i vode u suzdržavanje od komunikacije ako se smatra da su joj izgledi nepovoljni. Pravilo da je nemoguće ne komunicirati primjenjuje se samo među prisutnima unutar interaktivnih sistema<sup>3</sup>, a i onda pravilo isključivo tvrdi da će se komunikacija dogoditi, a ne da će i komunicirati. Postoji težnja prema suzdržavanju od komunikacije ako su slabi izgledi da se dosegne ljude i da se naiđe na razumijevanje. Ali bez komunikacije ne može biti socijalnih sistema. Dakle, nevjerojatnost procesa komunikacije i način na koji se ona može savladati i promijeniti u vjerojatnost vladaju formiranjem socijalnih sistema. Proces sociokulturne evolucije zato se može promatrati kao transformacija i ekspanzija uvjeta za uspješnu komunikaciju na kojoj društvo gradi svoje društvene sisteme; jasno je da se ne radi samo o procesu rasta, nego i o selekciji i određivanju koje su vrste društvenih sistema moguće a koje se moraju odbaciti kao premalo vjerojatne.

Tri navedene nevjerojatnosti međusobno se pothranjuju. Nije moguće uhvatiti se u koštac sa svakom pojedinačno, niti ih se jednu po jednu može mijenjati u vjerojatnosti. Ako se jedan problem riješi, to otežava rješavanje ostalih. Što više netko razumije komunikaciju, to više ima razloga da je odbije. U trenutku kad se komunikacija proširi izvan kruga onih koji se nalaze na licu mjesta, razumijevanje postaje sve teže a odbijanje s druge strane lakše. Izučavanje „filozofije“ čini se da potječe iz tog zakona o sve većim međusobnim odbijanjima<sup>4</sup>. U trenutku kad pismo počinje omogućavati da se komunikacija proširi izvan publike prisutne u određenom vremenu i prostoru, ne možemo se više pouzdati u rapsodijski element ritmičnoga stiha jer se on obraća samo ljudima

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koji slušaju, pa time ono čime se može uvjeriti postaje sadržaj<sup>5</sup>. To pravilo da se nevjerojatnosti međusobno pothranjuju i da rješavanje problema na jednoj strani smanjuje mogućnosti na drugoj, implicira da nema direktnog načina da se progresivno poboljša međusobno razumijevanje. Svi napori u tom smjeru brzo naiđu na problem rasta zajedno sa sve većim zahtjevima koji su međusobno nepomirljivi. U stvarnom funkcioniranju modernih sistema masovne komunikacije ljudi se, naravno, ponašaju kao da su ti problemi već riješeni. Oni se u biti i ne primjećuju s nadmoćnoga položaja određenih novinskih i elektroničkih redakcija. Unatoč tome pojavljuje se pitanje nisu li strukture modernoga društva u svojoj biti određene činjenicom da se rješenja tih problema međusobno ometaju i da stvaraju neprekidnu seriju novih problema

**Koncept medija.** Ova teorija zahtijeva jedan osnovni koncept koji će pokriti cijeli raspon djelatnosti koje sudjeluju u transformaciji nevjerojatne komunikacije u vjerojatnu, što se tiče navedenih triju problema. Predlažem da se te djelatnosti nazovu „medijima“. Uobičajeno je da govorimo samo o masovnim medijima, što je pojam koji se primjenjuje na tehnike – uglavnom tisak i elektroničke medije – koji se koriste da bi se komunikacija proširila na publiku koja nije prisutna. Parsons je dodao simbolično generaliziran koncept „medija razmjene“ i razvio je odgovarajuću teoriju po analogiji novca<sup>6</sup>. Odonda se koncept medija u društvenim znanostima rabio u dvama različitim značenjima i može ga se razumjeti isključivo unutar određenoga konteksta ili uz pomoć dodatnih objašnjenja. Prijedlog da se koncept stavi u odnos s problemom male vjerojatnosti u procesu komunikacije i da ga se tako funkcionalno definira, može raspršiti konfuziju i istovremeno pomoći da se razjasne značenje i svrha triju različitih vrsta medija. Medij koji naše razumijevanje komunikacije širi izvan osnovne percepcije jest jezik. On upotrebljava simboličke generalizacije da bi nadomjestio, prikazao ili ujedinio percepcije i da bi riješio probleme koji nastaju kao posljedica zajedničkoga razumijevanja. Drugim riječima, jezik se specijalizira za stvaranje dojma zajedničkoga razumijevanja kao osnove za daljnju komunikaciju, koliko god da su osnove za taj dojam klimave.

Mediji diseminacije nisu adekvatno definirani pojmom „mass-mediji“. Pojedinačno gledano, već je izum pisma zadovoljio funkciju transcendiranja okvira onih koji su neposredno prisutni i koji sudjeluju



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u komunikaciji. Širenje se može postići medijem pisma ali i upotrebom drugih postupaka koji služe da se informacija sačuva u određenoj formi. Ne može se precijeniti selektivni utjecaj koji takvi mediji imaju na kulturu, jer oni enormno povećavaju količinu zapamćenih podataka koja stoji na raspolaganju za dodatnu komunikaciju, dok je istovremeno ograničavaju svojom selektivnošću.

Općenito govoreći, teorija komunikacija koncentrirala se na te dvije vrste medija. Ali tako nastala slika ozbiljno je neuravnotežena. Samo ako se trudimo ustanoviti koji medij komunikacije ima najveće vjerojatnosti za uspjeh, možemo razviti teoriju koja se zbilja suočava s problemima komunikacije u društvu. Treću vrstu medija može se opisati kao simbolički generalizirani mediji komunikacije jer samo oni efikasno postižu svrhu komunikacije<sup>7</sup>. U odnosu na socijalne sisteme Parsons, kao primjere takve vrste medija, spominje novac, moć, utjecaj i vrijednosne obveze. Ja bih tom popisu dodao istinu u području znanosti i ljubav u području intimnih odnosa<sup>8</sup>. Različiti mediji pokrivaju glavne ogranke društvenoga sustava koji imaju civilizacijski utjecaj te glavne pod-sustave modernoga društva. To pokazuje do kojeg je stupnja, tijekom razvoja, povećanje mogućnosti komunikacija dovelo do toga da se formiraju sustavi i da se diferenciraju posebni sustavi unutar područja ekonomije, politike, religije, znanosti itd. Simbolički generalizirani mediji komunikacije mogu nastati samo ako tehnike širenja omoguće da se nadiđu granice interakcije licem u lice i ako se informacije mogu spremirati za odsutnu publiku nepoznatog broja te za situacije koje još nisu određene. Drugim riječima, oni ovise o prethodnom izumu generalno dostupnog oblika pisanja<sup>9</sup>. Garancije uspjeha koje pružaju interaktivni sustavi, u svjetlu tako neizmjereno proširenih mogućnosti komunikacije i budući da ovise o fizičkoj prisutnosti, raspadaju se. Moraju se nadomjestiti, ili barem dopuniti, sredstvima koja su istovremeno apstraktnija i konkretnija. Tako su se u grčkom klasičnom svijetu razvile nove ključne riječi (*nómos*, *alétheia*, *philia*) i razvili su se odgovarajuće diferencirani sustavi standarda koji su označavali uvjete u kojima se još uvijek moglo računati na vjerojatnost da komunikacija bude prihvaćena, iako je sama komunikacija postala sve manje vjerojatna. Odonda nikome nije pošlo za rukom da sve uvjete za uspješnu komunikaciju ujedini u jedan cjelovit semantički sustav koji bi se mogao primijeniti na sve prilike i, od izuma tiska, razlike u tim komunikacijskim medijima postaju tako naglašene da konačno razbijaju i same premise ujedinjene, prirodne, moralne i pravne

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osnove života: uzroci države i strasne ljubavi, metodično otkrivena znanstvena istina, novac i pravo slijede svaki svoj put tako što se specijaliziraju u različitim nemogućnostima komunikacije. Oni se služe različitim komunikacijskim kanalima – država, na primjer, oružanim snagama i administrativnom hijerarhijom; strastvena ljubav salonom, pismom (koje se može objaviti) i romanom – i to vodi u diferencijaciju različitih funkcionalnih sistema koji u krajnosti omogućavaju da se napusti društveni ustroj baziran na fiksnim klasama i omogućava nastanak modernoga društva.

Ovaj kratki opis pokazuje dvostruki aspekt mojega teoretskog koncepta. Red je stvoren zahvaljujući činjenici da je komunikacija, koliko god da nije vjerojatna, svejedno moguća i postaje normalnom situacijom u društvenim sustavima. Ali mala vjerojatnost širenja, kad su jednom savladane tehničke prepreke, smanjuje vjerojatnost uspjeha. Kulturi se postavljaju novi zahtjevi kao posljedica promjena na području komunikacijskih tehnologija. Uspostavljeni red njezinih medija i načina uvjeravanja dolazi pod pritisak od strane promijenjenoga standarda vjerojatnosti tako da neki elementi postaju suvišni (na primjer kult prošlosti), a drugi se potiču (na primjer kult „novoga“). Sve u svemu, primjećuje se naglašena tendencija prema sve većoj diferencijaciji i specijalizaciji te zato postoji i potreba da se arbitrarno sve više institucionalizira. Istovremeno se tempo promjene postupno ubrzava, kako se to obično događa tijekom ljudskoga razvoja<sup>10</sup>, tako da se sukcesivno sve brže moraju razvijati načini da se savlada malu vjerojatnost iz onoga što već postoji, a ta zadaća postaje sve manje realna ako ni zbog čega drugoga, onda zbog samoga faktora vremena te to dovodi do selekcije po kriteriju brzine.

Moderna sredstva komunikacije

Trenutačne rasprave o utjecaju novih masovnih medija ograničene su njihovim neopravdano ograničenim pristupom problemu. One uzimaju koncept „mase“ kao polaznu točku a ispituju utjecaj medija na pojedinačno ponašanje. U tom su svjetlu socijalne reperkusije posljedica masovne deformacije pojedinačnoga ponašanja kao posljedica popularnoga tiska, filmova i radija. Čak se i promjene koje se tek događaju na tom području, kao što su povećan pristup emitiranom materijalu, ili na kraju krajeva komunikaciji unutar vlastitoga doma, predviđaju referencama na taj pristup. Ne želim poricati vrijednost ove metode istraživanja. Ali kad se prihvati tako usko gledište, neke važne promjene potpuno se previde. Društvo se uvijek mora gledati kao heterogeni sustav; ono se ne sastoji od pukog velikog broja individualnih akcija nego je

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sastavljeno od podsustava unutar podsustava i samo povezivanjem s takvim podsustavima – na primjer s obitelji, politikom, ekonomijom, pravom, zdravstvenim sustavom, obrazovanjem – dotične akcije dobivaju društvenu relevantnost u smislu reperkusija koje se osjete i nakon početne situacije.

Zbog toga se mora prihvatiti puno opsežniji pristup da bi se dobila sveukupna slika promjena koje su u modernom društvu nastale zbog strukture sredstava komunikacije. Ukupni problem toga da komunikacija nije vjerojatna, stapa se s idejom društva kao heterogenoga sustava, jer svaki sustav predstavlja preobrazbu toga da komunikacija nije vjerojatna u to da jest. Zato se moraju uzeti u obzir kako promjene u tehnologiji komunikacije, tako i različite te promjenjive perspektive uspješne komunikacije, ali i uzajamne reperkusije tih dvaju područja problema. Povrh svega toga postoji i pitanje da li neovisno o mediju mogu, kroz diferencijacije sustava, postojati daljnji direktni učinci na pojedinačne stavove i motive koji u svjetlu teorije sustava pripadaju okolini socijalnoga sustava društva kao cjeline i upravo iz toga razloga reaguju na njega.

Problem latentnog, da tako kažemo demografskog, efekta nedavno je dospio i u analize obrazovnoga sustava, gdje se pokazuje na primjer kao izraz „hidden curriculum“ (skriveni program)<sup>11</sup>. Na sličan način može se pretpostaviti (a u ovom kontekstu ima razloga uspoređivati masovne medije i masovno obrazovanje u školama) da organizirani masovni mediji također upotrebljavaju selektivna ograničenja unutar repertoara stavova i motiva među kojima drugi podsustavi mogu naći utočište.

Naravno da doseg ovoga teksta ni približno ne dopušta opis programa tako širokog zahvata. Morat ću se ograničiti na određeni broj primjera koji služe kao ilustracija nekih mogućih problema koje bi trebalo istražiti.

Kako god da se definiraju funkcionalni preduvjeti za očuvanje ili razvitak društva, ne može se očekivati da će poboljšanja izgleda za uspješnu komunikaciju biti jednako korisna u svim funkcionalnim sferama. Vrsta modernoga društva koja vuče korijene iz Europe dosad je velikim dijelom bila podržavana ograničenim brojem simbolički generaliziranih komunikacijskih medija koji su se pokazali kao jako efikasni, naročito zbog teoretski i metodoloških garantiranih znanstvenih istina, novca i političke moći koja se dijelila u skladu sa zakonom. To oslikava nadmoćnost znanosti, ekonomije i politike u općenitoj svijesti takve vrste društva.

Čak je i Parsonsova teorija sistema generalne akcije bazirana na

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pretpostavci da se sve funkcionalne oblasti mogu jednako oslanjati na komunikacijski medij kao i na logične posljedice vlastite diferencijacije. To je razmišljanje vođeno vlastitim željama<sup>12</sup>. U svakom slučaju morat ćemo prihvatiti da ne postoje niti prirodne niti teoretske garancije da će se funkcionalne potrebe i izgledi za komunikaciju stopiti.

Naročito je u ovoj vezi vrijedno pažnje da nikakav simbolički generaliziran komunikacijski medij nije razvijen da bi podržao razgranate aktivnosti stvorene kako bi se promijenile individue, što se rasprostire od obrazovanja do terapijskih tretmana i rehabilitacije, iako je to funkcionalna domena koja je potpuno ovisna o komunikaciji. Osobna interakcija ostaje na tom području jedini način da se ljude uvjeri o poželjnosti promjene. Strogo uzevši, još uvijek nema znanstveno pouzdane tehnologije za tu svrhu<sup>13</sup>. Istina je da novac, zakon, moć, ljubav... ništa od toga ne može ponuditi adekvatna sredstva sa sigurnim izgledima za uspjeh. Sve veća količina osobne i interakcijske energije troši se u to područje problema a da nitko nema jasnu sliku o tome hoće li se, i kako bi se, tehnološka neefikasnost mogla tim trudom spriječiti. Navedeni primjer pokazuje da problem neuravnoteženoga razvoja nesumnjivo postoji. Na nekim je područjima transformacija male vjerojatnosti u nešto što se rutinski može očekivati toliko uspješna da se kompleksni sustavi mogu tehnološki kontrolirati iako u osnovnim procesima ovise o slobodnom donošenju odluka. Na drugim područjima došlo je do zastoja u razvoju jer se, zbog sve većih zahtjeva za učinkovitošću, došlo do obeshrabrujućih granica male vjerojatnosti, čak i unutar jednostavnih sustava interakcija. Moji sljedeći primjeri dobiveni su iz istraživanja reperkusija tehnika diseminacije na funkcionalne podjele društva i na njegove komunikacijske medije. Izum tiska rezultirao je očigledno vrlo brzim preobražajem uvjeta pod kojima su se odvijale važne funkcije društvenih sustava. Velik dio razvoja vjerskoga radikalizma, koji je konačno doveo do podjela raznih vjeroispovijesti, može se pripisati tisku jer je javno kristalizirao pozicije i time otežao autorima da se povuku nakon što ih se s njima identificiralo<sup>14</sup>. U području politike tisak je otvorio nove mogućnosti za vršenje političkog utjecaja i stvaranje političkih karijera izvan krugova dvora; otkazivanje dvorske dužnosti nije više nužno značilo i odricanje od političkog utjecaja<sup>15</sup> pa se politika morala prilagoditi tom novom stanju stvari. U sferi društvenoga života i intimnih odnosa, tisak je s jedne strane doveo do sve većih

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mogućnosti obrazovanja, a s druge strane do nereálnih nastojanja; poticao je oponašanje ali istovremeno i preuveličavao mogućnosti oponašanja<sup>16</sup>. Preporučivao je pravila ali je pridržavanje pravilima prepuštao individualnim slobodnim procjenama<sup>17</sup>. U cjelini govoreći, zbog toga je tisak promijenio repertoar iz kojega funkcionalni sustavi biraju svoje djelovanje; on može proširiti mogućnosti ali i zakomplicirati proces izbora.

To se i dalje primjenjuje i u trenutku kad su masovni mediji postali neovisni o obrazovanju i kad su primjetno proširili vlastite mogućnosti. Ali mogu li se utvrditi ikakve smjernice? Možemo pribjeći samo nagađanju. Možda se može razviti stanovita vrsta kulture zasnovane na medijima, čije jedino opravdanje leži u činjenici da je pretpostavljaju sami medijski programi. Ali znači li to da moral korumpira moć, kako je to sugerirao Arnold Gehlen pozivajući se na Sjedinjene Države<sup>18</sup>? Nema li dovoljno dobrih osnova i za suprotnu pretpostavku, to jest da moć vrlo lako korumpira moral tako da promijeni osnovne pretpostavke tih programa?

Međutim, ima manje dokaza za takve teorije da masovni mediji mijenjaju osnovne političke pretpostavke nego onih koji podupiru postojanje formalnijih efekata. Prije svega mijenja se vremenska struktura političke akcije, ako se ona stalno reflektira u masovnim medijima. Ona postaje sklona tome da se sve više ubrza jer političari moraju reagirati iz trenutka u trenutak, zbog činjenice i zbog načina na koji se izvještava o njihovim aktivnostima. Manevriranje, koje to povlači za sobom, efikasno sprječava konzistentno pridržavanje određenoj političkoj teoriji, a uvjeti sudjelovanja u političkom životu, koliko god s jedne strane bili jako prošireni u demokratskim društvima, nisu ništa manje ograničeni činjenicom da se stalno treba držati korak s posljednjim razvojem događaja.

Koliko god takve analize bile realistične, one polaze od osnovne pretpostavke o selektivnosti svih dostignuća da bi se nevjerovatno transformiralo u vjerovatno. Sa svakim novim i višim nivoom nevjerovatno vjerovatnog koji komunikacija postiže sve boljom tehnologijom, mora se ponovno uspostaviti ravnoteža s pomoću novih institucionalnih pomagala. I još jednom, kako možemo biti sigurni da će zadovoljavajuća rješenja za svako funkcionalno područje uvijek biti moguća?

Problem što smo ga raspravljali, koji se tiče trenutanih reperkusija komunikacijske tehnologije, mora se razlučiti od pitanja da li organizirani masovni mediji mijenjaju osobne stavove i

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motivacije na koja se društvo može pozvati da bi potaknulo društveno prihvatljivo ponašanje na selektivnoj osnovi<sup>19</sup>. To naravno ima daljnje indirektno reperkusije na mogućnosti koje se otvaraju politici, znanosti, obitelji, religiji itd. Međutim, ti funkcionalni sistemi već direktno utječu na masovne medije a da nisu pod pritiskom motiva svojih članova. Uzmimo, na primjer, probleme politike Crkve do kojih je doveo slučaj Küng, kad su se provokacija i reakcija, hrabrost i oklijevanje, težnje za reformama i konzervativno pridržavanje principa, svi doveli u prvi plan zbog dobrobiti masovnih medija.

Ako i pustimo sve to, svejedno ćemo morati razmotriti već spomenuti „demografski“ utjecaj masovnih medija koji se sastoji od formiranja kolektivnih načina razmišljanja koji kao posljedica stvaraju uvjete što mogu utjecati na sve društvene sisteme. Ali to sigurno ne dovodi do zaključka da se uniformni, masovni stavovi kod populacije stvaraju na taj način, na primjer s pomoću televizije. Realističnije je pretpostaviti da se određena načela odlučivanja hoće li se nešto pojaviti u tisku ili u eteru, prepuštaju publici; i zapravo takva načela odlučuju o tome što će se pojaviti kao informacija<sup>20</sup>. Vjerojatno je tako najvažnije načelo ono da nešto mora djelovati novo ili izvan uobičajenoga da bi bilo vrijedno o tome obavještavati. To ne isključuje nego, štoviše, uključuje monotona ponavljanja (nogometne nezgode, obavijesti vlada, kriminal). Drugo slično načelo selekcije jest konflikt<sup>21</sup>. Moramo pretpostaviti da takva načela koja stalno naglašavaju diskontinuitet za razliku od kontinuiteta, teže tome da se potkopa povjerenje. Sasvim je uvjerljivo da stimuliraju simultane zahtjeve za zaštitu od promjena i za sudjelovanje u njima, te tako istovremeno stvaraju i strahove i zahtjeve. Društveni politički i ekonomski sustav, bilo da ga na okupu drži privatni kapitalist ili državni kapitalistički poredak, može se tako naći u položaju da sve teže može zadovoljiti očekivanja populacije.

„Postavljamo li prava pitanja?“ bila je briga iskazana na Unescovoj konferenciji o masovnim medijima<sup>22</sup>. A čak i na kraju mog ocrtavanja problema ne možemo biti sigurni jesmo li postavili „prava“ pitanja, dok će filozof biti sklon tome da se pita postoje li uopće „prava“ pitanja. Ipak bi trebalo biti moguće razviti radikalniji i sistematičniji pristup proučavanju i nalaženju rješenja problema u području istraživanja komunikacija nego što je dosad vladao. Veze između nikakve vjerojatnosti i formiranja sustava jedan je od koncepata koje teorije sustava moraju ponuditi u ovom

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kontekstu. Ako se problem toga da nema vjerojatnosti uzme kao polazišna točka, javlja se automatska težnja tome da postavimo, ako ne baš prava, onda barem osnovna pitanja koja prepoznaju da povezanost komunikacije i društva nije ograničena na polje istraživanja komunikacije, nego je to zapravo osnovno pitanje teorije društva.

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<sup>1</sup> Klaus Merten je u *Kommunikation: Ein Begriffs- und Prozessanalyse* (Opladen: 1977), pokušao analizirati takve diskusije s namjerom da identificira zajedničke karakteristike.

<sup>2</sup> Za takve izjave vidi npr. Joseph Glanvill, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (London: 1661); Francis Hutcheson, *Preface to An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (London: 1728)

<sup>3</sup> Paul Watzlawick, Janet H. Beavin i Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of International Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes* (New York: 1967), str. 48, 72 i dalje.

<sup>4</sup> Vidi Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1963).

<sup>5</sup> O razvoju nepoetskih literarnih umjetničkih formi vidi među ostalim Rudolf Kassel, *„Dichtkunst und Versifikation bei die Griechen“*, predavanje za Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> Najvažniji tekstovi na tu temu nedavno su ponovno bili izdani u Talcott Parsons, *Politics and Social Structure* (New York: 1969). Vidi također Talcott Parsons, *„Social Structure and the Symbolic Media of Interchange,“* u Peter M. Blau, ur., *Approaches to the Study of Social Structure* (New York: 1975), str. 94–120. Među brojnim sekundarnim komentarima vrijedni su pozornosti: David A. Baldwin, *„Money and Power“*, *The Journal of Politics* (1971), br. 33, str. 578–614; Rainer C. Baum, *„On Societal Media Dynamics,“* u Jan J. Loubser et al., urednici, *Explorations in General Theory in Social Science: Essays in Honor of Talcott Parsons* (New York: 1976), str. 579–608; Jürgen Habermas, *„Handlung und System – Bemerkungen zu Parsons' Medientheorie,“* u Wolfgang Schluchter, ur., *„Verhalten, Handeln und System – Talcott Parsons' Beitrag zur Entwicklung der Sozialwissenschaften“* (Frankfurt: 1989), str. 68–105; Stefan Jensen i Jens Naumann, *„Commitments – Medienkomponente einer ökonomischen Kulturtheorie?“*, *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* (1989), br. 9, str. 79–99; i uvod Stefana Jensena njegovu izdanju Talcotta Parsonsa *„Zur Theorie der sozialen Interaktionsmedien“* (Opladen: 1980).

<sup>7</sup> Iako je predmet dovoljno razumljiv što se tiče njegova sadržaja, pitanje terminologije i dalje je širom otvoreno. Slijedeći Parsonsa neki rabe termin „mediji razmjene“, neki „interaktivni mediji“ a neki „komunikacijski mediji“. Ništa od toga baš nije zadovoljavajuće. Kako se često primjećuje u slučajevima novih teoretskih otkrića, postojeći vokabular ne nudi nijednu potpuno odgovarajuću riječ.

<sup>8</sup> Vidi Niklas Luhmann, *„Einführende Bemerkungen zu einer Theorie symbolisch generalisierter Kommunikationsmedien“*, *Soziologische Aufklärung*, 2:170–192 (Opladen: 1975); i o Parsonsovima teorijama, Niklas Luhmann, *„Generalized Media and the Problem of Contingency“*, u Jan J. Loubster et al., *Explorations in General Theory*, str. 507–532.

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<sup>9</sup> O razvoju u grčkom polisu, koji su u ovom slučaju odlučujuće važni, vidi Jack Goody i Ian Watt, *“The Consequences of Literacy”*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1963), br. 5, str. 304–345.

<sup>10</sup> Vidi Gerard Piel, *The Acceleration of History* (New York: 1972).

<sup>11</sup> Vidi naročito Robert Dreeben, *On What Is Learned in School* (Reading, Mass.: 1968), i njegovu, u cjelini gledano, vjerojatno neopravdano optimističnu procjenu.

<sup>12</sup> Tako su kritičari primijetili inherentna ograničenja analogije novca i drugih komunikacijskih medija. Za recentnu diskusiju o toj temi vidi naročito Habermas, *“Handlung und System”*.

<sup>13</sup> Vidi Robert Dreeben, *The Nature of Teaching: School and the Work of Teachers* (Glenview, Ill.: 1970) naročito str. 26, 81, 82 i dalje.; Niklas Luhmann i Karl Eberhard Schorr, *“Das Technologiedefizit der Erziehung und die Pädagogik”*, *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* (1979), br. 25, str. 345–365.

<sup>14</sup> Vidi Elisabeth L. Eisenstein, *“L'avènement de l'imprimerie et la Réforme: une nouvelle approche au problème du démembrément de la chrétienté occidentale”*, *Annales ESC* (1971), br. 26, str. 1355–1382.

<sup>15</sup> O ovoj temi bih preporučio J. H. Hextera, *“The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation: More, Machiavelli and Seyssel”* (London: 1973).

<sup>16</sup> Tema o kojoj se puno raspravljalo od sedamnaestog stoljeća, naročito što se tiče žena. Vidi na primjer Jacques du Bosq, *L'honneste femme*, novo izdanje (Rouen: 1639), naročito str. 17 i dalje.; Pierre Daniel Huet, *Traité de l'origine des romans* (Pariz: 1670; ponovno izdano Stuttgart: 1966), str. 92 i dalje. Za suvremeni pogled vidi također Georg Jäger, *Empfindsamkeit und Roman* (Stuttgart: 1969), str. 57 i dalje.

<sup>17</sup> Vidi Erich Köhler, *“Je ne sais quoi: Ein Kapitel aus der Begriffsgeschichte des Unbegreiflichen, Esprit und arkadische Freiheit: Aufsätze aus der Romania* (Frankfurt: 1966), str. 230–286; Christoph Strosetzki, *Konversation: Ein Kapitel gesellschaftlicher und literarischer Pragmatik im Frankreich des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: 1978), naročito str. 125 i dalje.

<sup>18</sup> Vidi Arnold Gehlen, „*Die gewaltlose Lenkung*“, u Oskar Schatz, ur., *Die elektronische Revolution: Wie gefährlich sind die Massenmedien?* (Graz: 1975), str. 49, 64.

<sup>19</sup> O teoretskim konceptima koji služe kao osnova vidi Niklas Luhmann, „*Interpenetration: Zum Verhältnis personaler und sozialer Systeme*“, *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* (1977), br.6, str. 62–76.

<sup>20</sup> Ovdje pretpostavljam koncept informacija po kojem se nešto može smatrati informacijom samo ako je izabrano po kriteriju razlike. To s druge strane znači da se pretpostavlja komparativni model da bi se identificiralo informaciju, ali se to istovremeno ne prenosi publici te dakle recipijenti ne mogu (ili mogu samo jako teško) kontrolirati ili proizvesti komunikacijsku reakciju.

<sup>21</sup> O ovoj temi vidi naročito Hans Mathias Kepplinger, *Realkultur und Medienkultur: Literarische Karrieren in der Bundesrepublik* (Freiburg: 1975).

<sup>22</sup> *Mass Media in Society: The Need of Research* (Pariz: Unesco, 1970) (Reports and Papers on Mass Communication, 59).



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# Niklas Luhmann. The Improbability of Communication.

Without communication there can be no human relations, indeed no human life. Communication theory cannot therefore be confined to examining only certain sectors of life in society. It is not enough to engage in exhaustive discussion of particular techniques of communication, even though, because of their very novelty, such techniques and their consequences are attracting special attention in contemporary society. It is equally inadequate to begin with a discussion of concepts<sup>1</sup>. That would serve a useful purpose only if one already knew what the concept was intended to achieve and in what theoretical field it was to be applied. But no consensus on such points can be assumed, and I shall therefore begin by distinguishing two different theoretical approaches whereby a scientific theory can be constructed.

One type of theory looks for possible ways of improving the status quo. It is guided by conceptions of perfection or health or optimum conditions in the broadest sense of the term. This was the line of thought pursued by Bacon and his followers. A scientific knowledge of natural principles and the avoidance of errors of judgment are not absolutely necessary for the preservation of the world, just as a knowledge of optics is not necessary for seeing properly. But they help to iron out flaws and gradually to improve the conditions in which people live.

The other type of theory is based on an assumption of improbability. Averse like the first type to the mere perpetuation of the status quo, it lays aside the routine expectations and certainties of everyday life and sets out to explain how relationships that are intrinsically improbable are none the less possible, and indeed can be expected to occur with a high degree of certainty. In contrast to Bacon, Hobbes based his political theory on such an assumption of improbability; and, unlike Galileo, Kant no longer relied on the possibility of an empirical knowledge of nature but cast doubt on synthetic knowledge as such and then investigated the preconditions for such knowledge. In this case, therefore, the major issue is not how to achieve practical improvements but how to answer a theoretical question that arises prior to any improvement, namely, how can an order be created that transforms the impossible into the possible and the improbable into the probable?

The following discussion remains strictly within the limits defined by the question just formulated, with the object of finding a

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suitable theoretical structure for the field of communication, as the only appropriate way of identifying the universal principles underlying all societies. But there are also practical motives making themselves felt with increasing urgency in a society geared toward growth and welfare. One can no longer proceed on the naïve assumption that will always be possible on the basis of “nature”, be it physical nature or human nature<sup>2</sup>. If nature is understood as improbability that has been surmounted, another standard has to be applied in assessing what has been achieved and what must be improved; at least then it becomes clear that the dissolution of an existing order implies a return to the improbability of a new combination.

**Communication as a Problem.** The type of communication theory I am trying to advise therefore starts from the premise that communication is improbable, despite the fact that we experience and practice it every day of our lives and would not exist without it. This improbability of which we have become unaware must first be understood, and to do so requires what might be described as a contra-phenomenological effort, viewing communication not as a phenomenon but as a problem; thus, instead of looking for the most appropriate concept to cover the facts, we must first ask how communication is possible at all. Immediately, it becomes evident that a multitude of problems and obstacles have to be surmounted before communication can come about.

The first improbability is that, given the separateness and individuality of human consciousness, one person can understand what another means. Meaning can be understood only in context, and context for each individual consist primarily of what his own memory supplies.

The second improbability relates to the reaching of recipients. It is improbable that a communication should reach more persons than are present in a given situation. The problem is one of extension in space and time. The system of interaction among those present in each case assures, in practical terms, an adequate measure of attention for the purposes of communication, but the system collapses if a desire not to communicate is perceptibly communicated. Beyond the limits of this interactional system, however, the rules obtaining in that context can no longer be imposed. Hence, even if the communication finds means of

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conveyance that are mobile and constant over time, it is still improbable that it will command attention. In other situations people have other things to do.

The third improbability is the improbability of success. Even if a communication is understood, there can be no assurance of its being accepted. By “success” I mean that the recipient of the communication accepts the selective content of the communication (the information) as a premise of his own behavior, thus joining further selections to the primary selection and reinforcing its selectivity in the process. In this context, acceptance as a premise of one’s own behavior can mean acting in accordance with corresponding directives but also processing experiences, thoughts, and other perceptions on the assumption that a certain piece of information is correct.

These improbabilities are not only obstacles preventing a communication from reaching its target; they also function as thresholds of discouragement and lead to abstention from communication if the prospects for it are thought to be inauspicious. The rule that it is impossible not to communicate applies only among those present within interactional systems<sup>3</sup>, and even then it merely states that communication will take place, and not what will be communicated. There will be a tendency to abstain from communication when the prospects of reaching people and of meeting with understanding and success seem to be poor. But without communication there can be no social system. Hence, the improbabilities of the process of communication and the way in which they can be surmounted and changed into probabilities govern the formation of social system. The process of sociocultural evolution can therefore be viewed as the transformation and expansion of the conditions for effective communication on which society constructs its social systems; this is clearly not just a process of growth but one of selection and of determining what kinds of social system are feasible and what kinds have to be rejected as too improbable.

The three types of improbability are mutually reinforcing. They cannot be dealt with and changed into probabilities one after another. The solution of one problem makes it that much more difficult to solve the others. The better one’s understanding of a communication, the more grounds one has to reject it. When communication extends beyond the circle of those immediately present, understanding becomes more difficult and rejection again

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easier. The study of “philosophy” seems to owe its origins to this law of increasing mutual impediments<sup>4</sup>. When writing enables communication to extend beyond the audience present, limited in time and space, the rhapsodical element of rhythmical verse can no longer be relied on, since it can only carry with it the people actually listening; the subject matter itself must henceforth be the means of carrying conviction<sup>5</sup>.

This law that improbabilities mutually reinforce one another, and solutions to problems in one respect limit possibilities in other respects, implies that there is no direct way of achieving a progressive improvement in mutual understanding. Any efforts in this directions tend rather to run up against a growth problem coupled with increasingly irreconcilable demands. In the actual operation of the modern mass communication system, of course, people behave as though these problems have already been solved. In fact, they are no longer perceptible from the vantage point particular offices in newspapers and broadcasting organizations. None the less, the question arises whether the structures of modern society are not essentially determined by the fact that the solutions to problems are mutually obstructive and generate a continual series of fresh problems.

**The Concept of the Media.** This theory requires a general concept covering the whole range of agencies involved in transforming improbable into probable communication in respect of all three basic problems. I propose to refer to such agencies as “media”. Normally, we speak only of mass media, a term applied to techniques – principally the press and broadcasting – used to extend communication to an absent public. Parsons has added the concept of symbolically generalized “media of interchange” and developed a corresponding theory on the analogy of money<sup>6</sup>. Since then the concept of the media has been used in two different senses in the social sciences and can only be understood from the particular context or with the aid of additional explanations. The suggestion that the concept be related to the problem of improbability in the process of communication and thus defined in functional terms might dissipate this confusion and at the same time help to clarify the significance and scope of three different kinds of media.

The medium that extends our understanding of communications beyond basic perception is language. It uses symbolic generalizations to replace, to represent, or to put together

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perceptions and to solve the resulting problems of mutual comprehension. In other words, language specializes in creating the impression of mutual understanding as the basis for further communication, however fragile the grounds for that impression may be.

The dissemination media are not adequately defined by the term “mass media”. In particular, the invention of writing already fulfilled the function of transcending the bounds of immediate presence and face-to-face communication. Dissemination may be achieved through the medium of writing but also through the use of other procedures designed to preserve information in a fixed form. The selective influence of such media on culture can hardly be overestimated, since they enormously expand the store of memorized data available for additional communication, while at the same time restricting it through selectivity.

Generally speaking, communication theory has concentrated on these two types of media. But the resulting picture is seriously unbalanced. Only by endeavoring to discover which communication media are likely to be most successful can one develop a theory that really faces up to the problems of communication in society. The third kind of media may be described as symbolically generalized communication media because they alone effectively achieve the objective of communication<sup>7</sup>. With reference to social systems, Parsons mentions, as examples of this type of medium, money, power, influence, and value commitments. To this list I would add truth in the realm of science and love in the realm of intimate relationships<sup>8</sup>. The various media cover the major branches of the social system that have civilizing influence and the main subsystems of modern society. This shows the extent to which, in the course of development, an increase in the possibilities of communication has been conducive to the formation of systems and the differentiation of special systems in the fields of economics, politics, religion, science, etc.

Symbolically generalized communication media can come into existence only when dissemination techniques enable the boundaries of face-to-face interaction to be transcended, and information to be stored up for an absent public of unknown proportions and for situations not yet exactly determined. In other words they depend on the prior invention of a generally available form of writing<sup>9</sup>. In the face of such vastly expanded possibilities

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of communication, the guarantees of success provided by international systems, dependent as they are on physical presence, break down. They must be replaced or at least supplemented by more abstract and at the same time more specific means. Thus, in the Greek classical world, new code words (νόμος, alêtheia, philía) and correspondingly differentiated systems of standards were developed, denoting the conditions in which a probability of acceptance could still be assumed even though communication had become that much more improbable. Since then nobody has ever succeeded in combining all of the conditions for successful communication in a unified system of semantics applicable to all situations and, since the invention of printing, the differences between these communication media are becoming so pronounced that they ultimately break down even the premises of a unified natural, moral and legal foundation to life: reasons of state and passionate love, methodically discovered scientific truth, money, and law all follow their different paths by specializing in different improbabilities of successful communication. They use different channels of communication – the state, for instance, uses the armed forces and the administrative hierarchy; passionate love uses the salon, the (publishable) letter, and the novel – and this leads to the differentiation of distinct functional systems, which ultimately make it possible to abandon an order of society based on fixed classes and allow modern society to take its place.

This brief sketch brings out the dual aspect of my theoretical concept. Order is created by virtue of the fact that communication, though improbable, is none the less made possible and becomes the normal situation in social systems. But the improbability of dissemination, once it has been surmounted by technological means, increases the improbability of success. New demands are made on culture as a result of changes in the field of communication technology. The established order of its media of persuasion comes under pressure from changed standards of plausibility, so that some elements become superfluous (for instance, the cult of the past) and others are encouraged (for instance, the cult of the “new”). All in all, a pronounced trend toward greater differentiation and specialization is discernible and hence also a need to institutionalize the arbitrary to an ever-increasing extent. At the same time, the pace of change is gradually accelerating, as generally happens in the course in the course of human development<sup>10</sup>, so that means of overcoming increasing

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improbabilities in ever faster succession have to be developed out of what is already available, a task that becomes increasingly unrealistic if only on account of the time factor and leads to selection by the criterion of speed.

**Modern Communication Facilities.** Current discussions of the impact of the new mass media are restricted by their unduly narrow approach to the problem. Taking the concept of the “masses” as their starting point, they investigate the influence of the media on individual behavior. Viewed in this light, the social repercussions are due to the wholesale deformation of individual behavior by the popular press, films, and radio. Even changes only just taking shape in this sector, such as increased access to broadcast material, or indeed to communication in general within one’s own home, are anticipated by reference to this point of view. I do not wish to deny the validity of this method of research. But when such a narrow approach is adopted certain important changes are entirely overlooked. For society must always be seen as a heterogeneous system; it does not consist merely of a large number of individual actions but is composed of subsystems and subsystems within subsystems, and it is only through association with such subsystems – for instance, the family, politics, economics, law, the health system, education – that actions can assume social relevance in the sense of repercussions being felt beyond the initial situation.

A much more comprehensive approach must therefore be adopted in order to gain a general picture of the changes being brought about in modern society because of the structure of its communication facilities. The problem of the improbability of communication in general and the idea of society as a heterogeneous system converge, since any system represents the transformation of the improbability of communication into the probable. Account must therefore be taken both of the changes in communication technology and of the different and changing prospects for successful communication as well as of the mutual repercussions of the two problem areas. In addition to all this, there is the question whether, independently of the medium, there may be, through the differentiation of systems, further direct affects on individual attitudes and motivation which, in the light of system theory, appertain to the environment of the social system of society as a whole and react on it for this very reason. This problem of a

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latent, so to speak demographic, effect has recently made its way into analyses of the educational system as well, being reflected for instance in the catch-phrase "hidden curriculum."<sup>11</sup> Similarly, it can be assumed (and in this context there are grounds for a comparison between the mass media and mass education in schools) that the organized mass media also operate selective restrictions on the repertoire of attitudes and motivations to which other subsystems of society can have recourse.

Of course, the scope of this article does not allow even an approximate description of such a wide-ranging program. I shall have to confine myself to a number of examples which may serve to illustrate some of the possible problems to be investigated.

However one defines the functional prerequisites for the preservation or development of a society, it cannot be assumed that the improvements in the prospects for successful communication will be equally advantageous to all functional spheres. The type of modern society that has its roots in Europe has hitherto been largely supported by a limited number of symbolically generalized communication media which have proved highly effective, more particularly by theoretically and methodically guaranteed scientific truth, by money, and by political power shared in accordance with the law. This reflects the prominence of science, economics, and politics in the general consciousness of this type of society. Even Parsons' theory of the general action system is based on the assumption that all functional domains can rely equally on a communication medium as a logical corollary of their differentiation. This is wishful Thinking.<sup>12</sup> In any case, it will have to be accepted that there are neither natural nor theoretical guarantees for such a convergence of functional needs and communication prospects.

It is particularly noteworthy in this connection that no symbolically generalized communication medium has been developed to support the manifold activities designed to bring about change in individuals, ranging from education to therapeutic treatment and rehabilitation, although this is a functional domain totally dependent on communication. In this field, personal interaction remains the only way of convincing people of the desirability of change. Strictly speaking, there is as yet no scientifically reliable technology for this purpose.<sup>13</sup> Truth, money, law, power, love: none of these can offer adequate resources with sure prospects of success. An increasing amount of personal and interactional energy



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is being invested in this problem area without any real idea of whether or how technological inefficiency can be offset by such investment.

The above example shows that the problem of unbalanced development undoubtedly exists. In some fields the transformation of the improbable into what may be routinely expected is so successful that complex system can be technologically controlled even though, in their basic processes, they depend on free decision making. In other fields development is at a standstill because, as performance demands increase, discouraging thresholds of improbability are reached even within simple interactional system. My next examples are drawn from an investigation of the repercussions of dissemination techniques on the functional divisions of society and on its communication media. The invention of printing clearly resulted in a very rapid transformation of the conditions in which important functions of the social system are fulfilled. Much of the development of religious radicalism that ultimately led to the splitting up of the various denominations was attributable to printing, because it publicly crystallized positions, making it difficult for their authors to retract them once they had been identified with them.<sup>14</sup> In the realm of politics, printing opened up opportunities for exerting political influence and making a political career outside court circles; renunciation of court office no longer necessarily implied renunciation of political influence,<sup>15</sup> and politics had to adapt itself to this new state of affairs. In the sphere of social life and intimate relationships, printing led on the one hand to increased educational opportunities and on the other to misguided aspirations; it was an incitement to imitation but at the same time exaggerated the possibilities of imitation.<sup>16</sup> It recommended rules but left their observance to the individual's discretion.<sup>17</sup> Generally speaking, therefore, printing changes the repertoires from which functional systems select their operations; it can broaden the range of possibilities but also complicate the process of selection.

This continues to apply when the mass media have become independent of education and have appreciably expanded their possibilities. But are there any identifiable guidelines? We can only resort to conjecture. A kind of media-based culture may develop whose sole justification lies in the fact that it is presupposed by the media programs themselves. But does this mean that morals corrupt power, as suggested by Arnold Gehlen with reference to the United

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States?<sup>18</sup> And are there not equally good grounds for the contrary assumption, namely that power can quite easily corrupt morals by changing the basic assumptions of the programs?

But there is less evidence to confirm such theories regarding mass media modification of basic political assumptions than to support the existence of more formal effects. Above all, the time structure of political action changes when it is constantly being reflected in the mass media. It tends to accelerate because politicians have to react from one moment to the next to the fact that, and the way in which, their actions are reported. The maneuvering that this entails effectively precludes consistent adherence to a political theory, and the conditions for participating in political life, though in one respect enormously expanded in democracies, are non the less restricted by the fact that it is necessary to keep constantly abreast of the latest developments.

However realistic such analyses may be, their starting point is the general assumption of the selectivity of all achievements in transforming the improbable into the probable. At each new and higher level of improbably probable communication achieved through improved technology, balance must be restored through new institutional expedients. And again, how can we be sure that satisfactory solutions will always be possible for each functional domain?

The problem discussed above with regard to the immediate repercussions of communication technology on functional systems must be differentiated from the question of whether the organized mass media system changes the personal attitudes and motivations to which society can refer for the purpose of encouraging socially acceptable behavior on a selective basis.<sup>19</sup> This, of course, has further indirect repercussions on the possibilities open to politics, science, the family, religion, etc. But these functional systems already exert a direct influence on the mass media without being pressurized by the motivations of their members. Take, for instance, the problems of church policy posed by the K ung case, in which provocation and reaction, courage and hesitation, reforming tendencies and conservative adherence to principles were all brought forward for the benefit of the mass media.

Leaving this aside, we may also have to consider the above mentioned "demographic" impact of the mass media which consists of the formation of collective mentalities that subsequently give rise to conditions capable of affecting all social systems. But this certainly does not warrant the conclusion that uniform, mass

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attitudes are generated among the population in this fashion, for instance by television. It is more realistic to assume that certain principles followed in determining whether something should be printed or broadcast are passed on to the public; and it is in fact such principles that define what shall appear as information.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the most important principle of this kind is that a thing should seem new or out of the ordinary in order to be worth reporting. This does not rule out, but rather includes, monotonous repetition (football, accidents, government communiqués, crime). Another similar principle of selection is conflict.<sup>21</sup> It must be assumed that such principles, which constantly stress discontinuity as opposed to continuity, tend to undermine confidence. It is quite conceivable that they stimulate simultaneous demands for protection against and participation in change, thus generating both fears and claims. Society's political and economic system, whether it is held together by a private capitalist or state capitalist order, may thus find it increasingly difficult to meet the expectations of the population.

"Are we asking the right questions?" was a concern voiced at a Unesco conference of the mass media.<sup>22</sup> And even at the end of my outline of problems we still cannot be sure whether the questions being asked are the "right" ones, while a philosopher will be inclined to ask whether the "right" questions exist at all. None the less, it should be possible to develop a more radical and systematic approach to the study and solution of problems in the field of communications research than has hitherto been the rule. The connection between improbability and the formation of systems is one of the concepts that systems theory has to offer in this context. If the problem of improbability is taken as the starting point, there is an automatic tendency to ask if not the right questions at least more fundamental ones that recognize that the issue of the connection between communication and society is not confined to the field of communication research but is in fact central to all social theory.

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<sup>1</sup> In *Kommunikation: Ein Begriffs- und Prozessanalyse* (Opladen:1977), Klaus Merten attempted to analyze such discussions with a view to identifying common characteristics.

<sup>2</sup> For statements of this kind see, for example, Joseph Glanvill, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (London: 1661); Francis Hutcheson, Preface to *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (London:1728)

<sup>3</sup> Paul Watzlawick, Janet H. Beavin, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of*

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Human Communication: A Study of International Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes (New York: 1967), pp. 48, 72 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> See Eric A. Havelock, Preface to *Plato* (Cambridge, Mass.:1963).

<sup>5</sup> On the development of nonverse literary art forms, see also Rudolf Kassel, "Dichtkunst und Versifikation bei die Griechen", lecture to the Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> The most important essays on this subject have been recently reprinted in Talcott Parsons, *Politics and Social Structure* (New York; 1969). See also Talcott Parsons, "Social Structure and the Symbolic Media of Interchange," in Peter M. Blau, ed., *Approaches to the Study of Social Structure* (New York; 1975), pp. 94-120. Noteworthy among the numerous secondary commentaries are: David A. Baldwin, "Money and Power," *The Journal of Politics* (1971), no.33, pp.578-614; Rainer C. Baum, "On Societal Media Dynamics," in Jan J. Loubser et al., eds., *Explorations in General Theory in Social Science: Essays in Honor of Talcott Parsons* (New York; 1976), str.579-608; Jürgen Habermas, "Handlung und System – Bemerkungen zu Parsons' Medientheorie," in Wolfgang Schluchter, ed., *Verhalten, Handeln und System – Talcott Parsons' Beitrag zur Entwicklung der Sozialwissenschaften!* (Frankfurt: 1989), pp. 68-105; Stefan Jensen and Jens Naumann, „Commitments – ‚Medienkomponente einer ökonomischen Kulturtheorie?“, *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* (1989), no. 9, pp. 79-99; and Stefan Jensen's Introduction to his edition of Talcott Parsons' *Zur Theorie der sozialen Interaktionsmedien* (Opladen: 1980).

<sup>7</sup> Although the issue is adequately understood from the point of view of content, the question of terminology is still wide open. Following Parsons, some use term „exchange media“, some „interactional media“ and some „communication media“. None of these is quite satisfactory. As is often found in the case of new theoretical discoveries, our existing vocabulary provides no exactly suitable term.

<sup>8</sup> See Niklas Luhmann, "Einführende Bemerkungen zu einer Theorie symbolisch generalisierter Kommunikationsmedien", *Soziologische Aufklärung*, 2:170-192 (Opladen: 1975); and, on Parsons' theories, Niklas Luhmann, „Generalized Media and the Problem of Contingency“, in Jan J. Loubster et al., *Explorations in General Theory*, pp. 507-532.

<sup>9</sup> For developments in the Greek *polis* that are of decisive importance in this context, see Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1963), no. 5, pp. 304-345.

<sup>10</sup> See Gerard Piel, *The Acceleration of History* (New York: 1972).

<sup>11</sup> See, in particular, Robert Dreeben, *On What Is Learned in School* (Reading, Mass.: 1968), and its probably, on the whole, unduly optimistic assessment.

<sup>12</sup> Thus, critics have noted the inherent limitations of an analogy between money and other communications media. For a recent discussion of this subject see, in particular, Habermas, "Handlung und System".

<sup>13</sup> See Robert Dreeben, *The Nature of Teaching: School and the Work of Teachers* (Glenview, Ill.:1970) in particular pp. 26, 81, 82 et seq.; Niklas Luhmann and Karl Eberhard Schorr, "Das Technologiedefizit der Erziehung und die Pädagogik", *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* (1979), no. 25, pp. 345-365.

<sup>14</sup> See Elisabeth L. Eisenstein, "L'avènement de l'imprimerie et la Reforme: une nouvelle approche au problème du démembrément de la chrétienté occidentale", *Annales ESC* (1971), no. 26, pp. 1355-1382.

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<sup>15</sup> On this topic I would recommend J.H.Hexter's *The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation: More, Machiavelli and Seyssel* (London: 1973)

<sup>16</sup> An issue that has been much debated since the seventeenth century, especially with reference to women. See, for example, Jacques du Bosq, *L'honneste femme*, new edition (Rouen: 1639), especially pp. 17 et seq.; Pierre Daniel Huet, *Traité de l'origine des romans* (Paris: 1670; reprinted Stuttgart: 1966), pp. 92 et seq. For a modern view, see also Georg Jäger, *Empfindsamkeit und Roman* (Stuttgart: 1969), pp. 57 et seq.

<sup>17</sup> See Erich Köhler, "Je ne sais quoi: Ein Kapitel aus der Begriffsgeschichte des Unbegreiflichen, *Esprit und arkadische Freiheit: Aufsätze aus der Romania* (Frankfurt: 1966), pp. 230-286; Christoph Strosetzki, *Konversation: Ein Kapitel gesellschaftlicher und literarischer Pragmatik im Frankreich des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: 1978), especially pp. 125 et seq.

<sup>18</sup> See Arnold Gehlen, "Die gewaltlose Lenkung", in Oskar Schatz, ed., *Die elektronische Revolution: Wie gefährlich sind die Massenmedien?* (Graz: 1975), pp.49, 64.

<sup>19</sup> On the underlying theoretical concept see Niklas Luhmann, "Interpenetration: Zum Verhältnis personaler und sozialer Systeme", *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* (1977), no.6, pp. 62-76.

<sup>20</sup> Here I am assuming an information concept whereby something can be regarded as information only if it is selected according to the criterion of difference. This means in turn that a comparative model is assumed for the purposes of identifying information, but this is not simultaneously conveyed to the public and thus cannot (or can only with difficulty) be controlled by or elicit a communicative reaction from the recipients.

<sup>21</sup> On this subject, see, in particular, Hans Mathias Kepplinger, *Realkultur und Medienkultur: Literarische Karrieren in der Bundesrepublik* (Freiburg: 1975).

<sup>22</sup> *Mass Media in Society: The Need of Research* (Paris: Unesco, 1970) (Reports and Papers on Mass Communication, 59).



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# Ovo je transkript razgovora koji su Katalin Timár i Nika Radić vodile 29. listopada 2010. u galeriji Traversée u Münchenu povodom izložbe „Out of

**Place“.** KT: Htjela bih početi ovaj razgovor osvrtom na iskustvo ulaska u ovu prostoriju, ovaj izložbeni prostor, kad će većina ljudi vjerojatno prvo primijetiti atmosferu. Ne radi se toliko o skupu pojedinih radova na izložbi, nego više o sveukupnoj atmosferi koja podsjeća na dnevni boravak ili neki prostor u kojem netko živi. Tu je krevet, koji ne spada nužno u dnevni boravak i zato mi je to draže nazvati prostorom u kojem netko živi, netko tko nije trenutačno prisutan. Osjećaj stambenog prostora pojačan je činjenicom da, dok gledamo uokolo i vidimo objekte, slike i projekcije, moramo doći do osnovnog i dvoznačnog pitanja podjele između umjetničkih djela koja je Nika napravila, i predmeta za svakodnevnu upotrebu. Unutar tih parametara postoji jedan predmet koji, po meni, djeluje kao polazište za cijelu izložbu (ili „sidro“, kako bi se reklo u semiotici). S tim bismo mogle početi razgovor, ali i početi razmišljati o pojedinim radovima. To je sidro za mene tepih. Jer se tepih vidljivo nalazi između tih dvaju polova. On izgleda kao običan svakodnevni tepih, ali je i umjetnički rad. U tepihu postoje znakovi, odnosno određeni elementi, koji indiciraju da je napravljen za izložbu, no on istovremeno izgleda svakodnevno i „normalno“. Kao predmet izgleda uobičajeno, gotovo kao nešto što bi se moglo kupiti u Ikei, gdje katkad prodaju tepihe s takvim smiješnim motivima. Htjela bih te pitati što misliš o cijeloj atmosferi i o tepihu. Kako si došla do toga da ga napraviš?

NR: Kad sam prvo razmišljala o izložbi, pojavilo se nekoliko aspekata problema zbog kojih sam došla na ovakvo rješenje, ali ono što me zbilja nagnalo da stvari napravim na ovaj način jest činjenica da mi svi još uvijek radimo s idejom „bijeke kocke“ – „white cube“, koju je modernizam napravio kao neutralno mjesto u kojem se može uživati u umjetničkom djelu. Taj bi prostor trebao umjetnost potpuno izdvojiti iz svakodnevnoga konteksta, da možemo umjetničko djelo izolirati od života, gledati samo umjetnost i ignorirati sve drugo. Zbog toga je stvoren taj idealni prostor za gledanje umjetnosti i još uvijek ga se koristi kao standardni prostor u muzejima i galerijama. Podovi će već nekako



Izložba Out of Place  
Galerie Traversée, München, 2010.





Izložba Out of Place s tepihom

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biti neutralni, zidovi bijeli itd. Međutim, u tim prostorima ima puno drugih stvari za koje smo naučili da ih trebamo zanemariti. Tamo će biti neki stupovi, prekidači za svjetlo, sve one stvari koje su dio galerije i koje ćemo pokušati zanemariti i gledati samo u ono što je umjetnost. Ja sam zato zaključila da ću iskoristiti cijeli prostor, sa svim njegovim dijelovima, i promijeniti prostor u nešto što nije uobičajeno za galeriju. Također sam razmišljala o tome da privatne komercijalne galerije velikim dijelom računaju na privatne kolekcionare koji na koncu radove skinu s galerijskih zidova i prenesu ih u novo okruženje da bi ih pokazali u potpuno drugačijoj situaciji. Tako sam odlučila izložbu napraviti na nešto drugačiji način.

Jednako tako, priča o stanovima zapravo je nastavak jedne prijašnje izložbe. Bila sam napravila projekt o svim stanovima u kojima sam živjela i pokazalo se da sam tijekom života živjela u sedamnaest stanova. Zapravo zastrašujuće kad razmislimo, i dalje se stalno selim. To nekako ne prestaje. Ali tako znam taj osjećaj novoga prostora u kojem živimo i kako se nađemo s nekim jako otmjenim dizajnerskim stolom koji vučemo uokolo za sobom, ali i s nekim stolom koji smo skupili jer su nam ga prijatelji dali. Tako sam htjela imati tu čudnu kombinaciju raznih stvari koje se stave na hrpu i s njima improvizira. Uvijek mislimo da ćemo u nekom trenutku konačno imati neki divno uređeni stan, ali se to nikad ne dogodi jer se opet preselimo nekamo drugamo. I dok sam tako mislila o tim raznim predmetima, htjela sam imati i neki tepih, a to baš nije bilo jednostavno jer su tepisi manje funkcionalni od drugih predmeta. Na stol se jednostavno stave neke stvari, ali su tepisi dekorativniji i nisam bila zadovoljna ni s jednim tepihom koji sam našla pa sam sama napravila jedan. Rečenice na njemu zapravo su iz jednoga kratkog filma koji sam napravila prije nekoliko godina na kojem se vidi scena tuluma s puno ljudi koji razgovaraju, ali sve što se može razabrati jesu rečenice na raznim jezicima u kojima ti ljudi kažu da zapravo nisu razumjeli. To je ono što me zbilja zanima: koliko možemo razumjeti od umjetničkoga djela dok ga gledamo. Zbilja me uvijek zanimalo pitanje recepcije.

KT: Slažem se s tobom da je to vrlo važan aspekt tvojega rada u cjelini, ali bih se prije htjela zadržati na jednoj drugoj temi. Mislim da se umjetnicima, kad rade samostalnu izložbu, često postavlja pitanje uređenja prostora. Mislim na uređenje ne samo u umjetničkom smislu ili na način na koji bi se uredilo stan ili bilo koji prostor u kojem se živi, nego više na postav u smislu

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prezentacije slične kao na pozornici, gotovo kao u kazalištu ili na filmu. I kad tako gledam baš ovu izložbu, ali i druge tvoje izložbe koje sam vidjela, uključujući i pojedine radove, postoji određena doza prezentacije u tom smislu. Ne mislim samo na činjenicu da je nešto izloženo, nego na način aranžiranja stvari i ljudi, te na to da se onda gleda što se događa s takvim postavom. Možda je postav ipak ovdje najbolja riječ. Dakle, odakle to dolazi u tvom radu?

NR: Ne mislim o tome baš toliko. Mislim da velik dio baš tog dijela posla napravim nesvjesno. Ja sam studirala na tradicionalnoj, modernističkoj, istočnoeuropskoj akademiji gdje smo učili sve o zlatnom rezu itd. Ne vjerujem da postoji neutralan način da se nešto pokaže. To je nešto što smo naučili od konceptualne umjetnosti. Oni su očajnički pokušavali stvari napraviti neutralno. Sjetimo se samo tekstova na zidovima Lawrencea Weinerja. Pokušao ih je napraviti što je neutralnije moguće, a na kraju je zapravo stvorio vrlo prepoznatljiv izgled konceptualne umjetnosti. Čim su stvari vizualne, nekako izgledaju i moramo donositi neke odluke. Zašto radim stvari na ovaj ili onaj način...

KT: Mogu preciznije preformulirati pitanje upravo zbog toga što si sad rekla. Slažem se da nema neutralne prezentacije. Možemo pokušati napraviti relativno neutralni postav ili napisati relativno neutralni tekst, ali se u pisanju pisac uvijek podrazumijeva tako da ima i puno subjektivnih elemenata koji su nužno i uvijek prisutni. Istovremeno, a to je nešto što je i tvoj prijatelj Miško Šuvaković napisao u predgovoru tvom katalogu, ti si fizički prisutna. Ali kad gledam tvoje radove, čak i kad si ti sama u njima kao u ovim videima, ne vidim te kao osobu. Tako da istovremeno dok vjeruješ u prisutnost subjektivnosti, uspijevaš stvoriti distancu između sebe i rada.

NR: Kad ja gledam druge ljude. (*Obje se smiju*) Da, zbilja. To je nekako kao u ovim fotografijama. Dok gledamo druge ljude postanemo znatiželjni i mislimo o tome što rade, ali na kraju ne znamo. I to je to što me zapravo zanima: činjenica da projiciramo sami sebe, kao promatrača, u ono što smo primili od umjetničkoga djela. A to je nešto u što se ne bih htjela puno miješati jer me zbilja veseli kad ljudi na kraju kažu da su konačno shvatili da u tim fotografijama nema naracije.

KT: Ako mislimo o recepciji umjetničkoga djela kao o komunikacijskom činu (sad govorim jako pojednostavljeno), postoji pošiljalac, što je umjetnik koji šalje poruku, koja je u ovom slučaju umjetničko djelo, i onda postoje primaoci, promatrači,

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oni koji gledaju i primaju poruku. Prema lingvistu i semiotičaru Romanu Jakobsonu, taj čin komunikacije ne može nikad biti potpuno gladak, jer uvijek postoje izobličenja. Postoji previše nepredviđenih situacija, „nezgoda“ ili šûma koji se miješa u taj čin komunikacije. To znači da ne postoji pravi ili idealni način slanja poruke ili primanja te iste poruke. Što ti misliš o potrebi koju imaju mnogi umjetnici, da što je više moguće kontroliraju recepciju vlastitoga rada? Vrlo često ne prihvaćaju ta izobličenja u recepciji ili činjenicu da rad dobije vlastiti život i umjetnik ga ne može kontrolirati nakon što je rad napravljen i izložen.

NR: Ja to uopće ne pokušavam kontrolirati. Zapravo mi je zanimljivo vidjeti potpuno različite interpretacije. I isto tako ne mislim da postoji kriva interpretacija. Možda neka prilično loše informirana, ali što god da netko vidi u radu, meni je ok. Ma ima puno teorija o tome kako se ne možemo stvarno razumjeti. Lingvistika je i počela s Ferdinandom de Saussureom i on je definirao jezik kao sustav znakova i tvrdio da se može komunicirati samo ako postoje dva identična sustava znakova između pošiljaoca i primaoca. To je, naravno, nemoguće. Pogledaj samo ovu situaciju u kojoj se nalazimo. Svi se služimo jezikom koji vjerojatno nitko u ovom prostoru ne govori kao materinskim jezikom. Sigurno ćemo u nekom trenutku upotrijebiti riječi koje možda neki drugi prisutni ljudi neće razumjeti pa se sustavi znakova nikad potpuno ne podudaraju. De Saussure je na kraju došao do toga da je prestao i pisati i predavati. Baš nikad nije ni pisao, ali je odustao i od predavanja. Mislim da se na nekoj drugoj razini to događa i s umjetnošću. Umjetnost nije (nužno) verbalna, ali je također oblik komunikacije. I mislim da umjetnost katkad funkcionira bolje od jezika. Nije tako precizna, ali nekako upravo zbog toga katkad bolje radi.

KT: Slažem se s tobom i mislim da se tvoj rad jako oslanja na ideju fragmenta. Ne mislim da počinješ sa zamišljenom cjelinom i onda smisliš fragment, nego da počneš s fragmentom od samog početka. Ima onaj video u kojem vidimo jednu ženu (tebe), a u videu su ostale samo pauze između onoga što je rekla (*Pauza, 2003.*). Ne mislim da si počela s konkretnim tekstom koji si htjela odigrati, nego da si zbilja htjela pokazati u prvom redu te pauze.

NR: Da, jer mi se činilo da one, na neki način, nose više informacija nego same riječi. To je čudno... sigurna sam da, kad bih sada govorila potpuno isti tekst koji upravo govorim, ali kad bih bila odjevena u drugačiju odjeću i, ne znam, na primjer hihotala

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se cijelo vrijeme, da bi poruka bila drugačija. Ne radi se samo o tome što kažem, nego i o tome kako to kažem. To je cijela ideja toga da je medij poruka. I na izložbi, kad se radi izložba u galeriji, ne radi se samo o pojedinim radovima nego i o tome kako ih se prezentira i to je nešto o čemu zapravo ti kao kustosica znaš jako puno. Ti radiš s istim stvarima. Kad si me vodila po izložbi zbirke u Muzeju Ludwig u Budimpešti koju si ti radila, možda možeš sama više reći o tome, ali mene je fasciniralo kako puno stvari s kojima si radila, veze između pojedinih radova i kako djeluju zajedno, na kraju na prvi pogled nisu vidljive. Kad postavljaš i radiš izložbu na točno određeni način, koliko ideja s kojima radiš misliš da će posjetilac na kraju shvatiti?

KT: Mislim da se zato nas dvije tako dobro razumijemo (*obje se smiju*) Vjerujem da ja kao kustosica mogu pokušati prikazati moje čitanje ili moju viziju veza između radova, ali da je na kraju uvijek posjetilac taj koji dolazi do neočekivanih veza ili neočekivanih ideja o izloženim radovima. Meni je kao kustosici jako važno zadržati svijest o tome da ja također mogu imati slijepu točku, čak i ako radim s određenom zbirkom ili s hrpama materijala a ne samo s jednim umjetnikom. I ja imam vlastito subjektivno čitanje radova i, čak i ako sam školovana kao povjesničarka umjetnosti, moj mozak radi na određeni način. Ja obvezno moram biti svjesna i svoje subjektivnosti i svojih slijepih točaka. Bila je zgoda na mojoj nedavnoj izložbi u Budimpešti gdje sam o jednom radu mislila na određeni način, a onda su mi došli neki prijatelji da vide izložbu i podsjetili me na jedno drugo čitanje, na drugi sloj rada, koji je očigledno jednako tako bio tamo, samo sam ja na njega imala slijepu točku i nisam ga vidjela. Ta mi je anegdota postala vrlo važna u poslu, ali pretpostavljam da je tebi, kao umjetnici, također važno dopustiti da se stvori situacija za posjetioce gdje će se osjećati slobodni da dođu na vlastite ideje, osobne poglede i interpretacije.

NR: Svakako. Danas sam od prijateljice čula jednu smiješnu priču. Ona se zapravo ne bavi umjetnošću i rekla mi je da je vidjela moju izložbu i primijetila činjenicu kako sam osobno prisutna u svim videima. Rekla je kako joj je to bilo neobično i kako je, budući da pripadamo različitim generacijama, sigurno naša generacija otvorenija za to da se prikazuje u javnosti jer smo se navikli na internetske društvene mreže ili što god da već koristimo, a da nam život čini prilično javnim. Zbog toga smo se mi dakle navikli da se pokazujemo u javnosti pa je zato normalno da sam ja na ovim video

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radovima. Prilično sam se iznenadila jer sam ja zapravo na tim videima zato što mi je to bilo najjednostavnije napraviti. Najbolje mogu kontrolirati cijelu situaciju dok snimam. Katkad tako napravim nešto iz najglupljih razloga i ne mogu spriječiti slojeve značenja da prodru u rad. I to je ok. Mislim, to je sasvim valjana interpretacija. Možda je istina da nisam jako sramežljiva jer sam se navikla vidjeti blesave fotografije same sebe na prilično javnim mjestima. Ali moja ideja nije bila da ovdje mora biti prikazan video u kojem sam ja. Da sam imala prijatelja ili prijateljicu pri ruci koji bi bili spremni glumiti, bilo bi mi drago da je netko drugi. Ispada da je to tako u životu, pa je onda jednako tako i u umjetnosti, da usput napravimo hrpe stvari koje ne možemo izbjeći, a onda one ipak nose neko značenje. Ne možemo kontrolirati svaku sitnicu. Neke se stvari dogode slučajno.

KT: A kako se dogodilo da si studirala ne samo tradicionalno kiparstvo na Akademiji u Zagrebu – jer se to može lako dogoditi (*obje se smiju*), nego kako se dogodilo da pretežno radiš s videom, projekcijama, fotografijom i svim tim medijima?

NR: Ja sam zbilja jedno vrijeme i radila skulpture i zavarivala sam i bila pod jakim utjecajem skulpture osamdesetih. Onda sam s vremenom shvatila da me ne zanima toliko objekt, nego više način na koji se ljudi kreću oko njega. Onda sam te skulpture radila sve veće i veće tako da ljudi mogu hodati uokolo i fascinirala me je činjenica da se mogu napraviti intervencije u prostoru i njima kontrolirati način na koji se ljudi kreću po njemu. Neće, na primjer, otići lijevo nego desno, jer sam stavila nešto na određeno mjesto, ili će svi zastati na istom mjestu. Onda sam shvatila da postoji komunikacija u načinu na koji mogu utjecati na to kako se ljudi kreću po prostoru. A zatim su se stvari događale i slučajno. Uvijek sam fotografirala. Fotografije su mi bile dio radnoga procesa. Fotografirala sam galerije i po fotografijama crtala skice. To je obično prvi korak. Onda sam počela raditi video jer sam bila u New Yorku na stipendiji... zapravo, to nije bilo tako davno. Čudno mi je da ljudi katkad o meni govore kao o video umjetnici. Ne mislim da sam video umjetnica. Vrlo rijetko radim video koji se može gledati na ekranu, na monitoru. Obično se radi o dosta specifičnoj projekciji ili o dijelu instalacije. Tako da se zapravo više radi o prostoru. To baš nije zgodno za praktične svrhe, ali što možemo. Bila sam na stipendiji u New Yorku i prvo mi je bilo jako zabavno, jer sam se mogla puno šetati po New Yorku, ali mi je nakon određenog vremena dosadilo biti turist. Na sreću tamo imam

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prijatelja koji ima malu video produkciju, ali se tada baš bavio nečim drugim pa mi je dao da za to vrijeme upotrebljavam njegovu opremu. Tako sam tamo napravila prve video radove.

KT: A što je s prozorima? Imaš ih puno, ne samo fotografija, nego i videa, koje si projicirala u postojeća vrata ili prozore, ili si čak stvarala iluziju prozora kao site-specific projekcija u Berlinu, gdje su i sami prozori bili projicirani (*3 prozora, 2007.*) Ljudi koji nisu živjeli u blizini mogli su misliti da se radi o pravim prozorima. Izgledali su vrlo realno. Kako si došla do te ideje o gledanju kroz prozor? Meni je upadljivo da se svi osjećamo nelagodno ili „loše“ ako virimo u tuđe prostore, čak i ako to ipak katkad radimo.

NR: Ma svi to rade. Možda svi ne priznaju, ali sam sigurna da to svi rade.

KT: Ali je i dalje čudan osjećaj.

NR: Je.

KT: Ali ako gledamo tvoje radove, mislim da se ne osjećam nelagodno na način na koji se osjećam ako virim u prave stanove.

NR: Neki ljudi zapravo kažu da se osjećaju nelagodno. „3 prozora“ zapravo su uspomena iz djetinjstva. Sjećam se da smo živjeli u Zagrebu i bilo je ljeto i ljudi su zbog vrućine spustili rolete pa se ljudima u stanu preko puta našega nisu mogla vidjeti lica. A stan je bio kao u većini starijih srednjoeuropskih kuća (mora da ih je i München pun), imao je tri sobe u nizu tako da se moglo vidjeti kako ljudi idu iz jedne u drugu. Drvene rolete bile su napola spuštene tako da su se pretežno vidjele ruke dviju osoba koje su gestikulirale po stanu. Hodali su gore-dolje i očigledno se svađali. Zapravo je bilo zabavno kako se moglo vidjeti da se svađaju samo po pokretima ruku. To ima veze s fragmentom koji si maloprije spominjala.

KT: Jednako tako čini mi se da je zanimljivo da danas puno umjetnika čita puno teorije i koriste teoriju, ili teoretske argumente, ali mislim da ne znam nikog drugog tko je već imao diplomu iz umjetnosti pa onda otišao studirati i još jednom diplomirati povijest umjetnosti, a da nije htio postati povjesničar umjetnosti.

NR: Nisam htjela postati povjesničarka umjetnosti.

KT: Da, upravo o tome se i radi. Sve si odstudirala i službeno završila. Dakle, diplomirala si.

NR: A tako dugo sam studirala da mi se činilo da onda mogu i završiti.

KT: Zašto te uopće zanimalo studirati povijest umjetnosti?

NR: I to ima veze s komunikacijom. Ljudi koji se profesionalno

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bave umjetnošću obično završe ili neku likovnu akademiju ili povijest umjetnosti. Bilo mi je jako zanimljivo da te dvije grupe ljudi dobiju vrlo različito obrazovanje i na kraju rade zajedno i posao im je pun nesporazuma. Često izgleda kao da govore o različitim stvarima. Mislim da će se umjetnici često baviti s tim kako je nešto napravljeno i ulaziti u banalnosti rješavanja malih problema koji uključuju tehničke aspekte. Ljudi koji su studirali povijest umjetnosti više se bave razinom značenja i interpretacije. Htjela sam vidjeti drugu stranu. Htjela sam vidjeti gdje je raskorak između tih dvaju obrazovanja. Imaš li ti iskustva s tim kad radiš s umjetnicima?

KT: Imam takva iskustva, ali mi je poučno iskustvo bilo prije nekoliko godina, kad sam bila pozvana da kao članica međunarodne grupe kustosa u Leipzigu, u Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, napravimo izložbu. Zbog teme sam se odlučila da ne tražim umjetnika, nego sam na kraju napravila intervju s jednim teoretičarom iz Londona i pokazala taj intervju kao video. Nisam se doživljavala kao umjetnica tako da se ni to nije smatralo umjetničkim radom nego prije nekim dokumentarnim uratkom. Kad su me pitali kako to hoću postaviti, shvatila sam poziciju umjetnika (*obje se smiju*). Imala sam vrlo precizne ideje o tome kako to želim pokazati, a kad sam stigla u Leipzig, sve je već bilo postavljeno. Bio je dan prije otvorenja i nisu me mogli čekati s postavom. Ispalo je sasvim ok, ali sam neke sitnice promijenila i bilo mi je jako stalo do tih neznatnih detalja. Kad sam završila, mislila sam da je to vjerojatno način na koji umjetnici osjećaju vlastiti rad i kako se bave tim detaljima. Jako su precizni i uzrujavaju se ako nije sve točno onako kako su htjeli. Imala sam takva iskustva s umjetnicima, a onda sam i sama mogla osjetiti isto i odonda sam nekako... mislim da sam drugačija (*obje se smiju*).

NR: Tolerantnija! Treba ti iskustvo druge strane. To je bio moj razlog da studiram povijest umjetnosti.

KT: Kad mislimo, ne samo o ovoj izložbi, nego o tvojem radu općenito, ima vrlo malo referenci na socijalna stanja, ne što se tiče interakcije među ljudima, nego društvenih klasa ili političkih pitanja. Jedna iznimka koja mi je na pameti jest rad koji je lani bio na izložbi „Periodic Table“ koju sam ja kuratirala u galeriji Traversée (*Čišćenje galerije, 2009.*). Napravila si noćnu projekciju na galerijskom izlogu tako da su ljudi, dok su noću prolazili, mogli vidjeti čistačicu u galeriji. To je bila druga verzija jednoga sličnog rada koji si napravila u Berlinu na kojem su bile tri čistačice



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(Čišćenje ureda, 2008.). Ljudi su tako mogli viriti u prostoriju koju su neke žene čistile. Meni su ti tvoji radovi bili važni iz političkih razloga, ali to je bio jedini trenutak u tvom radu da sam se nelagodno osjećala vireći u neki prostor. Činilo mi se da se prikradam ljudima koji rade i bave se poslom koji se ne cijeni i slabo je plaćen, a bez kojega ne bismo mogli preživjeti, ali mi se činilo da su na određeni način i izloženi našim pogledima te da smo mi nekako prisiljeni gledati ih. Nismo nužno morali, ali nam je umjetnica ponudila viziju tih ljudi. Da odem još dublje u to, misliš li da umjetnici imaju socijalnu funkciju ili, da to formuliram jako široko, imaju li socijalnu odgovornost?

NR: Ja vjerojatno imam jako podvojen stav prema politici. Kako dolazim iz bivše komunističke zemlje koja je prošla kroz rat i onda ušla u vrlo sirov oblik kapitalizma, onda sam se selila u zemlje starijega kapitalizma i kao dijete živjela sam u inozemstvu, na „zapadu“, mislim da je politika na razne načine odredila moj život i mislim da politiku shvaćam vrlo ozbiljno i zbog toga imam problema s puno političke umjetnosti koja se danas može vidjeti po izložbenim prostorima. Često mi se čini jako pojednostavljena. Također mi se često čini kao nekakvo propovijedanje već obraćenima. Puno tih radova na kraju se pokazuje ljudima koji i sami spadaju u umjetničku scenu a tako i tako dijele iste stavove. Ljudi koje ti radovi kritiziraju i tako ih neće vidjeti pa mi se čini da se s tim ne isplati baviti. Često i nisam sigurna da su stvari tako jednostavne kako djeluju u tim radovima.

Čistačice sam napravila kad su me pozvali da napravim rad u javnom prostoru. Svi znamo što se događa s javnim prostorom. Ako ne možeš platiti *latte macchiato*, ne vidim kako baš možeš koristiti javni prostor. Zato sam htjela da svi pogledamo te ljude koje nikada ne vidimo, a koji su zapravo tamo, rade svoj posao da bismo se mi lijepo mogli služiti javnim prostorom. Ali stvari su bitno drugačije kad se rad pokazuje u javnom prostoru, a ne u zatvorenom galerijskom prostoru u koji ulazi samo umjetnička publika. I naravno, opet smo ja i moje prijateljice glumile čistačice jer se prave čistačice, kad sam ih pitala, nisu htjele pokazati u javnosti. To mi se činilo ok, tako da su na kraju umjetnice glumile da su čistačice. I dalje se radilo o tome da se pokaže funkciju koju se normalno ne vidi. Nije to tako skriveno, nego samo ne primjećujemo. Sve su te stvari tu. Samo ih treba pogledati, a to mi se čini da je zbilja zanimljivo s umjetnošću. Umjetnost katkad može upozoriti na stvari koje nisu skrivene, nego nismo naviknuti

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obratiti pažnju na njih. Ista je stvar sa žaruljama u galeriji white cube. One su tamo, samo ih mi ignoriramo.

Vrlo sam podvojena oko političke umjetnosti. Nekad funkcionira, ali nekad postane, sad ću izgovoriti tu riječ, propaganda. Čak i kad se radi o problemu, o predmetu koji hoću podržati, i dalje mislim da je propaganda loša stvar i da se u umjetnosti ne bi smjela događati. Ako na kraju završimo s pojednostavljenom izjavom i svima, na primjer, kažemo da je jednakost bolja nego da imamo nekog nevjerojatno bogatog tik do nekoga tko je beskućnik, ne vidim da smo rekli nešto novo.

KT: Meni je zanimljivo, kad gledamo projekcije na ovoj izložbi, da je očigledno kako vidimo tebe u ovim videima. Naravno da ako te netko ne pozna i dođe u prostor dok ti nisi tu, neće toga biti svjestan, ali kad sam vidjela čistačice u Berlinu, moram priznati da te nisam prepoznala. (*Smije se*)

NR: Kad sam imala čudne stvari na sebi.

KT: Ne sjećam se više što sam mislila tko su te žene, ali sigurno nisam mislila da si to ti. Smiješno, to me podsjeća na Flaubertovu izjavu kad je rekao: „Madame Bovary, to sam ja“. Tako da se ono pitanje što je fikcija a što nije ponovno javlja, samo u ovom okruženju s pravim namještajem i pravim umjetničkim djelima (*smije se*), ali i u tvom radu općenito. Kakav je tvoj odnos prema tome? Misliš li da je to pitanje uopće relevantno u tvom slučaju? Kakav je tvoj stav?

NR: Ne mislim da je to uopće relevantno. Judit (*Bönisch, vlasnica galerije Traversée*) mi je rekla da je imala posjetioca na ovoj izložbi koji nije vjerovao da su fotografije slučajne, nego da su namještene. Mislio je da sam sve namjestila pa da su lažne. Baš to ne razumijem. Ja sam svakako prelijena da to sve namještam. Trebalo bi naći prozor koje je prikladan, dovesti tamo neke ljude, režirati ih i sve mi se to čini kao prevelika gnjavaža. Ovako uperim fotoaparat kad vidim nešto zanimljivo i snimim fotografiju. Međutim, da i jesam dovoljno marljiva da to sve namjestim, ne vidim u čemu bi bio problem. Na kraju krajeva to nije važno. Mislim da smo samo znatiželjni saznati kako su stvari nastale, ali na kraju se vidi samo gotovi rad, pa je li on napravljen na ovaj ili onaj način, ne mislim da ima ikakvog utjecaja. A ti?

KT: Ne, ni ja ne mislim da je to važno, ali imam iskustva s tim i ne znam je li to geografski ili nije, da neki ljudi koji čitaju puno beletristike imaju sasvim drugačija očekivanja od literature nego kad se to uspoređi s likovnom umjetnošću. Tako ne bi pitali je li

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Madame Bovary Flaubert ili nije, izgleda da znaju pravila kako to radi u beletristici, ali često imaju potpuna drugačija očekivanja od vizualnih umjetnosti. Često to žele vidjeti ili kao nastavak života umjetnika, kao nastavak umjetničke biografije, ili žele to vidjeti kao nešto sasvim drugačije, kao nešto potpuno fiktivno. U tvom radu djeluje da ti miješaš te pozicije.

NR: Postoji psihološka činjenica da stvari možemo zamisliti samo kao kombinaciju onoga što smo iskusili. To je vrlo očigledno u znanstvenofantastičnim filmovima kad izmisle, na primjer, neko čudovište koje je zapravo kombinacija elemenata stvorenja koja znamo. Izgleda da nekako razmišljamo tako da kombiniramo elemente iz vlastitog iskustva. Sigurna sam da se moje osobno iskustvo vidi u mojem radu, ne zato što bih ja to tako htjela, nego zato što ne mogu izmisliti potpuno drugačiji život. Nekoliko puta mi se dogodilo da sam razgovarala s ljudima koji imaju sasvim drugačija životna iskustva i ispalo je da smo imali vrlo malo tema za razgovor. Sad se opet vraćam teoriji komunikacije. Trebaju nam zajedničke stvari da bismo tu i tamo mogli alocirati iznenađenja. Ako je sve iznenađujuće, možemo samo odustati i otići na kavu s prijateljem. Postoji samo određena količina novoga koju možemo prihvatiti. Kako to izgleda s tvojega stajališta? Naime, ti radiš s umjetnicima. Da li prvo razgovarate ili nešto drugo? Da li prvo dođeš u kontakt s umjetnikom, umjetnicom ili s radom? Ili i jedno i drugo? Je li to nešto odvojeno jedno od drugoga?

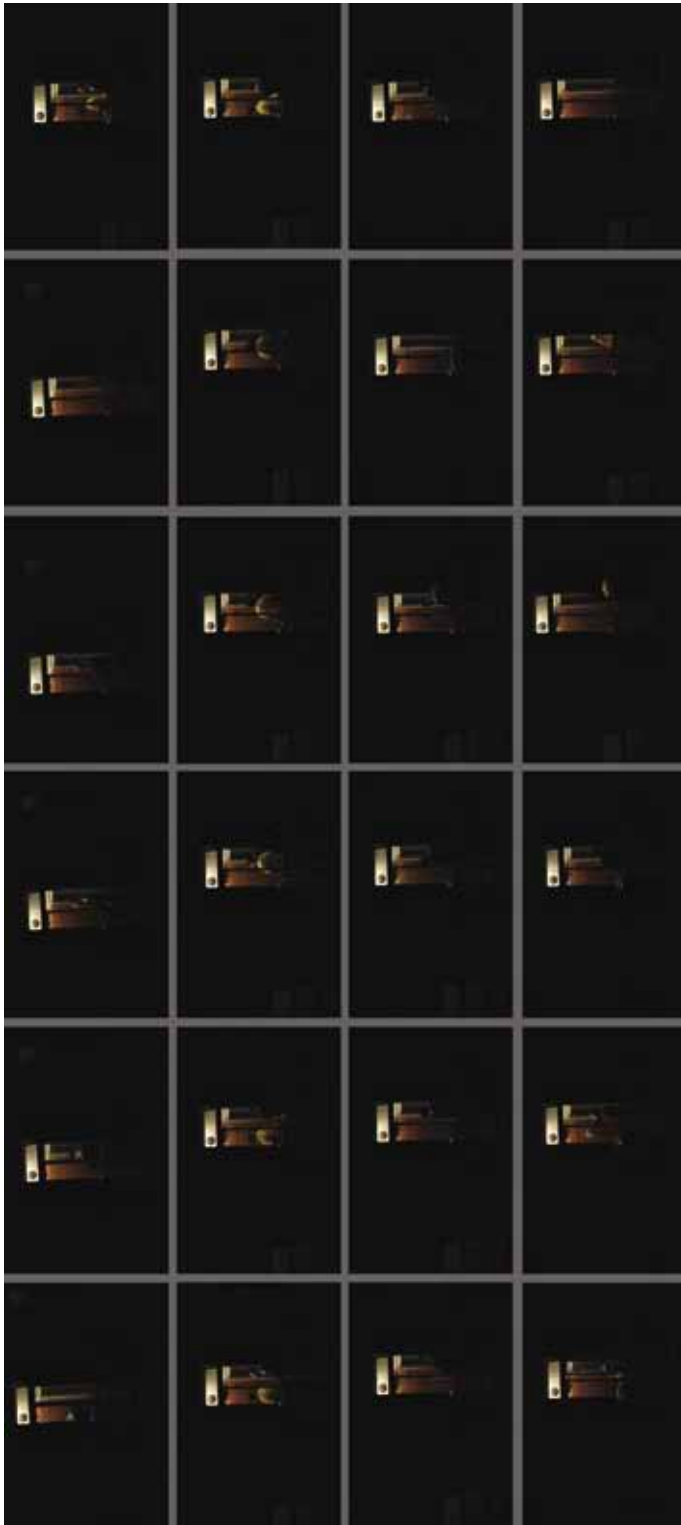
KT: Moje iskustvo je drugačije, jer vrlo često imam samo djelo s kojim mogu raditi i umjetnika i ne vidim. To je bio slučaj s mojom nedavnom izložbom djela iz zbirke Muzeja Ludwig u Budimpešti. Na izložbi ima šezdesetak umjetničkih djela i većinu umjetnika ne poznajem osobno. Međutim, što se tiče lokalnih umjetnika koje poznajem, to može funkcionirati drugačije. Jedan umjetnik na primjer ima posebne zahtjeve oko toga kako su mu radovi osvjetljeni pa smo ga pozvali da bude prisutan dok smo postavljali svjetlo. Mislim da taj odnos uključuje sve mogućnosti. Katkad imaš vrlo osoban odnos s umjetnikom, katkad nemaš nikakav. Ali nikad nisam mislila da je rad izravan odraz umjetnikova iskustva, jer mislim da je umjetnost jednako tako i nešto kroz što se iskustvo filtrira. Tako da nama, promatračima, umjetnik ne nudi vlastito iskustvo izravno.

NR: Ali gledaj ovu situaciju u kojoj se upravo nalazimo. Zapravo je čudna. Sjedimo u galeriji gdje ja, kao umjetnica koja je napravila ovu izložbu, govorim o svojem radu i o osobnim iskustvima.

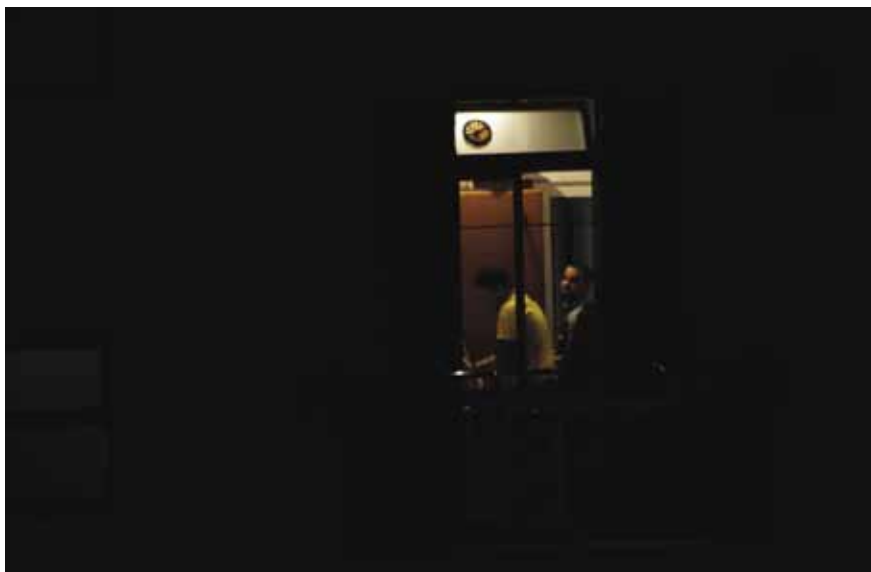
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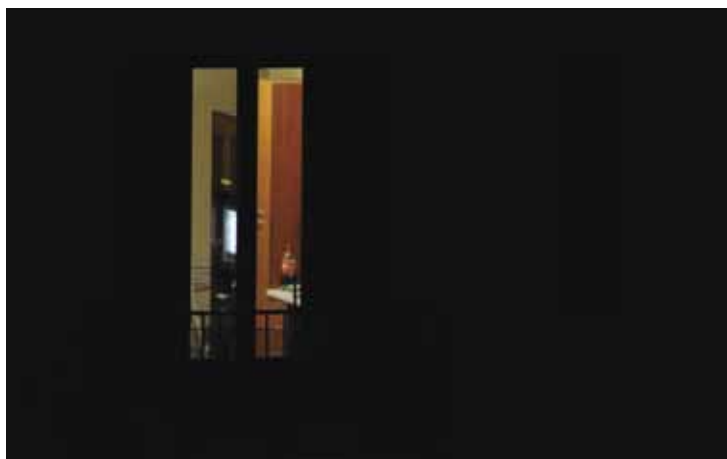
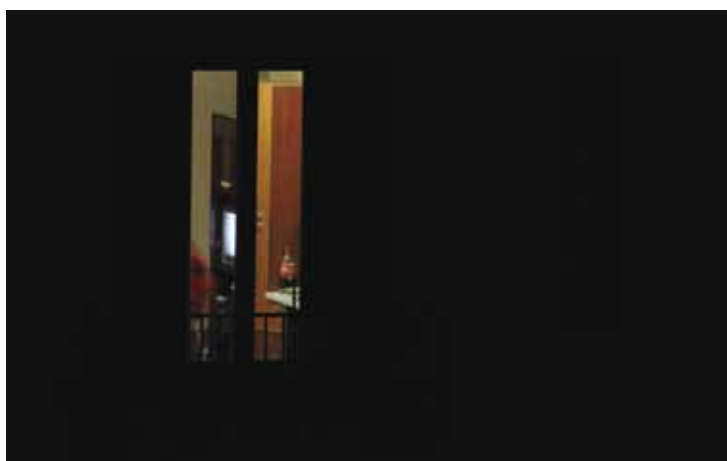
Zbilja bih rado čula zašto ljudi to uopće žele čuti. Naime, postoji li nešto što ja znam i mogu reći, a da to nije vidljivo u radu? Mogu li ponuditi novu ili drugačiju interpretaciju? Ja i sama katkad odem na razgovore s umjetnicima jer sam znatiželjna vidjeti osobu. Samo da vidim kako izgleda. I na stanovit način bilo bi pogrešno reći da to nema baš nikakve veze s radom. Kad čovjek kao povjesničar umjetnosti piše članak, uobičajeno je da pročita intervjue i skupi što je više moguće informacija iz prve ruke... iako to može biti beskorisno, jer umjetnici katkad jednostavno lažu. Ali pretpostavljam da je i to nekakva informacija.

*(Obje se smiju)*



Prozor u  
Milanu 24  
kom 30x50 cm  
pigmentni tisak  
na pamučnom  
papi, 2008.





Window Milano Coke  
3 kom, pigmentni tisak na pamučnom papiru, 2008.



3 prozora Berlin  
trokratna video projekcija,  
2008., Berlin, 6 min. u loopu.



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This is the transcript of an artist's talk held between Katalin Timár and Nika Radić at the gallery Traversée in Munich on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2010, on the occasion of the exhibition “Out of Place”.

KT: I would like to start this conversation with referring to the experience of entering this room, this exhibition space, when perhaps most people are first struck by the atmosphere. It is not so much the ensemble of individual works in the exhibition, but more the overall atmosphere that resembles a living room or a space where somebody lives. There is a bed, which does not necessarily belong to a living room, and that's why I would prefer to call it a space where somebody lives who is, moreover, not present at the moment. The experience of the living space is enhanced by the fact that, when one looks around and sees the objects, the pictures and the projections, one can somehow arrive at a fundamental and ambiguous question of trying to differentiate between an artwork that Nika created, and an object for everyday use. Within these parameters, there is one object that functions for me as a kind of a starting point for this whole show (or an “anchor” as they would say in semiotics). This is where we could start the discussion but also where we could start thinking about the individual works. This anchor is for me the carpet, because the carpet visibly stands between these polarities. It looks like a regular, everyday carpet, but it's also an artwork. There are signs in the carpet, or certain elements of the carpet, which indicate that it was made for the exhibition but at the same time it looks absolutely everyday and “normal”. It looks quite common as an object which might even have been bought at IKEA, where they sometimes sell these carpets with funny motives. I would like to ask you what you think of this whole atmosphere and the carpet itself. How did you arrive at producing it?

NR: When I thought about the show, there were several aspects of the problem that made me come up with such a solution, but what actually made me do it in this way, was the fact that we still operate with this white cube that modernism produced as a neutral place where we can enjoy a work of art. It is supposed to put art totally apart from an everyday context, we can isolate the artwork from our daily life, look just at the art and ignore everything else.

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That's why this ideal space to look at art was created and it is still used as the standard space for museums and galleries. The floors will be somehow neutral, walls are white etc. There are, however, a lot of other things in these spaces that we have learned we had to ignore. We will have columns, switches for the light, we will have all these things that are still part of the gallery, which we then try to ignore and look only at whatever is the art. So I thought I would use the whole space, with all its little bits and pieces, and then turn the space into something that is not a usual way the gallery looks like. I also thought how a private commercial gallery counts a lot on private collectors that will eventually take the works from the gallery walls and put them in a new surrounding and show the works in a totally different situation. That is why I thought I will do the show in a different way.

Also, this apartment thing is something that is an extension of a previous show. I did a project about all the apartments I lived in and it turned out I lived in seventeen different apartments in my life. Actually scary, when one thinks about it, and I keep on moving all the time, it somehow doesn't seem to stop. So I know this feeling of a new place you live in and how you end up with your really fancy designer table that you carry around, but also another table you collected because you got it from a friend. So I wanted to have this strange combination of different things that you put together and you improvise. You think that at some point you'll have this beautifully decorated apartment but it never happens because you move some place else. And then, when I was thinking about different objects, I wanted to have a carpet and that was not easy because carpets are somehow less functional than other things. A table, you just put stuff on, but carpets are more decorative and I wasn't happy with any carpet I have found so I made a carpet myself. The sentences on it are actually from a short film I have done couple of years ago in which there is a party scene with a lot of people who are talking but all you can pick up is them saying in different languages that they didn't really understand. That is actually something I am interested in: how much is it that we can understand from a work of art when we look at it. I always find the question of reception really interesting.

KT: I agree with you that this is a very important aspect in your work in general, but I want to stick to another topic first. I think that when an artist is about to make a solo exhibition, this idea of installing the room emerges often. I mean installing not only in an

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artistic sense or as you would install your own apartment or any space that you live in, but more like how to stage something or make a setup, a stage, almost as it would be done in a theatre or in a film. So if I look at this particular exhibition, but also the other shows of yours that I have seen, including individual artworks, then there is a certain element of staging. I don't mean only in the sense of putting something on display, but in the sense of arranging objects and people, and then looking at what happens with that arrangement. Perhaps arrangement is the most important word here. So where does that come from in your work?

NR: I don't really think about it that much. I think I do a lot of that part subconsciously. I studied at a traditional modernistic east European academy where we learned all about the golden section etc. I don't think there is a neutral way of showing something. This is a lesson I think we've learned from conceptual art. They tried so desperately to make things neutral. Think of Lawrence Weiner's texts on the walls. He tried to do them as neutral as possible but what he actually created is a very distinct conceptual art look. As soon as things are visual, they look like something and you have to make some decisions. Why I do things this way or the other...

KT: I can rephrase the question in a more precise way, exactly because of what you have said. I agree with you that there is no neutral presentation. You can try to make a relatively neutral presentation or a relatively neutral piece of writing, but the writer is always implied in the writing, so there are many subjective elements that are always and unavoidably present. At the same time, and that's also what one of your friends Miško Šuvaković wrote in your catalogue essay, you are physically there, but when I look at a work of yours, even if you are in it like in these videos, I don't see you as a person. So while you believe in the presence of subjectivity, you manage to create such a distance between yourself and the work.

NR: Because I look at other people. *(Both laughing)* Yes, really. It's kind of like in these photographs. If you look at other people you get curious and you think about what they are doing, but in the end you don't know. And that's actually what I am interested in: the fact that you do project yourself, as a viewer, into whatever you received from a work of art. And that is something in which I would not like to interfere that much, because I'm really happy if people end up saying that they finally realize there is no narrative in these photographs.

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KT: If we think about the reception of a work of art as a communicative act (and it is very simplistic what I'm saying now), there is a sender who would be the artist who sends out the message which is the artwork. Then there are the receivers, the viewers the spectators who receive this message. According to the linguist and semiotician Roman Jakobson, this communicative act can never be perfect or seamless, because there is always a distortion. There are too many contingencies, "accidents" or noises that interfere in this communicative act. It means there is no proper or ideal way of conferring a message or of receiving this same message. So what do you think of the need that many artists have to try to control the reception of their work as much as possible? Very often they don't accept these contingencies of reception or that the fact that the works get their own life and the artists cannot control it after the work is done and exhibited.

NR: I don't try to control it at all. I actually find it very interesting to find totally different interpretations. I also don't think there is a wrong interpretation. Maybe a somewhat badly informed, but whatever someone sees in a work is fine with me. I mean there are a lot of theories about how we cannot really understand each other. Linguistics started with de Saussure and he defined a language as a system of signs and he said that to be able to communicate, you would have to have two identical systems of signs, between the sender and the receiver. That is, of course, impossible. Just think of this situation right now. We are all using a language that probably no one in this room speaks as his or her mother tongue. We end up using words that perhaps other people simply don't know and the sign systems never completely overlap. De Saussure eventually came to a point where he gave up writing and speaking. He never really wrote anyway but he gave up lecturing as well. I think on a different level this also happens in art. Art is not (necessarily) verbal but it is also a means of communicating. And I think art sometimes works better than language. It is not so precise, but somehow exactly because of that it can work better.

KT: I agree with you and I also think all of your works rely very strongly on the idea of the fragment. I don't mean that you yourself have the whole in mind and then come up with a fragment, but that you start with the fragment from the very beginning. There is this video for example where we can see a woman (you), and only the gaps between whatever she said is what remained in the video (*Pause, 2003*). I don't think that you actually started with

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a concrete text that you intended to perform, but that you really wanted to show these gaps in the first place.

NR: Yes, because I thought they carried, in a way, more information than the actual words. It is a strange thing... I'm sure if I would now say exactly the same text as I am saying right now, but be dressed in a different way and, I don't know, giggle for instance the whole time, it would give off a different message. It's not just what I say, it's also how I say it. It's the whole idea that the medium is actually the message. And in a show, when you do an art exhibition, it's not just the specific art works, it's also how you present them and that's something you actually know a lot about as a curator. You work with the same thing. When you gave me a tour of the collection exhibition at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest that you have done, perhaps you can say more about it yourself, but I found it fascinating that a lot of things you worked with, connections among the artworks and how they work together are in the end not so visible on the surface. How much of the ideas that led you to set up the show in a certain way do you think a visitor will eventually get?

KT: That's why I think we understand each other so well (*both laughing*) I think that I, as a curator, can try to present my reading or my vision of the connections between the works, but it will always be the visitor who will come up with unexpected connections or unexpected ideas about the works on display. For me as a curator it is very important to bear in mind that I can also have my blind spots, even if I work with a collection or lots of materials, not just with one artist. I also have my own subjective reading of the works and, even if I am trained as an art historian, my mind works in a certain way. For me it's obligatory to be aware of both my subjectivity and my blind spots. There was a story in my recent exhibition in Budapest where I thought about a particular work in one way and then some friends who came to see the show reminded me of another reading, another layer of the work which was obviously there but I had a blind spot and didn't see it. This anecdote has become very important for me in my work, but I assume for you as an artist, too, it is important to allow, to create a situation for the visitors where they feel free to come up with their own ideas, personal views and interpretations.

NR: Definitely. Today, I heard a story from a friend which was really funny. She doesn't actually have to do with art a lot and she said she has seen my show and was struck by the fact that I was

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personally present in all the videos. She said how it was unusual and that, because we're a different generation, it must be that our generation was more open to presenting itself in public because of being used to online networking websites and whatever it takes to make our life so public. We are thus used to showing ourselves in public and that's why it is normal for me to be in the videos. I was quite surprised since I'm actually in the videos because it's the simplest thing to do. I can best control the whole situation while shooting. So sometimes you do things for the most stupid reason and cannot prevent layers of meaning from seeping into the work. And that's fine. I mean it's a valid interpretation. It might be true that I am not so shy because I'm used to seeing silly pictures of myself on rather public places. But it was not my idea that it has to be me in the video that is being shown here. If I had a friend close by who was willing to act, I would have been happy to have someone else. It seems to be true for life, as well as for art, that you do a lot of things along the way that you cannot avoid, but those things still carry a meaning. One cannot control every little bit. Some things just happen by accident.

KT: And how did it happen that you studied, not just traditional sculpture at the academy in Zagreb – because that is something that can easily happen (*both laughing*), but how did it happen that you work predominantly with videos, projections, photography and all these media?

NR: I actually really did make sculpture for a while and was welding and was really influenced by this 80s movement in sculpture. Then I slowly realized I was not really interested in the object but rather how people move around it. Then I made the sculptures bigger and bigger so that people could walk around them and then I became fascinated by the fact that you could actually do a spatial intervention and control the way people move in a space. They will not go to the left but to the right because you put something there and that they will all stop at the same spot. Then I realized there was communication in the way I could actually influence how people moved around. And then things also happened accidentally. I always took photographs. They were always a part of the work process. I would take photographs of the gallery and make sketches on them. That's usually the first step. Then I did videos because I was in New York on a residency... actually it was not so long ago. I find it strange that people sometimes talk about me as a video artist. I don't think I'm a video

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artist. I very rarely do a video that you can watch on a screen, a monitor. It usually has to be a rather specific projection or a part of an installation. So it, in fact, has more to do with the space. That is not very convenient for practical purposes but there you go. I was staying on a residency in New York which was great fun at first because I got to walk around New York a lot but after a while I got fed up of being a tourist. Luckily I had a friend who had a video production setup, but he was doing something else and let me use it in the meantime. So I did my first videos there.

KT: And how about the windows? You have many pieces, not only some photographs, but videos as well which you projected into existing doors or windows, or even creating the illusion of windows, like the site-specific projection in Berlin where the windows themselves were projected (*3 Windows*, 2007). People who didn't live in the area could have thought these were real windows. They looked very realistic. How did you come up with this setup of looking into windows? For me it is striking that we all feel kind of awkward and "bad" peeking into other people's places, even if we do it sometimes.

NR: But everyone does it. Not everyone admits it, but I'm sure everyone does it.

KT: But still it's a strange feeling.

NR: Yes.

KT: But if we look at your works, I don't think I ever felt that awkwardness that I do feel if I look into real apartments.

NR: Some people actually said they do feel uneasy. The "Three Windows" are actually a childhood memory. I remember we were living in Zagreb and it was summer and people had their blinds pulled down because of the heat so you couldn't see the faces of people in an apartment across the street from ours. And the apartment is like most older Middle-European houses (Munich must also be full of them), it had three rooms in a row so you can see people walking from one room to the other. The wooden blinds were half down so you could mainly see the hands and arms of two persons gesticulating in the apartment. They were walking back and forth and obviously arguing. It was actually funny how you could see it was an argument only by the movements of the hands. It has to do with the fragment you have mentioned before.

KT: I also think it is interesting how a lot of artists read a lot of theory and use theory or theoretical arguments these days, but I

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don't think I know anybody else who already has a degree in art and then goes on and gets another degree in art history without wanting to be an art historian.

NR: I didn't want to become an art historian.

KT: Yes, that's exactly the point. You did all the studies and you graduated officially. So you have a degree.

NR: Oh I did it for so long that I thought I might as well finish it.

KT: What was your interest in studying art history in the first place?

NR: That also has to do with communication. People who professionally have to do with art have either a degree from an art academy or in art history. I found it fascinating that these two groups of people get really different education and at the end work together and their work is full of misunderstandings. They often seem to be talking about different stuff. I think artist will notice more how things are made and go more into the banality of solving little problems that involve technical aspects. People who have studied art history will get more into the level of meaning and interpretation. I wanted to see the other side. I wanted to see where this gap between the two educations was. Do you have this experience when you work with artists?

KT: I do have the experience but I experienced an instructive moment when, a few years ago, I was invited as a member of an international team in the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst in Leipzig where the team had to put up a show together. It was because of the topic, that I decided not to come up with an artist but I ended up making an interview with a London-based theorist and showing the interview on video. I didn't take myself as an artist so it wasn't understood as an artwork but rather as a documentary piece. When they asked me how I wanted to install it, I understood the position of the artist (*both laughing*). I had very precise ideas about the way I wanted to display it and when I got to Leipzig it was already installed. It was the day before the opening and they couldn't wait for me with the installation. It ended up being quite ok but I made some small changes and was very anxious about these minor details. After finishing it I thought that this must be the way artists feel about their work when they go into these details. They are very precise and get upset if it doesn't happen exactly in the way they want it. I had that experience with artists and then I could experience it myself and since then I'm kind of... I think I'm different. (*Both laughing*)



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NR: More tolerant! You need the experience from the other side. That was my reason for studying art history.

KT: When we think about, not only this exhibition but your work in general, there are very few references to social situations, not only in the sense of interaction among people but of social classes or political questions. One exception that I have in mind is the work that was shown here last year when you were part of the exhibition “Periodic Table” that I curated in the Gallery Traversée (*Gallery Cleaning*, 2009). You did a night projection on the gallery windows so people, when they passed by at night, could see a cleaning woman in the gallery. That was the second version of a similar work you did in Berlin where you had three cleaning women (*Office Cleaning*, 2008). People could then peep into a room where women were cleaning the space. For me these works of yours are important for political reasons, but it was the only moment within your works when I had an uncomfortable feeling about peeping into a room. I thought I was sneaking at people who work and who have a very low key and underpaid job, without which we could not survive, but there they were also exposed to us and we, in a certain sense, are obliged to look at them. We don’t necessarily have to, but the artist provides us with this vision of them. To go even further into that, do you think that artists have a social function or, to make it very broad, do they have a social responsibility?

NR: I have, I guess, a very ambivalent position towards politics. Coming from a former communist country that went through a war and then came into a very crude form of capitalism, then moving to older capitalist countries, also as a child I lived abroad in the “West”, I think politics have shaped my life in many ways and I think I actually take politics very seriously and that’s why I have the problem with a lot of political work which we see in exhibition spaces nowadays. I often find them oversimplified. I also think it is often preaching to the converted. A lot of these works are being shown to a group of people that belong to the art scene who share the same opinions anyway. People these works criticize, will not see them anyway so I think why bother. A lot of times I am not sure things are that simple as they appear in these works.

I did the *Cleaning Ladies* when I was invited to do a work for public space. We all know what’s happening to the public space. If you cannot pay for a latte macchiato, I don’t really see how you can use the public space. So I wanted us to have a look at the people whom we never see and who are actually out there doing work so

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that we can nicely use the public space. But it is very different if the work is being shown in public space and not in a closed off gallery space where only the art crowd enters. And of course, again, it was me and my friends playing the cleaning women, because the real cleaning ladies, that I have asked, didn't want to be shown in public. I thought that was ok so we actually had artists who were playing at being cleaning ladies. It still showed this function you normally didn't see. It is not actually so hidden, we just don't notice. All these things are out there. You just have to look and that, I think, is really interesting about art. Art can sometimes point at things that are not hidden but we are just not used to looking at them. It's the same thing as light bulbs in a white cube. They are there, we just ignore them.

I do have a very ambivalent position about political art. Sometimes it works but sometimes it becomes, now I'll say the word, propaganda. So even if it's for a cause I would support, I still think propaganda is a bad thing and should not happen in art. If we end up with a one-liner statement, and tell everyone that, for instance, equality is better than having someone who is homeless next to someone immensely rich, I don't see we're saying something new.

KT: For me personally, it is interesting that if we look at these projections in this exhibition, it is obvious that we see you in the videos. Of course if someone doesn't know you and comes into the space while you're not here, they are not aware of it, but when I saw the cleaning ladies in Berlin, I must admit I didn't recognize you. (*Laughing*)

NR: Because I wore strange stuff.

KT: I can't remember now what I thought who these women were, but I definitely didn't think it was you. Funnily, it reminds me of Flaubert's famous statement when he said "Madame Bovary, it's me". So this question between what is fictional and what is non-fictional comes back again not only in this setup with real furniture and real artworks (*laughing*), but also your work in general. How do you relate to that? Do you think this question has any relevance in your case? What is your position?

NR: I don't think it's relevant at all. Judit (*Boenisch, the owner of Gallery Traversée*) told me that one of the visitors here, at this show, didn't believe the photographs were accidental but thought they were staged. He thought I set it all up and it was a lie. I don't quite understand that. I would certainly be too lazy to set it all up. You would have to find a window that would work, get some

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people up there, direct them and it all seems too much of a hassle to me. This way you point a camera and when you find something interesting, you take a picture. But if I were such a diligent person to set it all up, I don't see what the problem would be. In the end I don't think it really matters. I think we're just curious to see how things were made, but in the end it's just the work you see and if it was done one way or the other, I don't think it really matters. Do you?

KT: No, I don't think it matters either but I have this experience and I don't know if it geographical or not, that people who read a lot of fiction often have very different expectations vis-à-vis literature, as compared to the visual arts. So they wouldn't ask if Madame Bovary was Flaubert or not, they seem to know the rules how it works in fiction, but they often have a very different expectations in the visual arts. They often either want to see it as a continuation of the artist's life or the artist's biography or they want to see it as very different from it, as something entirely fictional. With your works, you seem to mix these positions. .

NR: There is a psychological fact that you can imagine only things as a combination of what you have experienced. It becomes very obvious in science fiction films when they come up with, for example, a monster but it is in fact a combination of elements of creatures we know. We somehow seem to think by combining elements from our experience. I am sure my personal experience is visible in my work, not because I want it to be that way, but because I cannot make up a totally different life. It has happened to me several times when I talked to people with rather different life experiences, that we ended with very little to talk about. Now I'm coming back to this theory of communication. You need things in common to be able to allocate the surprises every now and then. If everything is surprising, you just leave and go and have coffee with a friend. There is only so much new you can take. How does that work from your point of view? I mean when you work with artists. You talk to them first, or something else? Do you usually approach the person or the work first? Or both? Is that something separate?

KT: I have a different experience because very often I only have the works to deal with and I don't even see the artist. That happened in the case of my recent exhibition of the works from the collection in the Ludwig Museum in Budapest. There are about sixty artworks on display within this show and most of the artists I don't even know personally. However, with local artists

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who I know personally, it can function differently. One artist, for instance, is very particular about the way the work is lit, so we invited him to be present when we did the lighting. I think this relationship includes all possibilities. Sometimes you have a very personal relationship with the artist, sometimes you don't have any relationship at all. But I never thought the work was a direct reflection of the artist's experiences because I also think that art is something where experience gets filtered through. So it is not the direct experience with which the artist provides us, the spectators. NR: But look at this situation right now. It is actually strange. We are sitting here in the gallery where I, as an artist who has done this exhibition, am talking about my work and my personal experience. I would really like to hear why people actually want to hear that. I mean, is there something I know and can tell that is not visible in the work? Can I provide a new or different interpretation? I sometimes go myself to artist's talks because I am curious to see the person. Just to see what he or she is like. And in a way it would be wrong to say it has absolutely nothing to do with the work. When one writes an art historical article, it is common to read interviews and collect as much first hand information as is available... although it might be useless because artists simply lie sometimes. But that, I guess, is a piece of information as well.  
*(Both laughing)*



Čišćenje galerije Muenchen  
dvokanalna video projekcija,  
Galerie Traversé, München, 2009., 4 min u loopi



Prozor Berlin  
6 kom 112x76 cm  
pigmentalni tisak na pamučnom papiru







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**Miško Šuvaković: Recepcija.** Recepcija je situacija i proces percipiranja, čitanja i doživljavanja umjetničkog djela. Umjetničko djelo je izvor vizualnih senzacija i informacija koje promatrač poput prijemnika procesom recepcije prima i obrađuje. Teoriji umjetnosti svojstvena su tri modela recepcije umjetničkog djela: (1) direktna recepcija djela je proces artikulacije percepcije, čitanja i doživljavanja djela, odnosno, direktan odnos konkretnog djela i promatrača, (2) kulturološka recepcija je povijest primanja te djelovanja nekog umjetničkog djela, autora ili umjetničke tendencije na gledaoca, društvenu ili povijesnu formaciju publike. Drugim riječima, promatra se povijesni utjecaj djela i modela njegovog primanja u konkretnim ili hipotetičkim uvjetima i (3) produktivna recepcija je dio procesa ostvarivanja i dovršavanja umjetničkog djela. Na primjer, u neoavangardnoj i postavangardnoj umjetnosti umjetničko djelo (novi roman, eksperimentalna glazba, kinetička umjetnost, mobili, hepening, konceptualna umjetnost, ambijentalna umjetnost, horizontalna plastika) dovršava se tek suočavanjem s publikom koja je aktivni sudionik realizacije djela. Kada publika recepcijom dovršava djelo, ona ga i ostvaruje. Na primjer, kada se promatrač bavi mobilom, on rukom premješta dijelove skulpture stvarajući novu strukturu, kada percipira instalacije kinetičke umjetnosti, ambijente i instalacije horizontalne plastike ulazi u prostor u kojem se kreće, promatra, dolazi u tjelesne, prostorne i vremenske odnose s djelom i proživljava nove, ekskluzivne životne situacije. Tekstovi engleskog konceptualnog umjetnika Victora Burgina iz ranih 70-ih opisuju situacije u kojima se nalazi osoba koja ih čita i čitanjem dovršava rad. U hepeninzima publika postaje sudionikom u realizaciji umjetničkog događaja, odnosno, recepcija se preobražava u kreativno djelovanje i ponašanje u režiranim ili neregiziranim životnim situacijama.

Aspekti recepcije likovnog umjetničkog djela i radova izvedenih iz te tradicije su vizuelna percepcija, čitanje i doživljavanje. Modernistička teorija razlikuje dva koncepta redosljeda procesa recepcije: (1) doživljaj je sinkron činu vizualne percepcije, a čitanje dolazi naknadno (naknadna intelektualna interpretacija) i (2) vizualna percepcija stvara informacijsku osnovu na kojoj se odvija proces čitanja, a iz razumijevanja koje je posljedica čitanja proizlazi mogućnost doživljavanja umjetničkog djela. Po prvoj koncepciji za recepciju umjetničkog djela nije potrebno prethodno

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znanje o umjetnosti ili o konkretnom kontekstu umjetničkog djela, dok je za drugu koncepciju, da bi se doživjelo, nužno prethodno razumijevanje djela, poznavanje njegove povijesti, konteksta i atmosfere umjetničkog svijeta u kojem je nastalo.

Čitanje je proces lociranja, razlikovanja i dešifriranja podataka dobivenih u procesu vizualne percepcije. Razlikuju se tri modela čitanja: (1) čitanje pisma prirodnog jezika, (2) čitanje semiotičkog znakovnog sistema (3) čitanje nesemiotičkih sistema izražavanja i prikazivanja slikarstva, skulpture itd. Pri čitanju zapisa na pismu prirodnog jezika, vizualna percepcija je posrednik u prikupljanju kodificiranih, klasificiranih i uređenih znakova po pravilima gramatike koju prihvaća veliki broj korisnika. Za razumijevanje znakova pisma prirodnog jezika nije bitan likovni izgled slova, slova trebaju biti što jednostavnija, budući da prenose utvrđene i prihvaćene semantičke vrijednosti. Za čitanje zapisa ili slikovnih izraza koji se mogu nazvati semiotičkim znakovnim modelima vizualni (likovni) izgled znaka bitan je koliko i njegova kodificiranost u nekom značenjskom sistemu. Semiotičkim znakovnim sistemima ne upravlja gramatika nego skup otvorenih pravila poznatih određenoj grupi korisnika. Na primjer, suprematistički križ Kazimira Maljeviča i ekspresionistički križ Emilija Vedove ne iščitavaju se na isti način, budući da likovne karakteristike znaka ulaze u njihova značenja. Isto tako kukasti križ nema ista značenja u staroindijskoj kulturi kao u nacističkoj Njemačkoj.

Za čitanje nesemiotičkih znakovnih struktura koje mogu biti mimetički prikazi koji se opažaju kao prizori ili apstraktne slobodne forme neophodno je poznavanje konteksta i postupaka umjetnikovog rada. Čin čitanja zasniva se na razumijevanju oblika i njihovih značenjskih upotreba i motivacija za svaki pojedinačni slučaj (za svaku pojedinačnu sliku ili seriju slika). Kod mimetičkih slika potrebno je otkriti pravila i navike prikazivanja svijeta koja su svojstvena određenoj civilizaciji, kulturi ili povijesnoj epohi, na osnovu čega se može reći da li slika prikazuje konkretni svijet, fantazije, fikcionalne tvorevine ili formalno konstruirane likovne situacije. U slučaju apstraktnih slobodnih formi čitanje se zasniva: (1) na traganju za onim što oblik svjesno ili podsvjesno znači umjetniku ili (2) na interpretativnom pripisivanju značenja apstraktnim oblicima na osnovi asocijacije, poznavanju konteksta interesa, života i djelovanja umjetnika. Za čitanje kao proces dešifriranja značenja bitno je da se u slici, seriji slika pojedinog

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autora ili pokreta otkriju pravilnosti i njihovi odnosi sa značenjima i vrijednostima individualnog umjetnikovog svijeta i šire kulture. U postmodernističkoj teoriji čitanje je oblik produkcije značenja: na osnovi prepoznatih i utvrđenih karakteristika djela razvijaju se jezičke spekulacije kojima se djelo reinterpreтира i nudi publici kroz novo čitanje. Mnoga djela postmoderne umjetnosti (transavangarde, neoekspresionizma, anakronizma) likovni su izrazi i prikazi umjetnikovog čitanja i doživljavanja umjetničkih djela iz povijesti umjetnosti. Doživljaj umjetničkog djela objačnjava se na sljedeće načine: (1) kao emocionalno stanje koje umjetničko djelo svojim izgledom direktno uzrokuje kod promatrača i (2) kao kompleksno egzistencijalno stanje nastalo vizualnom percepcijom, čitanjem, razumijevanjem i udublјivanjem (kontemplativnim uvidom) u djelo, doživljaj je posljedica kako čina percepcije samog djela, tako i našeg znanja o djelu, umjetniku, njegovom svijetu umjetnosti i širim kontekstima na koje djelo ukazuje. U prvom slučaju govori se o doživljaju nevinog oka, a u drugom o doživljaju sofisticiranog oka.

Iz knjige: Miško Šuvaković, *Pojmovnik suvremene umjetnosti*, Horetzky, Zagreb i Vlees & Beton, Ghent, 2005, Urednici: Jasna Galjer i Ranko Horetzky



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**Reception.** Reception is the situation and the process of perception, reading and experiencing a work of art. The work of art is the source of visual sensation and information which the observer, like a receiver, receives and processes through the process of reception. Theory of art works with three models of reception of a work of art: (1) direct reception of the work is the process of articulating the perception, reading and experiencing a work of art, i.e. a direct relation between a specific work and its observer; (2) culturological reception is the history of the acceptance and effect of a work of art, author or artistic tendency on the observer, social or historical formation of the audience. In other words, what is observed is the historical influence of the work and the model of its reception in specific or hypothetical conditions; and (3) productive reception is part of the process of realisation and completion of a work of art. For example, in neoavantgarde and postavantgarde art, a work of art (new novel, experimental music, kinetic art, mobiles, happening, conceptual art, ambient art, horizontal plastic) is only completed through engaging of the audience, which is an active participant in the realisation of the work. When the audience completes the work through reception, it also accomplishes it. For instance, when observers deal with a mobile, they move parts of the sculpture with their hands, creating a new structure; when they perceive kinetic art installations, ambients and horizontal plastic installations, they enter the space in which they move, observe, create physical, spatial and temporal relations with the work, and experience new, exclusive life situations. Texts by English conceptual artist Victor Burgin from the early 70's describe situations of a person reading them, and thus, by reading, completing the work. In happenings, the audience becomes participant in the realisation of the artistic event, i.e., reception is transformed into a creative action and behaviour in directed or non-directed life situations.

Aspects of the reception of artworks and works deriving from this tradition are visual perception, reading and experiencing. Modernist theory differentiates between two concepts of the order of the process of reception: (1) experience is synchronous with the act of visual perception, while the reading comes afterwards (subsequent intellectual interpretation), and (2) visual perception provides information on which the reading process is based, while the understanding that is the result of this reading allows

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the possibility of experiencing the artwork. In the first concept, reception of a work of art needs no previous knowledge of art or the specific context of the work, while in the other concept, in order to experience a work, previous understanding of the work, knowledge of its history, context and atmosphere of the art world in which it was created are all necessary.

Reading is the process of locating, differentiating and decoding data received in the process of visual perception. There are three models of reading: (1) reading the writing of natural language, (2) reading of a semiotic sign system, and (3) reading of non-semiotic expression and presentation systems such as painting, sculpture etc. In the reading of natural language writing, visual perception is the mediator in the gathering of codified, classified and ordered signs according to a grammar accepted by a large number of users. For the understanding of the signs of natural language writing, visual appearance of the letters is immaterial; letters are supposed to be as simple as possible, since they transfer defined and accepted semantic values. For the reading of writings or visual expressions that can be called semiotic sign models, the visual appearance of the sign is as important as its codification within a system of signification. Semiotic sign systems are not guided by grammar but rather by a set of open rules known to a certain group of users. For example, the suprematist cross by Kasimir Malevich and expressionistic cross of Emilio Vedova are not read in the same manner, since the visual characteristics of the sign enter their meanings. In the same manner, the swastika does not have the same meaning in ancient Indian culture as it does in Nazi Germany. For the reading of non-semiotic sign structures which can be mimetic representations which are observed as scenes or abstract free forms, the knowledge of the context and procedure of the artist's work is necessary. The act of reading is based on the understanding of forms and their signifying needs and motivations for each single case (for each single picture or a series of pictures). In mimetic pictures, it is necessary to discover the rules and customs of the representation of the world typical for a given civilisation, culture or historical period, on which basis it is possible to discern whether the image presents a specific world, fantasies, fictional creations or formally constructed visual situations. In the case of abstract free forms, the readings is based: (1) on the search for conscious or subconscious meaning of the form to the artist, or (2) on the interpretative assignation of meaning to abstract forms based on free association, knowledge

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of the context of interest, life and work of the artist. For reading as the process of decoding of meaning, it is important that regularities in the image, the series of images by a given author or movement be discovered, as well as the relationship of those regularities and the meanings and values of the individual artist's world and wider culture. In postmodernist theory, reading is a form of production of meaning: based on recognised and assessed characteristics of the work, linguistic speculations are developed which, in turn, reinterpret the work and offer it to the public through a new reading. Many works of post-modern art (transavantgarde, neo-expressionism, anachronism) are visual expressions and presentations of the artist's reading and experiencing art works from the history of art. The experience of an artwork is explained in the following ways: (1) as an emotional state which the artwork directly creates in the observer by its appearance, and (2) as a complex state of existence created by visual perception, reading, understanding and absorption (contemplative perception) in the work, with the experience a consequence both of the act of perception of the work itself and our knowledge of the work, the artist, their artistic world and wider contexts which the work refers to. In the first case, we are talking about the experience of the innocent art, and in the second, the experience of the sophisticated eye.

Miško Šuvaković, *Pojmovnik suvremene umjetnosti*, Horetzky, Zagreb and Vlees & Beton, Ghent, 2005, editors: Jasna Galjer i Ranko Horetzky





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*Ovaj razgovor vodila sam s mojim prijateljem Rolfom Wienkötterom prije nekoliko mjeseci u Beču. Mi smo se upoznali za vrijeme studija povijesti umjetnosti i često smo sjedili i razgovarali o svemu i svačemu, vrlo često o umjetnosti. U jednom času poželjela sam zabilježiti jedan naš razgovor i nagovorila sam Rolfa da mi za ovu publikaciju da intervju. Bilo mi je drago da je razgovor brzo dobio uobičajeni tijek i krenuo raznim smjerovima, koje obično ne bismo zapisali. Razgovarali smo u Rolfovu stanu u Beču, pili kavu, jeli kolače, a ja sam zvuk snimala na svoju kameru.*

Nika Radić: Voljela bih početi pokušajem da rekonstruiramo razgovor koji smo vodili s Clemensom (C. Kirsch) na moj posljednji rođendan u “Anzengruberu”. Možeš li se još sjetiti?  
Rolf Wienkötter: Naravno da mogu... naime, sjećam se te večeri. Čak se sjećam i razgovora... u grubim crtama... jako grubim crtama.

*Oboje se smiju.*

N R: Dobro, da ti pomognem, bilo je puno ljudi i na kraju nas je bilo troje: ti, Clemens i ja.

RW: Da, da. i u jednom trenutku smo se ozbiljno upustili...

NR: ...u nekom trenutku te Clemens pokušavao uvjeriti, da nešto što ti inače radiš ima karakteristike umjetničkoga djela kao i...

RW: Da, točno...

NR: A što je to što ti radiš?

RW: *(smije se)* Vodim grupe. Po izložbama.

NR: I pišeš tekstove.

RW: A, da. Pišem tekstove. Točno.

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Clemens je mislio da je medijacija općenito, uključujući pisanje, kreativni rad i da ima osobine umjetničkoga rada.

NR: Da.

RW: To je, manje više, bila njegova teza.. Govorimo o jednoj enormno proširenoj definiciji umjetnosti. Tko god bilo kako pridonese diskursu o umjetnosti, o kakvoj god formi da je riječ, radi umjetnost. Ja sam strastveno bio protiv.

NR: Da. I tu mi se činilo da nam treba definicija umjetnosti, a to je nekako bilo teško.

RW: Ne mislim da trebamo definiciju umjetnosti. Ne mislim da trebamo definirati bit umjetnosti... bar ne sada. Samo trebamo povući crtu, ograničenje.

NR: A to je nešto drugo?

RW: Možeš lako povući crtu između različitih socijalnih aktivnosti, a da ih ne definiraš.

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NR: Ali klasična definicija definicije ima dva dijela. Jedan nam kaže kojem području pripada definirani pojam, a drugi je *differentia specifica*, to je u stvari granica prema ostalim srodnim pojmovima. Sjećaš se iz škole?

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Isuse! Ja to nisam učio u školi. (*smije se*) Ali ne mislim da za ovo trebamo nekakve filozofske teoreme. To nije logični problem. To je vrlo praktičan, u stvari sociološki problem. A socio-logija često nije logična. (*smije se*)

NR: Da, ali onda završimo s kulturalnim studijama, koje mrzim. Jer završiš na definiciji... evo, opet definiram... završiš s tim da bilo što počneš nazivati umjetnošću što igra takvu ulogu u određenoj socijalnoj grupi. Meni se to čini dosta problematičnim jer uvijek postoje one iste stvari, koje imaju različite funkcije u različitim socijalnim grupama... što olakšava to da sve proglašiš umjetnošću. U tom slučaju možeš muzički video, npr. od Lady Gage, smatrati za umjetnost ako ga ljudi koji ga gledaju tako smatraju. Problem nastaje kad ljudi, koji nešto drugo smatraju umjetnošću, ipak gledaju video Lady Gage iz drugih razloga.

RW: Ne vidim problem u tome da video Lady Gage smatramo umjetnošću.

NR: Dakle to je nešto što ćeš smatrati umjetnošću, ali vlastite tekstove nećeš.

RW: Točno. Jer bih ja pisao tekst...uzmimo ovako. Nije velik problem definirati nešto kao umjetnost. Time se ništa ne postiže niti ne gubi. Ali to nekako ima vrlo malo veze s našom polaznom točkom. Pitanje o videu Lady Gage zanimljivo je samo ako se o njemu negdje govori... npr. u nekom umjetničkom časopisu. To se vjerojatno neće baš dogoditi... iako možda... nema veze. Ne moramo sad razgovarati o Lady Gagi.

*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: Ma ne... ali, OK. Općenito se slažem. Ne mislim da su tekstovi o umjetnosti umjetnost. Ali mi je zanimljivo...

RW: I mislim da takav način mišljenja o tome nije dobar. Ja sam više za identificiranje područja. Za ljubav etike.

NR: Ja ću, međutim, ovaj tekst što upravo govorimo napisati i objavit ću ga u knjizi koju ću složiti kao umjetnica. Je li onda ovaj tekst umjetnost?

RW: U tom je slučaju umjetnost, jer si ga ti u to napravila.

Ti si umjetnica. Dakle, dio tvoje knjige je intervju, a intervju je u današnjoj umjetnosti već etabliran. U tom slučaju to nije novinarstvo, nego je ugrađen u umjetničku praksu.

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NR: U jednom trenutku, za vrijeme onog razgovora u birtiji, rekla sam da umjetnici stvaraju novo značenje. Baš sam se osjećala pametno.

*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: ... ali ja stvarno mislim da pokušavamo stvoriti novo značenje.

RW: To bi bio izazov. Da, naravno. Premda ih malo doista uspije.

NR: To je barem nešto što se pokušava, za početak. Problem koji se pojavljuje jest, ako to uspije, kako se može iskomunicirati. Kako možemo razumjeti? Ako je to potpuno novo značenje, mora biti nešto o čemu ljudi nemaju iskustva i u tom slučaju ne mogu ni razumjeti. Dakle mora biti u nekom odnosu s vlastitim osobnim iskustvom.

RW: Jasno da umjetnik ne može stvoriti nešto potpuno bezuvjetno i bez pretpostavki. To je sigurno. Napraviti nešto bez ikakvih pretpostavki, tako da promatrač ne može dokučiti o čemu se radi, bila bi avangardistička utopija. To bi značilo da se umjetnici kreću po Zemlji kao izvanzemaljci bez osobnog balasta i osobne povijesti i da na ovom svijetu nisu ništa vidjeli i tek bi onda bilo moguće da stvore nešto poput prirode, što bi nas zadivilo na način na koji bi nas moglo zadiviti nešto iz prirode, nešto što još nismo nikad vidjeli. Takvo što ne postoji.

NR: Ali takvo što ne bismo mogli razumjeti.

RW: Uvijek se možemo diviti, zar ne?

NR: *(Smije se)* OK, ali razumjeti?

RW: Divimo se samo kad ne razumijemo, ili barem ne sasvim... onda se divimo... ali ja mogu govoriti samo o praktičnom iskustvu. Ne mogu se sjetiti situacije u kojoj sam vidio ili iskusio nešto, što je bilo tako odvojeno od svega što sam ikad vidio, iskusio, čuo ili čitao, da bi bilo potpuno nepojmljivo.

NR: Kad se spremaš za vođenje po izložbi, puno učiš ... Kako to ide? Kako se spremaš? Moraš nepoznate ljude voditi kroz izložbu...

RW: Da, točno. Svrha je medijacije u umjetnosti prije svega, kao njezin minimalni zahtjev, stvoriti neki pristup, što znači otvoriti cijelu stvar... prema posjetiocu, promatraču. Onda možemo raspravljati kako dalje. To ovisi o vrsti umjetnosti o kojoj je riječ, koliko znanja treba prenijeti da bi se stvar razumjela. S obzirom na to, postoje razlike između umjetnosti iz raznih razdoblja ili različitog podrijetla. Ali općenito radi se jednostavno o uspostavljanju veze. Veze s umjetničkim djelom.

NR: Između posjetioca vođenja po izložbi i umjetničkoga djela...

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RW: Da, točno.

NR: I ti zbilja ne znaš tko su ti ljudi koji se pojave, zar ne?

RW: U Kunsthistorisches Museumu obično ne znam. Katkad je neka specifična grupa o kojoj se zna malo više i može ih se nešto bolje svrstati. Općenito gledano, nekad se može malo bolje procijeniti zna li neka grupa nešto više o umjetnosti. Uobičajeni posjetioci muzeja donose stanovito zanimanje za umjetnost, ali se ne može znati što to točno znači. Moje generalno iskustvo jest da nema mnogo smisla puno misliti o tome kojoj vrsti ljudi ću se obraćati jer je svaka situacija drugačija. Nijedna grupa nije kao druge.

NR: Meni je to zanimljivo jer umjetnici s tim uvijek rade, iako uglavnom ne i svjesno. Nešto napraviš i izložiš. Ti si sad govorio o Kunsthistorisches Museumu, ali je situacija vjerojatno malo drugačija u Generali Foundationu, gdje se posjetioci međusobno ne razlikuju baš toliko.

RW: Da.

NR: Mislim da mora postojati već neki predizbor ako se radi o ljudima koje zanima suvremena umjetnost, iako sad baš ne mogu reći što bi to točno bilo.

RW: Da, to je sigurno specifičnija grupa od onih u Kunsthistorisches Museumu. Generali Foundation nije bečka turistička atrakcija. Premda su ljudi koje vodim u Kunsthistorisches Museum većinom iz Beča... ali to ima drugi status. Ipak, ljudi koji dolaze u Generali Foundation su mlađi i imaju specifične interese.

NR: Mlađi su?

RW: U prosjeku, sigurno. Ima od vrlo mladih, koji se motaju po bečkoj umjetničkoj sceni, do generacije od tridest do četrdest godina.

NR: A obrazovanje? Ima li tu razlike?

RW: I to, svakako. Ljudi koji dolaze u Generali Foundation su u prosjeku sigurno... zbilja mislim da je to druga društvena klasa... ne, klasa je kriva riječ. Drugi dio društva, recimo tako. Mislim da nema puno preklapanja između stalne publike u Generali Foundationu (ako ona uopće postoji) i u Kunsthistorisches Museumu. Međutim, govorim to s puno ograda jer nisam radio nikakvo empirijsko istraživanje. To je samo neki osjećaj. Možda sam u krivu, ali čak i među prijateljima znam da ako kažem "ima neka izložba i mogu vam je pokazati itd", može se dogoditi da dođu u stari muzej, iako normalno ne bi. Ali idu u Generali Foundation. Čak idu na otvorenja u Generali Foundation, ali sigurno ne na otvorenja u Kunsthistorisches Museum.

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NR: Nisam znala ni da imaju otvorenja. (*Smije se*)

RW: Naravno da imaju otvorenja. Imaju svečana otvorenja izložbi. Sad će na izložbu nizozemskih grupnih portreta doplesati nizozemski ambasador itd. I ako sve pođe dobro, pojavit će se i predsjednik republike. To ti je Kunsthistorisches Museum. To je pravi dvor i tako treba i biti.

NR: Ali natrag na našu temu. Što je tvoj zadatak na tim vođenjima? Ti pokušavaš nešto napraviti da bi posjetioci više shvatili o toj umjetnosti i da bi onda mogli s njom nekako komunicirati.

RW: Da, točno tako. Uzmimo ovako, pokušavam objasniti što je to što vidimo. Bilo bi lijepo da ima dijaloga. U Kunsthistorisches Museumu to je, iako su se stvari u području medijacije umjetnosti promijenile, još vrlo klasično vođenje po izložbi. Ja sam osoba koja nešto zna, a vi ste oni koji za početak ništa ne znate, pa slušajte i učite. To je klasična postavka. Naravno da je to dosadno i tradicionalno i konzervativno. Na mnogim mjestima zna se da postoje i druge forme medijacije. Kunsthistorisches Museum ih polako otkriva i ja bih bio vrlo otvoren i zainteresiran da probamo i nešto drugo. Međutim, ja ne radim samostalno. U Generali Foundationu također zapravo nisam samostalan. Moram ispuniti zahtjeve institucije.

NR: Što su ti zahtjevi?

RW: Nije točno specificirano kako se vodi po izložbi, ali je implicitno jasno da se to radi u smislu da umjetnost treba objasniti, da kažemo jednostavno, ne mogu reći "Ok, ovo je osnovni pregled izložbe i ne da mi se uvijek recitirati podatke, pa bih radije napravio performans s posjetiocima". To ne mogu napraviti. Došlo bi do problema. To nije ono što institucija od mene želi, a vjerojatno nije ni ono što posjetioci žele. Pa pitanje koliko mogu eksperimentirati, ili koliko bi inovacija i originalnosti u takvoj konstelaciji bilo razumno, ostaje otvoreno.

NR: Ono što me zbilja zanima jest činjenica da cijela medijacija počiva na jednoj ideji. Na ideji da gledaš nešto što ne razumiješ, a onda postoji netko tko će nešto o tome reći i to će onda omogućiti promatraču da nekako drugačije razumije umjetničko djelo. Ili možda da razumije nešto što je prije bilo potpuno nerazumljivo. Čini mi se da nas se pokušava navesti da se sjetimo nečeg iz vlastitog iskustva, što će nam pomoći vidjeti elemente u radu s kojima možda jesmo u dodiru.

RW: Iz osobnog iskustva?

NR: Da, vjerojatno, jer to je jedino što imamo.

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RW: To bi bio sljedeći korak. To bi bilo jako zanimljivo kad bi to uvijek bio slučaj na vođenju, ali je to u osnovi jednostavno povećavanje zadovoljstva kroz bolje znanje. Meni bi se to tako činilo.

NR: Zadovoljstva?

RW: Zadovoljstva gledanja umjetničkog djela. Nešto visi na zidu i ja to gledam i pruža mi zadovoljstvo. Često je s umjetničkim djelima tako da što više o njima znam, više vidim, ili ako mi na nešto baš skrenu pozornost, onda mi to više znači. Više razumijem od umjetničkoga djela. A ako postoji mogućnost povezivanja umjetničkoga djela s vlastitim životom, svijetom, iskustvom ili nečim takvim, ili sa sadašnjošću, to bi bilo vrlo uzbudljivo, naročito sa starom umjetnošću. Kad bi se je moglo povezati s osobnim iskustvom, ili našim današnjim društvom, to bi naravno bilo izvrsno.

NR: Vjerujem, i sad sam natrag na Luhmannovoj teoriji, da komunikacija ne šalje poruke od A do B. Ona pretežno ustanovljava što je zajedničko, znači zajednička iskustva i sve stvari koje smo u životu vidjeli, čuli, čitali itd. Moramo najprije naći što nam se preklapa u iskustvu da bismo se uopće mogli razumjeti. A onda, nakon što smo našli dosta zajedničkoga, možemo s vremena na vrijeme naći mala iznenađenja. Ako je sve novo, jednostavno smo izgubljeni. Ne razumijemo ništa. Pa mislim da kad ti vodiš po izložbi... Nemam s tim nikakvog iskustva. Samo sam nekoliko puta vodila po vlastitim izložbama...

RW: Sama?

NR: Da. Na većim izložbama katkad se napravi tako da umjetnik vodi posjetioce.

RW: Da, da, naravno. Ali ako umjetnik, koji je napravio rad, vodi po izložbi, to je sasvim drugo.

NR: Pokušala sam ljude prisjetiti na zajedničko iskustvo. Npr. kad sam govorila o fotografijama prozora, govorila sam o iskustvu gledanja drugih ljudi kroz njihove prozore. To je nešto što svatko može razumijeti.

RW: Točno.

NR: Naravno, postoje i drugi aspekti rada o kojima nisam govorila. Obično ima malo vremena i nisam sigurna koliko ljude zanima... Ali mislim da je dobro ako se može početi s nečim što nam je zajedničko, jer je to početna točka za nešto drugo. Mora biti da ti radiš nešto slično. Ili sam u krivu?

RW: Mora biti... da...što mora biti?

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*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: Pretpostavljam da radiš nešto kao... Ideš u Kunsthistorisches Museum i kažeš ljudima da je to Rubensova slika, da prikazuje mladu ženu i da ona gleda preko ramena...

RW: Nema takve slike.

NR: ...naravno da ima!

RW: U muzeju Lichtenstein.

NR: Ne, u Kunsthistorisches Museumu.

RW: Rubensova žena koja gleda preko ramena?

NR: Da, mlada žena koja stoji ovako...

RW: A, misliš "Djevojka s krznom".

NR: Da... valjda se tako zove.

RW: Da, ali ne gleda preko ramena. ..Malo je nagnuta.

NR: Kako god! Oprosti!

RW: Nema veze.

NR: I ta slika...

RW: Ali to je dobar primjer. To je slika koju možeš gledati prirodno i odmah nešto od toga imaš. Za neke ljude odmah, a za neke možda ne, ali može postojati nagrada u smislu užitka gledanja slike. Vidiš ženu, gotovo u prirodnoj veličini, vidiš cijelo tijelo, gola je, pokriva se krznom, očito je mlada i sve je ok. Onda se možda može doći do toga da je zanimljivo da je naslikana točno u toj veličini i na taj način. To ne može biti normalni portret. To mora biti nešto intimnije i ubrzo dođeš do toga da je to Rubensova žena i da je to "Djevojka s krznom" i možda već znaš za sliku jer je jako poznata itd. Možeš lijepo na toj razini gledati sliku. A onda dođeš do točke gdje se radi o znanju, nešto što ne možemo vidjeti sami po sebi ako nemamo temeljito humanističko obrazovanje, a to se s današnjim posjetiocima muzeja ne može podrazumijevati. To su stvari koje treba naučiti i pročitati da bi ih se moglo prepoznati. Govorim o tome da žena stoji kao *Venus pudica*, sramežljiva Venera, to je klasičan način prikazivanja Venere. Zanimljivo je da on slika svoju ženu i u slici radi aluziju. Sugerira da je ona Venera. Tako njegova žena postaje božica ljubavi i Rubens to radi sasvim svjesno.

NR: (*Smije se*) I izgleda kao netko tko je upravo izašao iz kreveta.

RW: (*Smije se*) Ali Rubens koristi klasično obrazovanje i primjenjuje ga na svoju ženu. I time daje, a to je opet osobna, intimna, ljudska razina, daje najveći kompliment koji muškarac može dati ženi: "Ti si božica ljubavi". Vrlo osobno. A onda možeš i znati da nije slučajno u krznu, nego da ima Tizianova slika, sto godina starija, koja prikazuje djevojku u krznu. On se dakle poziva

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na svojeg velikog idola... a to se sve ne vidi odmah, ali to dodaje meso na kostur. Odjednom na slici možeš identificirati više. Ima nekoliko slojeva. Svako umjetničko djelo, ako stvari idu dobro, ima nekoliko slojeva i svaki sloj koji otključamo čini djelo bogatijim. To je zadatak medijacije, dati informacije koje omogućuju da se slojevi prepoznaju. Govorimo jednostavno o razini znanja i u Kunsthistorisches Museum radi se samo o znanju i to je klasično razumijevanje medijacije.

NR: Da li onda čovjek više razumije?

RW: Dakle, znanje je samo dio. Često se radi o educiranju, ali to također može postati otužno. Može se pretvoriti u nabranjanje činjenica. Moraš odlučiti i što je bitno...

NR: Pitanje je možda što je razumljivo. Naime, ako pokušas objasniti razliku između barokne slike i... ne znam... npr. renesansne slike, je li to nešto što ljudi mogu razumjeti ako nisu imali nikakve veze sa slikarstvom?

RW: Naravno da mogu. Renesansna slika daje potpuno različit dojam od barokne slike i to svatko može vidjeti. Mislim da je zanimljiv zadatak eksplicitno i jasno izgovoriti ono što svatko i tako i tako može vidjeti, bez obzira na eventualnu razinu obrazovanja. Reći da je to što vidimo renesansa, a ono barok. Mislim, da se počne s materijalom, da se pusti da stvari govore same za sebe, a sa starim radovima uvijek imamo osjećaj da moramo prvo imati znanje da bi ih mogli profitabilno gledati.

NR: To što govoriš... Ok, reći ću ti što sam razumjela a ti mi reci je li to sasvim krivo.

RW: Ok.

NR: Imam osjećaj da se mora početi s tim da se nađu točke koje su povezane s iskustvom koje promatrač već ima, ali da ti istovremeno to novo iskustvo, iskustvo koje ljudi imaju dok promatraju umjetničko djelo, da ga ti činiš svjesnim.

RW: Da, točno.

NR: Je li to isto sa suvremenom umjetnošću?

RW: Ne vidim neku temeljnu razliku. Evo sad mislim, ali zbilja ne vidim razliku... ili hijatus prema suvremenoj umjetnosti. Zbilja mislim kako sam rekao, da je umjetničko djelo sastavljeno od nekoliko slojeva i da što više slojeva možemo uključiti u ono što razumijemo, toliko cijela stvar postaje zanimljivija. Inicijalno se sigurno radi o vizualnom iskustvu, u normalnim okolnostima, ako ne govorimo o nekom konceptualnom radu koji je zapravo samo u



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knjizi ili tako nešto. Dakle to je osjetilno iskustvo, a poslije dolazi iskustvo razuma i zapravo je uvijek tako, zar ne?

NR: Da.

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Iako, treba isto reći da mi se katkad čini kako ljudi imaju kriva očekivanja od umjetnosti, kriva očekivanja u smislu da shvate nešto što se na kraju mora raspasti. Ako govoriš neki jezik, nekako ga moraš moći razumjeti... ako sam naučio neki jezik, mogu ga razumjeti, a činjenica da katkad nema ništa što moraš razumjeti i da ima puno stvari koje se ne mogu razumjeti... mislim da je umjetnost jezik u kojem bi trebalo uživati i u stvarima koje su nerazumljive, veseliti se da su nerazumljive, to je nešto što bi trebalo objasniti.

Nešto kao: ne razumijem o čemu se radi, ali je to izvrsno!

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Ili isto tako: Ne razumijem o čemu se radi i to me smeta. To također. Prošle subote i nedjelje bila je konferencija, organizirao ju je *Schnittpunkt*, bečka platforma koja se bavi pitanjima medijacije u umjetnosti, naslov je bio „Obrazovni obrat“. Izgleda da opet imamo neki „obrat“. Radilo se o alternativnom pristupu medijaciji i o jačanju medijacije i o tome treba li medijacija postati autonomni faktor u cijeloj strukturi, a ne nešto što uvijek dolazi na kraju i ima zadatak objasniti ono što su drugi već prije smislili. Nisu rekli kako bi se to konkretno moglo napraviti, ali to je bilo manje više to. Pitanje je bi li se medijacija trebala kretati prema neovisnoj produkciji u smislu stvarnog autonomnog znanja.

NR: Ali, onda....

RW: Ne prema umjetničkoj produkciji!

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Iako je to zanimljivo. Tamo je bila neka žena koja se time bavi u Fridericianumu u Kasselu, i ona je isto umjetnica, ne znam da li sasvim ili djelomično... to je teško reći s današnjim miješanim egzistencijama. Ona radi stvari koje bi se lako mogle nazvati umjetnošću. To je medijacija, ali u formi, recimo, performansa ili performativnih intervencija u području izložbe. One mogu biti posve neovisne i mogu čak postati subverzivne. I tamošnja uprava to tako hoće. Oni to čak i zahtijevaju pa se može dogoditi da medijacija tvrdi kako je to što je umjetnik izložio potpuna besmislica i da na tome moramo raditi. Jako šarmantan pristup.

*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: I ti sad misliš: konačno!

RW: I ako se to dogodi kao performans, granice se zbilja počinju

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brisati. Možda je to onda medijacijska umjetnost. Možda onda postoji nešto takvo... ali nekako sam se udaljio od tvog početnog pitanja.

NR: Točno. Nemojmo sad početi diskusiju o Andrei Fraser i drugima.

RW: Mislim da je važno nešto otvoriti. Radi se i o otvaranju mogućnosti. Općenito govoreći, komunikacija između umjetničkoga djela... zamislimo ovakvu konstelaciju: imamo umjetničko djelo, imamo promatrača i imamo neku vrstu komunikacije koja se događa između njih... i ta je komunikacija napeta.

NR: Kako misliš?

RW: Napeta u smislu da je opterećena, jako nabijena očekivanjima i predrasudama i...

NR: Vlastitim iskustvom...

RW: Ne, ne vlastitim iskustvom, nego iskustvom o tome što bi umjetnost trebala značiti.

NR: Da, ali i to je iskustvo. Možemo to smatrati glupim, ali oni...

RW: Da, ali to nisu vlastita iskustva. Ako zamislimo konstelaciju u kojoj se ljudsko biće rodi, ne dobije nikakva objašnjenja i odrasta u... u galeriji.

*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: Strašno.

RW: Zastrašujuća misao, ali ta osoba dobije sve što treba, hranu itd., i koju vrstu odnosa bi ta osoba mogla imati prema umjetnosti? Prije nego bilo tko od nas dođe u galeriju, već je čuo puno o tome što je umjetnost, što znače slike i da je to nešto vrijedno, ali dosadno (ako govorimo o staroj umjetnosti), da je to nešto sasvim nerazumljivo i glupo i precijenjeno (ako govorimo o novoj umjetnosti), ovisno o tome pod čijim smo bili utjecajem. To nosimo sa sobom u vlastiti naš pristup umjetnosti. To znači da nikad nemamo priliku doživjeti umjetničko djelo na ravnopravnoj razini kao normalnog partnera u dijalogu. Za ovo se također može kriviti i umjetnički sistem, jer on promovira stanoviti status koji bi umjetnost trebala imati. Recimo ovako: većina ljudi koji dođu u Kunsthistorisches Museum nikad nisu pomislili da je moguće da postoji loša Tizianova slika. Pa ipak, katkad stojim ispred slike i ništa se ne događa. To je ono na što mislim kad kažem napeta situacija. Staneš ispred umjetničkoga djela i očekuješ da se nešto dogodi, a ako se ne dogodi ništa, greška je u meni, a ne na umjetničkom djelu.

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NR: Ali ja mislim da mi svoje iskustvo nosimo sa sobom kad gledamo umjetnost, ono iskustvo izvan umjetnosti... jer nismo odrasli u galeriji... i vjerojatno o umjetnosti ne bismo razumjeli ništa da imamo samo iskustvo umjetnosti i ničega drugog. Sva ta druga iskustva koja nosimo sa sobom...

RW: Kad bismo imali tu slobodu! Nažalost, nemamo slobodu donijeti osobna iskustva u našu recepciju umjetnosti. To bi dalo potpuno drugačije rezultate, ali to nitko ne radi...

NR: Naravno da ljudi to rade! To se ne može izbjeći. Stvarima prilaziš kao cjelovita osoba...

RW: Ja da.

*Oboje se smiju.*

NR: Ok, ali govorimo i o drugima.

RW: Uzmimo ovako, nakon što smo prošli određeno obrazovanje i skupili određeno vizualno iskustvo, razvili smo određeno razumijevanje, onda... možda... odjednom dođemo do točke da stvari možemo gledati opušteno i možemo razviti drugačiji oblik dijaloga... i opuštenosti. Tada nestaju napetosti. Ne možemo postići iskonsko stanje, to je jasno, ali možda možemo malo rasklopiti stvari, ne biti odmah svime impresionirani i isto tako stvari na opušten način i odbiti...

NR: Ja mislim da većina umjetnika gleda umjetnost na taj način. Ne kao nešto...

RW: Misliš kako umjetnici gledaju umjetnost?

NR: Da...

RW: Da, ali kao medijator u umjetnosti, ja s tim nemam ništa.

Naravno da vi gledate umjetnost na sasvim drukčiji način, ako sami radite umjetnost... ali to je samo jedan glas, i to ne privilegirani... u cijelom koncertu. Umjetnici isto kažu puno gluposti. Čak kažu puno besmislica o vlastitom radu. To smo već više puta utvrdili...

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Katkad to rade namjerno. Ali kad pred sobom imam umjetničko djelo, onda ne razgovaram s umjetnikom. Razgovaram s djelom. I ako mi se umjetnik sviđa, to uopće ne utječe na tu konstelaciju.

NR: Kod mene utječe.

*Oboje se smiju.*

RW: Ok, možda malo. Potpadamo pod utjecaj, postajemo mekši...

NR: Ili tvrđi...

RW: Ok, nije bez utjecaja, priznajem... a ako umjetnik stoji tik do tebe, definitivno nije.

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*Oboje se smiju.*

*U tom smo trenutku pojeli još jedan kolač i razgovarali o irelevantnim stvarima. Vraćam se u trenutku kad smo se vratili na temu..*

RW: Dakle, umjetnost je najsvеobuhvatnija forma komunikacije u smislu da može slobodno birati sredstva, ili kombinaciju sredstava: slike, tekstove, zvukove, film, video, skulpturu... može se napraviti bilo što. Ali istovremeno to je vrsta komunikacije koja je najteža za definiranje. Sveobuhvatna ne znači da se dobije najviše informacija.

NR: Ali tako se vraćamo na moje ishodište, da umjetnici stvaraju nova značenja, ali to ne znači nove informacije. Značenje je nešto drugo. Opet ću citirati Luhmanna: ako ponavljamo nešto, to gubi svoju informacijsku vrijednost, ali ne svoje značenje. I zato smatram da je pitanje recepcije tako zanimljivo.

RW: Da, ali onda moramo biti spremni na bilo što. Ako čitam priručnik s uputama i ne razumijem, imam sva prava biti ljut. Ali ako stojim pred umjetničkim djelom i ne razumijem ga, onda (*smije se*), onda je to druga priča. Umjetnost nije priručnik s uputama... medijacija možda jest... malo...u granicama. Radije bih rekao da se radi o vrsti prijedloga.

NR: Točno. Jer sam sigurna da bi bilo moguće svaki put ispričati drugu priču. Tu vidim razliku između umjetnosti i, recimo, jezika. Način na koji govorimo nije vrlo precizan i postoji dosta nerazumijevanja, ali je taj način daleko precizniji nego umjetnost i, u isto vrijeme, baš zbog toga je pogrešan. Mnoge stvari, kad ih pokušamo definirati, prestanu biti istinite. Umjetnost može funkcionirati na drugi način i ostaviti stvari otvorenima. To nije tako precizno, ali je ispravnije. Ja tako nikad neću moći točno transkribirati ovaj razgovor. U ovom slučaju zbilja sam snimila sve što smo rekli, ali i s vrlo temeljitom transkripcijom, trebala bih opisati i prostor, napisati gdje smo se točno nalazili u tom prostoru, ali i kako se poznajemo i u kojem smo točno odnosu kao ljudi, a to postaje nemoguće opisati. Vjerojatno bismo i nas dvoje ispričali o tome različite priče. Umjetnost u ovom slučaju ima prednost da može doći bliže upravo zato što nije tako precizna.





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*This is a conversation I had with my friend Rolf Wienkötter in Vienna a couple of months ago. We met during our art history studies and used to spend a lot of time sitting around and talking about whatever came up. We discussed art a lot. I thought at some point I would like to record one conversation and persuaded Rolf to give me an interview for this publication. I was pleased that our conversation soon took its normal course and drifted into all sorts of things that one would normally never write down. We spoke in Rolf's apartment in Vienna, drank coffee, ate cakes and I recorded the sound on my camera.*

Nika Radić: I would like to start with an attempt to reconstruct the conversation we had together with Clemens (*Kirsch*) at my last birthday in “Anzengruber”. Can you still remember?

Rolf Wienkötter: Of course I can... I mean I remember that evening. I even remember the conversation... the basics of it... the very elemental basics.

*Both laughing*

NR: Ok, to help you, there were a lot of people and by the end there was the three of us: you and Clemens and I.

RW: Yes, yes, and at some point we got into this very engaged...

NR: ...at some point Clemens tried to persuade you that something you normally do had characteristics of an artwork just like...

RW: Yes, exactly...

NR: But what is it that you do?

RW: (*laughing*) I do guided tours. In exhibitions.

NR: And you write texts.

RW: Oh. Yes. I write texts. That's right.

*Both laughing*

RW: So Clemens thought that mediation in general, including writing, is also a creative practice and has the characteristics of an art work.

NR: Yes.

RW: That was, more or less, his thesis. We're talking about an immensely extended definition of art. Whoever somehow contributes to the discourse about art, whatever the form may be, is making art. And I was passionately against it.

NR: Yes. And that is where I thought we needed a definition of art and that was somehow difficult.

RW: I don't think we need a definition of art. I don't think we need

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to define the essence of art... at least not now. We just need to draw a line, a limit.

NR: And is that a different thing?

RW: You can easily draw a line between different social activities without defining them.

NR: But the classical definition of a definition has two parts. One tells us which area the defined term belongs to and the other is the *differentia specifica* that is actually the boundary towards the other related terms. Do you still remember from school?

*Both laughing*

RW: Jesus Christ, I didn't learn that at school. (*Laughing*) But I don't think we need some philosophical theorems here. It is not a logical problem. It is a very practical and... actually a sociological problem. And socio-logical is often not very logical. (*laughing*)

NR: Yes but then we end up with cultural studies that I hate.

Because you end up defining... here I am defining again... you end up calling art anything that has such a role in a given social group.

I find that very problematic because there are always these same things that have different functions in different social groups... it makes it easy to declare everything as art. In that case you can view a music video by, for instance, Lady Gaga as art if the people who are watching it consider it to be art. The problem arises with people who consider different things to be art, will still watch a Lady Gaga video for other reasons.

RW: I don't see a problem in considering a Lady Gaga video as art.

NR: So that is something you will consider that as art, but not your texts.

RW: Exactly. Because I would write a text... let's put it this way. It is not a big problem to define something as art. Nothing is gained or lost by it. But that, somehow, has little to do with our point of departure. The interesting question about a Lady Gaga video is only if it is being discussed somewhere... like an art magazine. And that will probably not happen often... although maybe... whatever. We don't have to talk about Lady Gaga now.

*Both laughing*

NR: I'm not... but, ok. In general I agree. I don't think texts about art are art. But I do find it interesting...

RW: I also find it objectionable to think about it in such a way. I would really advocate the delineation of realms. For ethics' sake.

NR: However, I will write down this text we are saying right now and I will publish it in a book that I will put together as an artist. Is this text then art?



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RW: In that case it is art because you made it into it. You are the artist. Then, a part of your book is an interview and interviews became quite established in today's art. It isn't journalism in that case, but it is embedded in art practice.

NR: At that point, during that drinking conversation, I said at some point that artists create new meanings. I felt very clever about it...

*Both laughing*

NR: ... but I really believe that one does try to make new meaning.

RW: That would be the challenge. Yes, of course. Although just a few actually succeed.

NR: At least it is something one tries to do, to start with. The problem that arises is, if one succeeds, how can one communicate it. How can we understand? If it is a completely new meaning, it has to be something people have never experienced before and in that case they cannot understand it. So it does have to be in some relation to one's own experience.

RW: It is clear that an artist cannot create something completely unconditioned and without presuppositions. That is sure. To make something that has no presuppositions so that an observer doesn't have the least idea what it is all about, that would be an avant-garde utopia. That would mean the artists move upon earth as an extraterrestrial without any personal ballast and any personal history and hasn't seen a thing in this world and only then would it be possible to create something that is like nature and that would amaze us in the way something in nature, we haven't seen yet, could. Such a thing doesn't exist.

NR: But we couldn't understand such a thing.

RW: You can always be amazed, can't you?

NR: *(Laughing)* Ok, but to understand?

RW: One is amazed only when one doesn't understand, or at least not completely... then you are amazed... but I can talk only about practical experience. I cannot remember a situation in which I have seen or experienced something that was so disconnected from everything I have ever seen, experienced, heard or read, that it was completely incomprehensible.

NR: When you prepare for a guided tour, you learn a lot... how does that work? How do you get prepared? You have to take some unknown people through the exhibition...

RW: Yes, exactly. The scope of mediation in art is first of all, as a minimal requirement, to create an approach, which means to open the whole thing... towards the visitor, the viewer. Then we can

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argue what next. It then depends on the sort of art we are talking about, how much knowledge should be transferred to make the thing understandable. In this respect there are differences between art from different periods and different provenance. But in general it is simply about creating a connection. A connection to the artwork.

NR: Between the visitor of the guided tour and the artwork...

RW: Yes, exactly...

NR: And you don't really know who these people that show up are, do you?

RW: In the Kunsthistorisches Museum you normally don't. Sometimes there is a specific group when you know a bit more and can classify them somewhat better. Generally speaking sometimes you can guess that a group will know more about art. The normal museum visitors bring a certain interest for art but you can have no idea what that specifically means. My general experience is that it doesn't make much sense to think a lot which sort of people one will be talking to, because it is always a different situation. No group is the same as another.

NR: I find this situation very interesting because it is something artists always work with, even if mostly not consciously.

You make something and exhibit it. You spoke now about the Kunsthistorisches Museum but I suppose the situation is a bit different in the Generali Foundation where visitors are not so much different from each other.

RW: Yes.

NR: I think there must already be a pre-selection if they are people who are interested in contemporary art, although I cannot say now what exactly that would be.

RW: Yes, it is certainly a more specific group than in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. The Generali Foundation is not a Viennese tourist attraction. Although, the people I give guided tours in the Kunsthistorisches Museum are mostly Viennese... but it has a different status. Anyway, the people that come to the Generali Foundation are younger and have more specific interests.

NR: Are they younger?

RW: On average, sure. You have the really young, the people who kind of mingle in the Viennese art scene up to the generation of the thirty, forty year old.

NR: And education? Is there a difference there?

RW: Also, of course. People who come to the Generali Foundation

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are on average surely... I really think it is a different social class... no, class is a wrong word. A different part of society, let's put it that way: I think there are not many overlaps between the core audience in the Generali Foundation (if there is such a thing) and the core audience in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. However, I am saying that with a lot of caution because I made no empirical research. It is just a gut feeling. Maybe I am wrong but even among my friends I know that if I say: "There's this exhibition I can show you etc.", then they might come to the old museum although they normally wouldn't. But they do go to the Generali Foundation. They even go to openings in the Generali Foundation, but certainly not to the openings at the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

NR: I didn't know they had openings. (*Laughing*)

RW: Of course there are openings. There are ceremonial exhibition openings. Now, for this show of the Dutch group portraits, the Netherlands ambassador will trot along etc. And if all goes well, perhaps even the president of the republic shows up. That's the Kunsthistorisches Museum. They hold a grand court there and that's the way it should be.

NR: But back to our topic. What is your assignment at these tours? You try to do something so that the visitors understand more about the art and can then communicate with it.

RW: Yes, exactly. Let's put it this way, I try to explain what it is that we see. It would be nice if there were a dialogue. In the Kunsthistorisches Museum, although things have changed in the realm of art mediation, it is still a very classical guided tour: I am the person that knows things and you are the people that don't know anything to start with and so listen and learn. That is the classical setting. It is of course boring and traditional and conservative. In many places it is known that there are also other forms of mediation. The Kunsthistorisches Museum is discovering it slowly and I would be very open and interested to try out other things. However, I do not operate autonomously. I am in the Generali Foundation also not really autonomous. One has to fulfill the requests from the institution.

NR: So what are the requests?

RW: It is not exactly specified how one has to do a tour but implicitly it is clear that you just have to make a guided tour in the sense that you have to explain the art, to put it simply, I cannot say: "Ok, this is an overview tour of an exhibition and I don't feel like always counting down the same facts so I'd rather do a

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performance with the visitors”. I cannot do that. I’d get into trouble. That isn’t what the institution wants from me and presumably not what the visitors want from me. So the question remains how much I can experiment or how much innovation and originality would be reasonable in a given constellation.

NR: What really interests me is the fact that the whole mediation thing relies on one idea. The idea is that you look at something you do not understand and then there is someone who will say something about it that will then allow the viewer to understand the artwork in a different way. Or perhaps to understand something that was utterly incomprehensible before. It seems to me that one tries to make us remember something from our experience that will then help us see points in the work we might be in touch with.

RW: From personal experience?

NR: Yes, probably, because that’s the only thing we have.

RW: That would be a further step. That would be highly interesting if that would always be the case in a guided tour, but initially it is simply about enhancing the pleasure through a better knowledge. That would be how I see it.

NR: Pleasure?

RW: The pleasure of looking at a work of art. The fact that something is hanging on a wall and I look at it and find it pleasing. It is often the case with artworks that the more I know about them, the more I see, or when something is being pointed out to me then it has, so to say, more meaning. I understand more about the artwork. And if there is a possibility to connect the artwork with one’s own life, world, experience or something of that kind, or with the present, that would be exciting, especially with old art. If one could make it up to date with personal experience, or for our present society, that of course would be great.

NR: I believe, and now I’m back at Luhmann’s theory, that communication isn’t sending messages from A to B. It is largely establishing what is mutual, meaning shared experience and all the things one has lived to see, hear, read etc. We first have to find out what is overlapping in our experience, in order to be able to understand each other at all. And then, after we found out a lot of things in common, then maybe we can come up with little surprises every now and then. If everything is new, we are simply lost. We don’t understand a thing. So I guess when you do a guided tour... I have no experience with that. I just made a couple of guided tours on my own shows...

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RW: You yourself?

NR: Yes. If there is a bigger exhibition, sometimes you do an artist's guided tour.

RW: Yes, yes, of course. But if an artist who produced the work in the exhibition does a tour that is clearly something else.

NR: I tried to make people remember the general shared experience. For instance, when I talked about the window photographs, I spoke about the experience of looking at other people through their windows. That is something everyone can understand.

RW: Exactly.

NR: Of course there are also other aspects of the work that I didn't talk about. There is usually little time and I am not sure how interested people really are... But I do believe it is good if we can find something in common to start with, because that is a starting point for something else. And I guess you must be doing something similar. Or am I wrong?

RW: I must... yes... what is it that I must do?

*Both laughing*

NR: I guess you do something like... You go to the Kunsthistorisches Museum and tell people that that is a painting by Rubens, and it shows a young woman and she is looking over her shoulder...

RW: There isn't such a painting.

NR: ... of course there is!

RW: In Lichtenstein museum.

NR: No, in the Kunsthistorisches.

RW: A Rubens woman looking over her shoulder?

NR: Yes, the young woman that stands like this...

RW: Oh, you mean the "Girl in a fur".

NR: Yes... I guess, that's the title.

RW: Yes but she is not looking over her shoulder. She is inclining a bit...

NR: Whatever! Sorry!

RW: It doesn't matter.

NR: And the painting...

RW: But that's a good example. It is a painting you can look at naturally and right away you will get something back. For some people straight away and for some maybe not, but there can be a profit in the sense that one enjoys looking at pictures. You can see a woman, she is almost life size, you see the whole body, she

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is naked, covers herself with the fur and is obviously very young and that is all fine. Then one can perhaps come to the point that it is interesting the woman is depicted in exactly that size and in this way. It cannot be a normal portrait. It has to be something more intimate and then you soon come to a point that it is Rubens' wife and it the "Girl in a fur" and maybe you have seen the picture somewhere because it is famous etc. You can observe the painting nicely on that level. And then you come to a point where it is about knowledge, something you cannot just see on your own, unless you have an intensive humanistic education, and it is not something one can assume with today's museum visitors. Those are things you have to learn and read about to be able to recognize them. I am talking about the fact that the woman is standing there just like a *Venus pudica*, a coy Venus, so it is a classical modus of depicting Venus. It is interesting that he paints his wife and obviously makes a suggestion in this painting. He suggests she is Venus. So his wife becomes the goddess of love and Rubens does it quite consciously.

NR: (*Laughing*) She looks like someone who just got out of bed.

RW: (*Laughing*) But Rubens uses classical education and applies it to his wife. And thus he pays, and this again is the personal, the intimate, the human level, he pays the biggest compliment a man can pay to a woman: "You are the goddess of love." Very personal. And then you can know that it isn't a coincidence that she is wearing a fur, but that there was a Titian painting a hundred years earlier showing a girl in fur. So he is referring to his great idol... and all of that you don't just see straight away, but it puts more flesh on the bones. Suddenly you can identify more in the painting. There are several layers. Every artwork, if things go well, has several layers and every layer one unlocks, makes it richer. So that is the task of mediation, to provide information that allow for these layers to be recognized. We are talking simply about the level of knowledge and at the Kunsthistorisches Museum it is all about the knowledge and that's the classic understanding of mediation so far.

NR: So does one then understand more?

RW: Well, the knowledge is just part of it. Very often it is about education but it can also become a bit bleak. It can become an amassment of facts. You have to decide what is essential...

NR: But the question is probably: what is comprehensible. I mean, if you try to explain what the differences between a baroque painting and... I don't know... for instance renaissance painting

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are, is that something people can understand, if they never had anything to do with painting?

RW: Of course they can. A renaissance painting has a completely different feel to it than a baroque painting and anyone can see it. I find it is a very interesting task to make explicit and say out loud what everyone can see anyway, no matter what one's educational level might be. To say that this, what you see, is renaissance and that is baroque. I mean, to start with the material, to let the things speak for themselves and with these old works you always have a feeling you should first have the education to be able to profitably view them.

NR: What you are saying... ok, I'll tell you what I understood and you let me know if it is completely wrong.

RW: Ok.

NR: I have a feeling one has to begin with finding out some points that are connected to the experience the viewers already have, but that you, at the same time, make this new experience, the experience people have while they are watching an art work, you make it very conscious.

RW: Yes, exactly.

NR: Is it the same thing with contemporary art?

RW: I don't see a fundamental difference. I'm thinking about it, but I really don't see a difference... or a breach in contemporary art. I do mean what I said, that an artwork is composed from several layers and that the more layers one can include in what one understands, the more interesting the whole thing becomes. It is initially a visual experience in each case, under normal circumstances, unless we're talking about a conceptual work that is really just in a book or something of the sort. So it is a sensuous experience and afterwards there is the experience of the reason and that is actually always the case, isn't it?

NR: Yes.

*Both laughing*

RW: Although, and one should also say that I sometimes have a feeling people have wrong expectations from art, wrong expectations in the sense that they comprehend something that in the end has to come loose. If you speak a language, somehow you have to be able to understand it... if I have learned a language I can understand it and the fact that sometimes there is nothing you have to understand and there are many things you can't understand... I mean that art is a language where one should also enjoy things that are incomprehensible, enjoy them as incomprehensible, that is

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something that should specifically be mediated. Something like: I don't understand what this is about, but it's great!

*Both laughing*

RW: Or also: I don't understand what it's about and it's really annoying me. That too. There was a conference, last Saturday and Sunday, organized by *Schnittpunkt*, this Viennese platform that deals with questions of mediation in art, and the title was "Educational Turn". Apparently we have another "turn", and it was about alternative approaches to mediation and about self-empowerment of mediation and about whether mediation should become an autonomous factor in the whole structure and not something that always comes at the end and has the task to explain what others have thought up before. They didn't say how that could concretely be done, but that was primarily it. The question is: should mediation move towards independent production in the sense of actual autonomous knowledge.

NR: Well, but then...

RW: Not artistic production!

*Both laughing*

RW: Although that's interesting. There was a woman there, who does that in the Fridricianum in Kassel and she is also an artist, I'm not sure if full-time or part-time... difficult to say with today's mixed existences. And she does things that one can easily call art. It is mediation but in a form of a, lets say, performance or performative interventions in the exhibition realm. They can then be totally independent and can even become subversive. The management there wants is that way. They even require it and it can happen that the mediation states that whatever the artists have put up is total nonsense and we have to work it out. It is a very charming approach.

*Both laughing*

NR: Now you're thinking: finally!

RW: And if it takes place as a performance, the borders really become erased. Maybe it is then a mediation art. Maybe there is such a thing then... but somehow I got carried away from your actual question.

NR: Right. Let's not start discussing Andrea Frazer et al. now.

RW: I mean I find it is important to open something up. It is also about opening up of possibilities. Generally speaking the communication between the artwork... let's imagine such a constellation: there is an artwork and there is a viewer and there is



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some sort of communication happening between them... and this communication is tense.

NR: What do you mean?

RW: Tense meaning that it is burdened, heavily charged with expectations and prejudices and...

NR: With one's own experiences...

RW: No, not one's own experiences, but experiences about what art should mean.

NR: Yes, but that is also an experience. We might find it stupid, but they...

RW: Yes but these things are not experienced on one's own. If we imagine a constellation in which a human being has been born, gets no explanations whatsoever and grows up in a... in a gallery.

*Both laughing*

NR: How horrible!

RW: What a frightening thought, but the person gets all he/she needs, food etc., and what sort of a relation would the person have towards the art? Before any of us come to a gallery we have already heard so much about what art is and what the paintings mean and that it is something great and valuable but boring (if we are talking about old art) that it is something totally incomprehensible and stupid and overpriced (if we are talking about new art) depending under whose influence we are. And that is what we bring with us in our approach to art. It means you never really have a chance to perceive an artwork at eye level as a normal partner in a dialogue. The art system itself is also to blame for that, because it also promotes a certain status art should have. Let's put it this way: most of the people who go to the Kunsthistorisches Museum never thought it possible that there is also a bad painting by Titian. And yet, sometimes I stand in front of a painting and nothing happens. That is what I mean when I say it is a tense situation. You step in front of an artwork and expect something to happen and, if nothing happens, than it's my fault and not the fault of the work.

NR: But I think we bring our experience with us when we look at art, the experience outside of art... because we didn't grow up in a gallery... and we probably wouldn't understand a thing about art if we had experienced only art and nothing else. All this other experience we bring with us...

RW: If we had the freedom. Unfortunately we don't have the freedom to bring our personal experience to our reception of art. That would bring totally different results forth, but no one does it.

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NR: Oh yes people do! You can't avoid it. You approach things as a whole being...

RW: I do myself.

*Both laughing*

NR: Ok, but we're talking also about other people.

RW: Let's put it this way, after one has gone through a certain education and through a certain visual experience and has developed a certain understanding, then... maybe... one comes suddenly again to the point when one can look at things in a relaxed way and can develop a different form of dialogue... and a looseness. The tensions then disappear. We cannot reach a primordial state, that is clear, but we can maybe dismantle a bit, not be impressed by everything right away and also reject things in a relaxed way...

NR: I think most artists look at art in such a way. Not as something...

RW: You mean how artists look at art?

NR: Yes.

RW: Yes but as an art mediator I have nothing to do with it. Of course you look at art in a completely different way if you produce art yourself... but that's just one voice, and not a privileged one... in a whole concert. Artists also say a lot of rubbish. Artists even say a lot of nonsense about their own work. We established that time and again.

*Both laughing*

RW: And sometimes they do it on purpose. But if I have an artwork in front of me then I don't talk to the artist. I talk to the work. And if I like the artist then it doesn't influence this constellation at all.

NR: With me it does.

*Both laughing*

RW: Ok, maybe a bit. That is right. One gets under the influence, becomes softer...

NR: Or tougher...

RW: Ok, it's not without influence, I admit... and if the artist is standing right next to you definitely not.

*Both laughing*

*At this point we had another piece of cake and spoke about irrelevant things. I pick up at a point where we got back on track.*

RW: Well, art is the most all-embracing form of communication in the sense that it can freely choose its means, or the combination of means: images, texts, sounds, film, video, sculpture... you can do anything.

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But at the same time it is the form of communication that is least definable. All-embracing doesn't mean I get most information.

NR: But then we again arrived at my starting point again, that artists create new meanings and that doesn't mean new information. A meaning is a different thing. I'll quote Luhmann again: if we repeat something it loses its information value but not its meaning. And that's why I find the question of reception so interesting.

RW: Yes but then I have to be prepared for anything. If I read the instruction manual and don't understand, I have every right to be angry. But if I am standing in front of an artwork and don't understand it, then (*laughing*), then it's a different story. Art is not an instruction manual... mediation maybe is... a bit... within limits. I'd rather say it has characteristics of a proposal.

NR: Exactly. Because I'm sure it would also be possible to tell a different story each time. That is where I always see a difference between art and, let's say, language. The way we speak is not very precise, and there are many misunderstandings, but it is by far more precise than art and, at the same time, precisely because of that it is wrong. A lot of things, the moment we try to define them, cease to be true. Art can work in a different way and leave things open. It is somehow not so precise but more right. I can also never transcribe this conversation exactly. In this case I have really recorded everything we have said, but even with a very thorough transcription I would still have to describe the room, write down exactly where we were in this room, but also how we knew each other and exactly what sort of a relationship we as people were in and it all becomes impossible to describe. Also because the two of us would probably tell two quite different stories about it. And art has in that case the advantage to be able to come closer, exactly because it is not so exact.



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# Nika Radić, Za promatrača, dvokanalna video instalacija, 2008/09.

transkript teksta

Nika Radić (iz offa): Kad smo se bili razgovarali, ja sam govorila o publici...

Ješa Denegri: Da... da...

NR: ... a onda si ti Miško rekao da bi zapravo trebalo govoriti o recepciji...

JD: O recepciji...

NR: ... to jest o promatraču.

JD: Da, tako je.

NR: Zašto? Koja je razlika?

Miško Šuvaković: Publika – promatrač? Pa razlika je dosta krupna. Zato što se europska tradicija, europska estetička tradicija, definira za jednoga promatrača, jednoga recipijenta i on je onaj kojem je upućeno djelo. Najčešće u europskim teorijama umjetnosti taj jedan je univerzaliziran: bijelac, muškarac, heteroseksualac, Europljanin koji uživa u djelu, koji prima djelo. I to djelo prima se izvan socijalnoga, društvenog konteksta, izvan kulturalnoga konteksta. Ono se prima na jedan direktan način u autonomnom prostoru umjetnosti. Naprotiv, ideja publike podrazumijeva da u okviru društva, kulture, postoji nekakav svijet umjetnosti i da se u okviru toga svijeta umjetnosti pojavljuje proces recepcije. Taj proces recepcije nije samo individualni, estetski doživljaj ili estetska recepcija, već jedna vrsta kolektivne participacije, suučesništva, razumijevanja, prihvaćanja identificiranja. Zapravo se uspostavlja stanovito kolektivno tijelo, ili kolektivni subjekt. I to je jedna dosta velika razlika i gotovo do naših dana ta ideja kolektivnoga subjekta, ili publike, nije razmatrana. Razmatrana je dominantno u filmu, na primjer. Razmatrana je u odnosu na kazalište, javne manifestacije. U odnosu na ono što se naziva likovne umjetnosti ili vizualne umjetnosti, ona se pojavljuje tek s vremenom kada se studije kulture ili studije popularne kulture sve više primjenjuju na razumijevanje, tumačenje ili kustosko organiziranje te umjetnosti. Zapravo, tek s fenomenom velikih bijenalskih izložbi, što je karakteristika posljednjih godina, pojavljuje se ta ideja kolektivne publike i odnosa prema publici, što se danas proširuje i na uspješni muzej. Što je uspješni muzej? Onaj koji ima veliku protočnost publike. Tradicionalni muzej, modernistički muzej, zapravo

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nema svoje publike. Evo jedna kratka, po meni uvijek smiješna, anegdota. U ožujku sam bio u Poznańu. Tamo ima jedan veliki muzej i u tom velikom muzeju nalazi se cjelokupno slikarstvo Poljske dvadesetoga stoljeća, s odličnim primjerima avangardnog, apstraktnog, ekspresionističkog, socrealističkog, modernističkog itd. Stigao sam dva sata prije zatvaranja muzeja, htio sam ući (a to je bila jedina prilika da posjetim muzej) i u prodavaonici karata rekli su mi da me ne mogu pustiti, jer se muzej zatvara za dva sata. Ja sam inzistirao i objasnio zašto, da ću propustiti ovu priliku, jer da već sutra putujem. Onda su me pustili i tri su me čuvara cijelo vrijeme pratila dok sam ja sam obilazio po jednoj velikoj zgradi na tri, četiri razine. Slična mi se stvar dogodila nekoliko mjeseci poslije u bečkome muzeju, u koji sam stigao sat vremena, ili pola sata, prije zatvaranja i publika je dolazila, neki su otišli na kavu, neki u prodavaonicu, a neko je oprčao kroz izložbu da bi nešto i vidio. Dva potpuno različita koncepta. Jedan koji funkcionira kao institucija koja radi s publikom u okviru nekakvih mikrokulturalnih politika, i druga institucija koja radi zapravo kao čuvar velike nacionalne, državne, kulturne baštine, u kojoj je publika zanemariva, nebitna.

NR: A vi ste radili u muzeju, je li tako?

JD: Jesam.

NR: I je li vama to bilo bitno?

JD: Pa znate kako, to je bilo ono socijalističko vrijeme kad je postojala jedna posebna služba koja se bavila odnosima s javnošću, kako bi se danas reklo, znači sa školama, radnim organizacijama. Mi smo imali kustosa, imali smo jednu malu službu, znači tri, četiri kustosa i njihovih suradnika koji su o tome vodili računa. A u nekim trenucima, kada je recimo bila nedjelja ili kad nije bio radni dan, onda je dežurni kustos morao provesti publiku, odnosno goste, ako su bili najavljeni. Tako da je ta komponenta igrala neku ulogu u skladu s tadašnjom idejom o socijalizaciji umjetnosti i to sve zajedno što je svojstveno muzeju u socijalizmu. S vremenom se ta služba transformirala zahvaljujući okolnostima, zahvaljujući osobi koja je bila na čelu te službe, u jednu svojevrsnu jedinicu koja se bavila edukacijom na jednoj malo višoj razini. Znači, ne tako da sad provede slučajne namjernike ili recimo čak osnovne škole, za koje je bilo vrlo teško i njemu, a kamoli ostalim kustosima, naći dovoljnu mjeru što reći tako mladom i neupućenom uzrastu. Ali evo, kad me pitate, u osnovi muzej je vodio računa o tome, dakle postojala je služba i o tome se na neki način vodilo računa.

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Kakvi su efekti toga bili, teško je reći. Nama kao kustosima to je bila jedna... jedno opterećenje. Naprosto, nije bilo lako naći ključ što reći toj publici. Najlakše je bilo uhvatiti se na primjer nekoga vrlo poznatog rada i onda malo biografije umjetnika, ovo ono, tako da je taj odnos bio prilično neizgrađen. Mislim, nije postojala metodologija, nije postojalo iskustvo. Ono se stjecalo kroz sâm taj odnos i s vremenom je nekako ugasnulo. Kako se gasila s jedne strane i ta pažnja nekadašnjih radnih organizacija koje su svoje zaposlenike slali ili im davali nekakve besplatne ulaznice, i kako su se programi osnovnih i srednjih škola ustrojili tako da više nisu imali posjete muzeju, tako je to prestalo i otada je teško reći je li jedan muzej, kao što je bio Muzej savremene umjetnosti, imao jednu ciljnu grupu spram koje je, na neki način, organizirao svoje izložbe ili je to bila, da tako kažem, umjetnička i kulturna javnost Beograda i šire. I onda se moralo računati na vrlo heterogenu publiku sastavljenu od znalaca, umjetnika, kritičara, povjesničara umjetnosti do ljubitelja umjetnosti koji su pohodili izložbe. Onda se, ako već idemo u te detalje, formirala ta jedinica koja je imala neke svoje polaznike. Recimo, bili su tada neki seminari, tečajevi. Mnogo je ljudi poslije svjedočilo o tome da su polazeći tečajeve kod Koste Bogdanovića (evo da kažem i ime osobe koja je to vodila) dobili prve kontakte s umjetnošću. Neki su se opredijelili da budu bliži umjetnosti, neki su čak postali umjetnici izvan, da kažem, redovnoga školskog obrazovanja na akademiji i tako dalje. Ali ta komponenta igrala je neku ulogu u politici muzeja osim, naravno, onih ostalih kao što su pripremanje velikih izložbi, retrospektiva, tekućih izložbi, otkupi... sve ostalo što ide u politici jednoga muzeja.

NR: Ti si, Miško, bio posjetilac...

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: Da

NR: ...tog istog muzeja. Kakav je bio tvoj stav?

MŠ: Uz taj me muzej veže nekoliko sjećanja, dosta važnih. Eto, bio sam i posjetilac, s petnaest, šesnaest godina, tečajeve koje je držao Kosta Bogdanović.

JD (smijeh) Je li točno?

MŠ: Tamo negdje...

JD: Vidite, Nika... (smijeh)

MŠ: Tamo negdje šezdesetdevete, sedamdesete, prvi sam put tamo pohađao... Ali taj muzej je...

JD: Nisam to znao. (smijeh)

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MŠ: ...taj muzej je za mene imao dva iskustva. Jedno iskustvo veoma je osobno, dječje iskustvo. Tada sam, koliko imao, deset, jedanaest godina, odveli su me otac i majka u muzej i tada sam vidio nešto što mi je bilo jako značajno. Vidio sam bijelu mladu Gabrijela Stupice koja je bila jednako tako nažvrljana kao što sam ja neuspješno u svojoj neukosti crtao i to je za mene bilo prosvjetljenje. Da netko doista radi to i da sam ja ipak bio u pravu. Što je bilo još možda važnije u mojoj konfliktnoj ličnosti, naravno (smijeh). I to je na neki način bilo meni vezano za taj muzej i taj muzej, bez obzira na to kako se razvijao, on je neko mjesto gdje sam ja sreo nešto što je bilo važno u mom životu, a to je bio taj Gabrijel Stupica. Ta zapravo gotovo dječje nacrtana figura žene. Drugo iskustvo s tim muzejom vezano je za kasnija razdoblja. To su znači... zapravo, od vremena nakon tih tečajeva koje sam pohađao kod Koste Bogdanovića pa od dolaska na izložbe, obilaska muzeja, ja sam povremeno, znači na mjesec dana, dolazio bar jedanput gledati djela i ono što sam u muzeju iskusio... i dan-danas mogu prizvati u glavi taj osjećaj da nigdje nikoga nema, da ja idem po parketu, taj muzej je imao parket u zgradi...

JD: Da...

MŠ: ...da parket škripi i da ja čujem s malim zakašnjenjem kako iza mene također parket škripi. Budući da nikoga nije bilo, uvijek su jedan ili dva čuvara išla za mnom. I za mene je na neki način ideja socijalističkoga muzeja, a to se potvrdilo i ove godine kad sam bio u Poznańu, zapravo to iskustvo parketa koji škripi.

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: Publika koja dolazi izvana zapravo je stranac u muzeju i cijela je institucija pomalo narogušena, zbunjena i pita se što taj hoće, pa makar imao i petnaest godina. I to je na neki način moje iskustvo s tim odnosom kako je muzej kao takav funkcionirao.

Ali to nas vodi jednom možda općenitijem pitanju. Pitanju, pitanju... i to je možda tvoje pitanje publike o kojem sam ja također razmišljao u međuvremenu, a to je da je zapravo pitanje što je publika ili što je svijet u kojem se događa umjetnost. Kome je ona upućena zapravo? I tu uvijek ima jedna vrsta shizofrenog ili polushizofrenog rascjepa između toga da postoji upućenost umjetnosti (bez obzira na to radi li se o maloj galeriji, studentskoj galeriji, privatnoj galeriji ili velikom muzeju) nekakvom javnom mnijenju. Nekoj općoj doksi koja nije identificirana, koja podrazumijeva ono što bi bio kolektivni, i to makrokolektivni subjekt jedne kulture. I s druge strane postoje konkretni svjetovi



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umjetnosti kojima je zapravo manje-više svaka profesionalna izložba ili manifestacija u muzeju ili galeriji ili umjetničkom radu upućena. To su zapravo profesionalci kojima je upućen profesionalni izazov kao takav. I to je nešto što je u ovoj sredini dugo građeno. Ne mislim samo u ovoj sredini. Meni je jedno od velikih iskustava bilo kad sam bio u galeriji John Weber u New Yorku. Cijeli sam život čitao o toj galeriji, mislio sam da je tu centar moći, nekoliko kompjutera, da tamo sjedi nekoliko kustosa koji upravljaju ovim planetom. A zapravo sam ušao u galeriju koja je bila apsolutno prazna. Morali ste dugo zvoniti da bi vam netko otvorio. Bio je izložen samo jedan rad i to nekakav gotovo beznačajan rad jednoga značajnog umjetnika. I zapravo sve je bilo samo formalno mjesto. Topos koji nije bitan. Upravo, možda je riječ o tome da je taj idealitet profesionalne publike nešto što je modernizam dugo, pažljivo razvijao, publiku koju čine drugi umjetnici, koju čine kritičari, kustosi, koju čine u krajnjem slučaju trgovci, dileri i njihovo prateće osoblje, djevojke, momci, muževi, žene, ljubavnici, ljubavnice, partneri, partnerice i ostali...

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: ...ali zapravo to je taj uži svijet i sad imamo te dvije potpuno različite sfere. Jedna sfera bila je ona koju je činilo nekakvo apstraktno javno mnijenje. Druga je sfera nekakav povijesno-geografski, za određenu kulturu definirani svijet umjetnosti. I konačno ono što se danas tu pojavljuje, a to je ono očekivanje da je muzej instrument kulturalne industrije. Ne više kulturalne politike kakav je bio u socijalizmu, već kulturalne industrije. Očekuju se prosječni građani koji će biti na neki način dovedeni u muzej i koji će biti ona masa kroz koju će muzej reproducirati svoj smisao i razlog postojanja. Tako da mi se čini kako ta tri svijeta sačinjavaju publiku i svijet u kojem se to odigrava. I politika se, muzejska ili galerijska ili umjetnička, odigrava između tih triju svjetova.

NR: Vi se slažete?

JD: Što kažete?

NR: Vi se slažete?

JD: Pa dobro, znate kako, publika je ovako, da se nadovežem na to i na ono što sam malo prije rekao... mislim... ona je zapravo jedan krajnje heterogen skup za koji je teško naprosto ustanoviti kakve ima sve slojeve. Možemo poći od onih najnižih: recimo, ljubitelji koji nedjeljom ujutro ili nekog dana u mjesecu posvete nekoliko sati obilasku muzeja. Recimo, naš muzej je ovdje još bio i po strani. Nije lako bilo doći. Imali smo taj fenomen da je najviše posjeta

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bilo recimo na dan otvaranja, a onda sutradan i sve ove ostale dane jedva da bi itko i dolazio. Međutim druga publika, o kojoj se na neki način vodilo računa, to su verzirani ljudi, profesionalci, slikari, umjetnici, kritičari, kolege iz ove sredine, iz drugih sredina. Tako da unutar toga fenomena ili te kategorije... publika... mislim treba razumijevati, čini mi se, vrlo raznolike recipijente, da kažem ovim sadašnjim jezikom umjetnosti. I tu se negdje nalazi strategija onih koji vode muzeje, onih koji pripremaju izložbe, onih koji se na neki način upućuju javnosti i postavlja se onda pitanje kojoj je to javnosti bilo upućeno u konkretnoj izložbi i tako dalje. Ili o tome, to ste me pitali kad smo se onomad vidjeli, kad se recimo rade te izložbe, da li se računa na ikoga izvana ili naprosto autor izložbi, je li to pojedinac, je li to jedna manja ekipa ili je u ovom slučaju jedna institucija poput muzeja, računaju li oni uopće na nekoga ili zapravo obavljaju nekakve svoje zadatke u skladu s metodologijama...

NR: Da, rekli smo da je ta razlika između te opće publike...

JD: ...da...

NR: ... i promatrača. I ti si Miško rekao da je taj promatrač... kakav? Bijelac, muškarac, heteroseksualac...

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: U načelu Europljanin.

NR: Europljanin.

MŠ: Ali to je da kažem velika modernistička paradigma te publike, tog promatrača za koga je konstruirana estetika. Terry Eagleton na jednom mjestu u svojoj knjizi „Ideologija estetike“ sasvim jasno i lijepo kaže. „Estetika je disciplina koja je stvorena za srednju klasu u buržoaskim društvima kojoj je potrebno područje identifikacije slobode, a to je područje estetskog i umjetničkog“. I to je taj tradicionalni model. Danas on naravno na taj način ne postoji, ali negdje je zadržan. Jer kad se razgovara s jednim filmskim redateljem, kad se razgovara s jednim kazališnim redateljem, on će računati na brojnu publiku i to ne na publiku koja je specijalizirani individuum. U načelu, kad se priča sa slikarom, skulptorom, fotografom, video umjetnikom, on zapravo ili ne razmišlja uopće o publici, Sebe postavlja kao problem i razrješava kroz to. Ili izvršava zadatak koji je dobio od kustosa, ma što to značilo, eksplicitno ili implicitno. Ili zapravo postaje onaj tko ima nekakvog idealnog individuumu kojem se obraća, s kojim diskutira, s kojim polemizira, s kojim je na neki način u vrsti unutrašnjega dijaloga kojim će djelo razriješiti. Ali da strateški postavlja: „ja ću

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stvoriti djelo koje će reagirati na određeno javno mnijenje“, to se vrlo rijetko događa. Većina drugih djela zapravo nastaje u jednoj internoj relaciji...

JD: Da.

MŠ: ...i to je paradoks i ovoga trenutka u kojem sada živimo. Velik broj suvremenih umjetnika potkraj devedesetih i početkom ovoga stoljeća radi u području kulturalnih praksi. Rade neke prakse koje slične, izgledaju kao interventne, kao djelovanje, ne znam, u odnosu na pitanja rata, u odnosu na pitanja socijalne sigurnosti, pitanja prostitucije, pitanja delinkvencije itd. Cijeli onaj skup kulturalnih praksi u kojima se umjetnik pojavljuje kao interventan. Ali svaki od tih umjetnika zapravo, ili većina tih umjetnika, i to je paradoks, računa da će to djelo, ma koliko djelovalo i bilo izvedeno kao dokumentarno interventno, na kraju biti reprezentirano i čitano kroz kontekst autonomije umjetnosti. I to je jedan mehanizam koji je danas ugrađen. Drugim riječima, taj odnos prema publici, ili cenzura publike, nešto je što je skoro dvjesto godina razvijano u likovnim umjetnostima i tek ti rijetki momenti u kojima je umjetnik morao raditi prekršaj ili, batajevski rečeno, „prijestup“, on je zapravo onda računao na neko javno mnijenje. Ali to su rijetki trenuci.

NR: Što je onda provokacija, zapravo nešto što direktno računa na publiku?

MŠ: U načelu provokacija i identifikacija. Ali je problem što likovna umjetnost, ili vizualne umjetnosti u ovom smislu gube identifikacijsku funkciju tijekom posljednjih pedeset, šezdeset, sedamdeset godina. One sve više prelaze na druga područja i oni umjetnici koji računaju na javno mnijenje, oni idu prije svega prema provokaciji. Ili nečemu što slično na provokaciju, a ne mora biti uvijek provokacija. Ali ja se bojim da malo umjetnosti provocira po samom radu. Većina umjetnosti provocira na način interakcije rada i konteksta i da kontekstualna pitanja umjetničkoga djela moraju biti pokrenuta.

JD: Da. Ali evo ovo što je Miško naveo, ta dva primjera, Mića Popović i ta zabranjena izložba i potom grupa Irwin... To se javlja u trenutku kada taj umjetnik i ova umjetnička grupa... zapravo to nije Irwin, nego Novi kolektivizam.

MŠ: Novi kolektivizam.

JD: Znači jedan ogranak Neue slowenische Kunst...

MŠ: Neue slowenische Kunst.

JD: ... točno rečeno, da ne pomiješamo s Irwinom, jer to nije to.

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Dakle, to se javlja u trenutku kada ti subjekti umjetnosti, da ih tako nazovemo, uključuju u svoje strategije neku političku komponentu. Ovo što smo govorili malo prije, to zapravo vlada u razdoblju dominacije modernizma na jugoslavenskoj sceni, umjetničkoj sceni, kada se smatra, generalno rečeno, da umjetnost ima neku svoju autonomiju, da ona ima svoja svojstva kao likovnog jezika, plastičkih svojstava umjetničkoga djela i tako dalje, i da je ta tematska ili sadržajna strana, ako ne sasvim irelevantna, ali ona je ipak sekundarna u odnosu na ono kako umjetnik formulira svoju, da kažem, izjavu. U jednom času, dakle, događa se taj prijelaz s estetskih problema kojima se uglavnom bave umjetnici post-socrealističkog razdoblja. Jer ako hoćemo, povijesno rečeno, recimo u razdoblju socrealizma, koje počinje u drugoj polovini dvadesetoga stoljeća, postoji vrlo jasna, na neki način, ciljna grupa u komunikaciji umjetnosti i društva, politike i ideologije. Ali to postupno kopni u trenutku kada, tamo negdje pedesetih godina (sad je to već jedna povijest u koju je teško ulaziti ovako na brzinu i čisto usmeno) kada umjetnost zapravo stječe tu svoju autonomiju u socijalističkom društvu i umjetnici, generalno rečeno, smatraju da se i ne bi trebali baviti upravo ovim problemima, jer su se oni i te kako na neki način opekli, ili njihovi prethodnici koji su radili u socrealizmu, tim odnosom politike i umjetnosti.

E onda se, to bi sad trebalo povijesno pratiti, krizama socijalizma, gubitka njegovih homogenih struktura, njegova uspona i tako dalje, i njegovim pukotinama, javljaju se sada upadi ovih umjetnika poput Miće Popovića, poput Novoga kolektivizma unutar toga korpusa i oni počinju izazivati te reakcije javnosti ili reakcije politike. Ali pitanje je jesu li i oni bili svjesni konzekvencija koje će se dogoditi. Možda ta intencija provokacije nije bila toliko ciljana nego se ona dogodila zapravo u kontekstu u kojem se zapravo ta politička atmosfera već tada jako kontaminirala na razne načine. Ili su to zapravo okolnosti, konteksti u kojima se smatralo...

MŠ: A možda se upravo radi, ako se krene sa stajališta...

JD: Da.

MŠ: ...teorije zavjere...

JD: Da.

MŠ: ...da su zapravo oba projekta...

JD: Da.

MŠ: ...bila projekta koja su u sebi računala na nešto.

JD: Na nešto.

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MŠ: A s druge strane ta zabrana izložbe dovodi do toga da je on sve slike rasprodao.

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: Da je to bila veoma uspješna operacija. Ili s druge strane s Neue slowenische Kunst: je li zapravo slovenska politika toga doba podržala taj projekt s tom vrstom provokacije i da je zapravo čitava jedna kulturalno-politička situacija omogućila da se izvede takva vrsta djela. Što znači da mi možda, kad govorimo o odnosu umjetnost – publika, imamo situacije gdje veliko društvo nije zainteresirano za određene umjetničke akte, čak i u nekom imanentno umjetničkom smislu provokacije. I tada se to događa u okviru profesionalne publike, slučajne publike ili nekakve intelektualno umjetničke publike. I da ima druga situacija, a to je ona situacija u kojoj zapravo postoji nekakav interes između političkih centara moći ili kulturnih centara moći, tada umjetnost biva, ne instrumentalizirana, jer umjetnost nije nevinna u tom smislu...

JD: Da, nije.

MŠ: ...njezine su ruke jednako prljave, jer se i ona zapravo koristi tim centrom moći da bi se kroz to eksponirala i realizirala svoje djelovanje. Ja ovo ne govorim ni u pozitivnom ni u negativnom smislu. Jednostavno, to su neki mehanizmi.

JD: Da, da. To je sad vrlo složeno pitanje jer to dolazi u trenutku kada se spoznaje da taj neutralni status umjetnosti u socijalizmu na izvjestan način demobilizira umjetnost. Na neki način nema žešću vitalnu energiju u sebi i pojedini umjetnici moguće i da traže zaoštrenje. Sad na neki način možda kroz sam jezik, kroz medije, kroz ovo... Ali ovdje se doista događa, i to bi sad možda bilo potrebno izvršiti jednu vrstu analize, koji su doista politički profili stajališta ideologije tih aktera ovih događaja o kojima smo sad govorili i jesu li oni doista to učinili stratejski, dugoročno, planski, da bi, na neki način, ubrizgali taj svoj stav u jednu kulturnu klimu, situaciju u kojoj...

MŠ: Možda je to onako kako su u stvari... kako su art-languageovci upotrijebili taj termin „heuristički“. Oni su to učinili „heuristički“, znači to vjerojatno nije bio jasan plan u svim aspektima. Bilo je kretanje između nekakvog planiranja i očekivanja da će javno mnijenje i institucije reagirati, i nekakvih intuitivnih zahvata koji su se tome konfrontirali.

JD: Konfrontirali...

MŠ: ... i ta heuristička dimenzija mislim da je bitna. Ali možda se

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ovdje postavlja ono pitanje, da se vratimo na početak, na Nikinu intervenciju, a to je zapravo „što je publika“. Možda je pitanje u stvari u odnosu što je zapravo razlog ili smisao umjetnosti u jednom vremenu, u jednoj kulturi ili u nekakvom globalnom društvenom prostoru. Jer taj smisao, na primjer u vrijeme modernizma (pa bio to ovdašnji socijalistički ili internacionalni) i danas, očigledno nije isti. I mehanizmi funkcioniranja nisu isti, što znači da je sam razlog zašto se određene umjetničke prakse uspostavljaju, kako funkcioniraju, još važnije – kako se podržavaju – određen zapravo nekakvom globalnom situacijom u društvu i kulturi.

Zašto, na primjer, bijenala, trijenala u prošlosti i bijenala, trijenala danas imaju sasvim različiti efekt i funkciju. U jednom vremenu to su bile manifestacije, prije svega, identifikacijske u kojima se jedno društvo potvrđivalo da ono razvija, omogućava autonomiju umjetnosti. Vjerojatno je tako i trijenale jugoslavenske umjetnosti i ovdje nastajao. Danas su izložbe trijenalnog ili bijenalnog tipa dijelovi nekakvih mreža i internacionalizacija koji postavljaju horizont sličnih diskursa, sličnih tipova produkcije i prekrivaju zapravo ovaj planet jednom tom mrežom kao takvom u kojoj je umjetnik jedan, zapravo, upotrijebljeni igrač da bi se stvorila jedna mrežna situacija. Evo jedna situacija s kojom sam ja Niku iznenadio kad sam u Armeniji našao katalog njihova bijenala, u katalogu se nalazi njezin rad napisan... (smijeh)

JD (smijeh)

MŠ: ...koji je napisan armenskim jezikom. Ja sam vidio i rekao: „Pazi, Nika je u Armeniji a nije mi rekla da je izlagala.“ A zapravo ona nije ni znala da je bila na tom bijenalu.

JD: A kako piše?

MŠ: Onim armenskim slovima.

JD: Može se pročitati?

MŠ: Pa... samo se po liku prepoznaje.

JD: A samo po liku (smijeh)...

MŠ: To su bile fotke. Drugim riječima, bijenalne, trijenalne izložbe danas su jedna vrsta kulturalne prakse i politike koja zapravo više nema u okviru nacionalne kulture identifikaciju, već ima jednu vrstu realizacije koja je upućena, da kažemo, globalnoj mreži umjetničkih praksi.

JD: Pa evo dok su na primjer ova dva primjera o kojima smo malo prije govorili zapravo svojom političnošću iziritirala sredinu. Ako uzmemo sad ovaj posljednji Oktobarski salon koji je bio eminentno

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politička umjetnost. Tu se... Ovdje se dolazi gotovo do suprotne ideje. Traži se upravo da to budu radovi impregnirani nekom političkom porukom, nekim odnosom spram nekakva fenomena koji se može čitati politički. Jer kad toga ne bi bilo, gotovo ne bi nikoga – ili ne bi kustose koji su danas upregnuti u organizaciju ovakvih velikih priredbi – to zanimalo. Ne bi ih izazivalo, ne bi ih pobuđivalo na uključivanje. Ali što sada to govori? Govori s jedne strane da se društvo promijenilo, da ono više nema osjetljivosti ni prema kakvom tabuu, znači nema više neprikosnovene političke figure kao što je bilo nekada, nema nekakvog ideološkog modela koji se ne može dovesti u pitanje. Prema tome sve je tu dopušteno i dozvoljeno. A s druge strane opet traži se od umjetnika da bude jedan aktivni politički subjekt, da participira u dramama, krizama suvremenoga svijeta, jer ako to ne radi onda se čini kao da je to jedna osoba koja je ili po strani, ili nema svijesti o dobu u kojem živi i onda njegov rad jednostavno nije toliko, ili nije uopće, zanimljiv. A s druge strane opet te politizacije koje se sada vrše i izlažu, one ne samo, dakle, što se toleriraju, nego su one dobro došle, one se i potiču, ali se negdje uklapaju u jedan drugi kontekst koji... koji njih sada na neki način razoružava, čini ih bezopasnima jer, ne samo što se događaju u kontekstu „sve je dopušteno“, nego se zapravo zbivaju u kontekstu jedne nove klime koja se rado promovira i rado forsira, klime političke korektnosti. I onda, zapravo, te izjave, koje se sada nalaze često puta unutar sadržaja ovih umjetničkih djela, na neki način gotovo opet konformistički pogađaju u ono što se očekuje da se kaže. Ali kad se to ne kaže, nego kada se iskoči u nešto drugo, ili kada se zanemari ovakva situacija, onda može nastupiti neko novo zaoštrenje ili trenje između umjetnika i javnosti, između (dakle) umjetnosti i politike, i onda bi se moglo govoriti o čemu se sad iznova radi u ovom odnosu.









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# Nika Radić, *For the Viewer*, two channel video installation, 2008/09.

Transcript of the text

Nika Radić (off): When we talked last time, a spoke about the audience...

Ješa Denegri: Yes... yes...

NR: ... and then, you, Miško said one should really talk about reception...

JD: Reception...

NR: ... or rather the recipient.

JD: Yes, that's right.

NR: Why? What is the difference?

Miško Šuvaković: Audience – recipient? The difference is quite big. European tradition, European esthetic tradition is defined for one recipient and the recipient is the one to whom the work is addressed. In European theories of art he is usually universalized: a white, male, heterosexual, a European who enjoys the work of art, who receives it. And the work is received outside of a social context, outside of a cultural context. It is received in a direct way in the autonomous space of art. On the other hand, the idea of an audience comprises a world of art that is in within the framework of a society, a culture and within that framework a reception process is going on. This process of reception is not just an individual esthetic experience or an esthetic reception, but it is a kind of collective participation, complicity, understanding, accepting, identification. It actually means an establishment of a collective body or a collective subject. This is quite a big difference and almost until today the idea of a collective subject, an audience, has not been considered. It has predominantly been considered, for example, in respect to cinema. It has been considered in respect to theatre or public manifestations. Concerning what we call fine arts, or visual arts, the idea doesn't appear before the time when cultural studies or the studies of popular culture become more and more applied to the understanding, explaining or curatorial organization of that art.

Actually, with the big biennial exhibitions, so characteristic these last years, the idea of a collective audience, and the relations towards it, is starting to take form, which is then also extended to a successful museum. What is a successful museum? It is one

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that has a big flow of visitors. A traditional museum, modernistic museum, doesn't really have an audience. Here's a short anecdote I always find funny. I was in Poznan in March. There is a big museum there and the museum has all of Polish 20<sup>th</sup> century painting with excellent examples of the avant-garde, abstract art, expressionism, social-realism, modernism etc. I arrived two hours before closing, wanted to get in (it was my only opportunity to visit it) but they told me at the ticket counter they cannot let me in because the museum will be closed in two hours. I insisted and explained that I would miss it since I was leaving town. Then they let me but three guards followed me during the whole time I walked around three of four floors of the big building.

A similar thing happened to me several months later in the museum in Vienna where I showed up an hour, or half an hour before closing and the visitors came, some just went to have coffee, others went to the shop and some ran through the show to have a look. Two totally different concepts. One is functioning as an institution working with the public, within the framework of micro cultural policies, and another institution that actually works as a guardian of the big, national, state, cultural heritage where the public is insignificant, unimportant.

NR: You worked in a museum, didn't you?

JD: I did.

NR: Was that important to you?

JD: Well you know how it is. It was that socialist time and there was a special department in charge of public relations, as we would say nowadays, meaning working with schools, companies. We used to have a curator, a small department with three or four curators and their assistants that took care of that. And sometimes, if it was Sunday or a holiday, then the curator on duty had to give a tour for the public or some visitors if they had an appointment. So that component played a part within the ruling idea of the socialization of art and all the rest that is typical for a museum in socialism. With time, due to circumstances and the person running it, that department transformed, in a sort of a unit that engaged in education on a higher level. This meant not just giving a guided tour to accidental passers by or school children, for who it was very difficult for him, not to speak of other curators, to find the right measure of what to say to someone so young and uninformed. But yes, since you are asking, in general the museum did take this into account, there was a department and it was some sort of a concern.

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What the impacts were, is difficult to say. We, as curators, found it to be a... a sort of a burden. It was simply difficult to find a way to talk to these visitors. The easiest thing to do was to hold on to a very well known work, talk a bit about the artist's biography, this and that, so this relation was not built much. I mean, there was no methodology, no experience. It was gained during these relations and with time it somehow died out. Just as on the one hand the attention of the companies died out (that used to send their workers and give them free tickets), the primary and secondary school programs formed in such a way that they didn't include visits to museums so this stopped and ever since it is difficult to say whether a museum, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art, had a target audience for the exhibitions it organized or whether it was, to put it that way, the art and culture public of Belgrade and beyond. Even then you had to count on a very heterogeneous group of connoisseurs, artists, critics, historians to enthusiasts that visited the shows. Then, if we're getting into details, this department was formed and it had its visitors. There were seminars, courses. Many people testified afterwards that they made their first contacts with art in those courses by Kosta Bogdanović (there, to name the person running them). Some decided to become closer to art, some even became artists outside of the, let's say, regular school education at the academy etc. And this component played a part in the museum policy, apart, of course, the rest as making of big exhibitions, retrospectives, current shows, purchases... all the rest that makes the policy of a museum.

NR: Miško, you were a visitor ...

JD (laughing)

MŠ: Yes

NR: ...of the same museum. What was your opinion?

MŠ: I have several memories connected to that museum, quite important ones. I was one of the participants, when I was fifteen, sixteen, of Kosta Bogdanović's courses.

JD (laughing) Is that so?

MŠ: Somewhere ...

JD: Nika, there you go... (laughing)

MŠ: ...somewhere around sixty nine, seventy, I came for the first time to the course, but the museum...

JD: I didn't know that. (laughing)

MŠ: ...the museum brought two experiences for me. One was a very personal one, a childhood experience. When I was, maybe,

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ten, eleven, my mother and father took me to the museum and I saw something very important. I saw the white bride by Gabriel Stupica that was doodled in the same way that I used to unsuccessfully draw in my ignorance and that was enlightening. Someone really did that and I was right, which was even more important to my conflict prone personality (laughing). And for me that was very much connected to the museum and that museum, however it later developed, it was a place where I encountered something that was significant in my life, this Gabriel Stupica. This woman drawn in almost a childlike way. The other experience associated with that museum is connected to later periods. It was the ... actually after I attended the courses by Kosta Bogdanovič, I used to come to exhibitions occasionally or quite often, let's say at least once a month, and looked at art works and the experience... even today I can recall the feeling, no one is around and I am walking on the parquet... the museum used to have parquet floors...

JD: yes...

MŠ: ...the parquet is creaking and, with a little delay, I hear also behind me the parquet creaking. Since there was nobody around, there was always a guard or two following me. And for me this is the idea of a socialist museum, and I confirmed it this year in Poznań, the parquet creaking.

JD (laughing)

MŠ: The audience coming from the outside is actually a stranger in the museum and the whole institution is irritated, confused and wonders what is it that this person wants, even if he is fifteen. This is, in a way, my experience of the way this kind of museum used to function

But this brings us to a more general question. A question, a question... and this is maybe your question about the audience, that I also thought about in the meantime, and the question is what is an audience or what is the world in which art takes place. Whom does art really address? And there is always a sort of a schizophrenic, or partly schizophrenic hiatus between the facts that there is a certain public opinion that art will address (no matter if it is a small gallery, student gallery, commercial gallery or a big museum). There is a sort of a general, unidentified knowledge, which implies a certain collective that is macro-collective, subject of a certain culture. And, on the other hand, there are concrete worlds of art that is addressed pretty much by any professional exhibition or manifestation in a museum or gallery. Those are actually

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the professionals that are addressed by another professional challenge. And this is something that has been constructed in these surroundings for a long time. Not only in this surroundings. One of my big experiences was when I came to the John Weber gallery in New York. I read about that gallery all my life, I thought it was the center of power, that several computers sit there, several curators and that they run the planet. And actually, I came into a gallery that was absolutely empty. You had to ring the bell for someone to let you in. An insignificant work by a significant artist was the only thing exhibited. And everything was just a formal place. A site that wasn't important. And exactly this, maybe it is because the ideal professional audience was something that modernism developed carefully for a long time, an audience that consisted of other artists, critics, curators, dealers and their entourage: girlfriends, boyfriends, husbands, wives, lovers, partners and others...

JD (laughing)

MŠ: ...but this is actually the inner circle and we have this two totally different spheres. One is the sphere of an abstract public opinion. The other sphere is a historical, geographical, for any given culture well defined art world. And finally something that appears nowadays, the expectation that a museum is an instrument in the cultural industry. It isn't the cultural policy, as it used to be in socialism, but cultural industry. Average citizens are expected to be brought into the museum in one way or another and they have to be the mass enabling the museum to reproduce it's meaning and it's reason of existence. So these three worlds seem to me to be the audience and the world in which all of it is taking place. And the policy, whether that of the museum, gallery or an artist, takes place between these three worlds.

NR: Do you agree?

JD: Well ok, you know, the audience is, to continue this and what I have already said... I believe... it is actually an extremely heterogeneous aggregate for which it is difficult to define which layers it has. We can start with the lowest: for example enthusiasts that will spend a couple of hours on a Sunday morning or some other day in a month and visit a museum. Our museum, for example, was out of the way. It wasn't easy to reach. We had a phenomenon that the majority of visitors came at the opening and the day after, and all the other days, hardly anyone would come. However the other audience, which was taken care of in a way, it consisted of informed people, professionals, painters, artists, critics,

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colleagues from this and other scenes. So I think that within this phenomenon, this category, one should understand, it seems to me, very different recipients, to use the today's language of art. And somewhere there lies the strategy of the people running museums, those who make exhibitions, those that address the public and the question is being asked which public is it that is being addressed by a certain exhibition and so on. Last time we met, you also asked me whether there was anybody taken into account, as the shows were made, or was it simply the author of the exhibition, be it one person or a smaller team or, in this case, an institution like a museum. Did they take anybody into account or did they simply perform their tasks according to some methodologies ...

NR: Yes, we said that there was the difference between this general public ...

JD: ...yes...

NR: ... and a recipient. And you Miško said that the recipient was... what was it? White, male, heterosexual...

JD (laughing)

MŠ: In principle European.

NR: European.

MŠ: But this is, so to say, the big modernist audience paradigm, the recipient for which esthetics was constructed. Terry Eagleton in his book "The Ideology of the Esthetic" put it nice and simple: "Esthetics is a discipline made in bourgeois societies for the middle class that needs a field for the identification of freedom, and the field is the area of the esthetic and the artistic". And that is the traditional model. Of course it doesn't exist in such a way today, but in some parts it remained. If you talk to a movie director, or a theatre director, they will count on a numerous audience, and not an audience that is a specialized individual. In general, if one talks to a painter, sculptor, photographer, video artist, they usually don't even think about an audience. They put themselves as a problem and solve it through it. Or they fulfill an assignment given by the curator, whatever that means, explicitly or implicitly. Or they actually become someone who has an ideal individual they are talking to, with whom they discuss problems; someone with whom they stand in an internal dialogue will solve the work. But to strategically put: "I will make a work and cause a certain public opinion", that happens very seldom. Most of the other works take place in an internal relation ...

JD: Yes.



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MŠ: ...and this is the paradox of the time we live in. A large number of contemporary artists in the late nineties and the beginning of this century work in the area of cultural practices. Their practices appear to be, they look like, actions, like interventions, in the questions of war, social security, questions of prostitution, delinquency etc. – all those cultural practices where an artist appears as an interventionist. But all of this artists, or most of them, and this is the paradox, actually count on the fact that the work, however it was made or appeared to be documentary or interventional, will finally be presented and read through the context of the autonomy of art. And this is the mechanism that it built into it today. In other words, the relation to the audience, or the censorship of the audience, is something that has been developed in visual arts for two hundred years and the rare moments when the artist had to make a breach, a “violation” in Batailles words, this when the artist really counted on a public opinion. But those are rare moments.

NR: So is provocation then something that directly counts on an audience?

MŠ: In principle provocation and identification. But the problem is that the visual arts are loosing their function of identification these last fifty, sixty, seventy years. It keeps moving to different areas and the artists that take public opinion into account, they will run towards provocations. Or something that looks like a provocation and doesn't really have to be a provocation. But I am afraid that there is very little art that provokes by the work alone. Most of art provokes in the sense of an interaction of the work and the context and it is the contextual questions of the art work that have to be put in motion.

JD: Yes. But for example this what Miško mentioned, the two examples of Mića Popović and the forbidden exhibition and then the group Irwin. They happen at a moment in time when the artist and the group... actually it wasn't Irwin, but Novi kolektivizam (New Collectivism).

MŠ: Novi kolektivizam.

JD: A branch of Neue slowenische Kunst...

MŠ: Neue slowenische Kunst.

JD: ... to be precise, not to mix up with Irwin because it's not the same thing. So this was happening at a moment in time when these art subjects, let's call them that, include a political component in their strategies. The thinks we talked before about, this was actually

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taking place during the domination of modernism on the Yugoslav scene, the art scene, when the general opinion was that art had an autonomy, that it had its qualities as visual language, plastic qualities etc and that the motive or content part was, if not totally irrelevant, but certainly secondary to the way the artist phrased his statement. There was a point, when there was a shift from the esthetic problems that were the main concern of the post social realism artists. Because, if we're into that, historically speaking, during the period of socialist realism, that started in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a very clear target group for the communication of art and society, politics and ideology. But that slowly dissolves as art, somewhere in the fifties (this is now a history that is difficult to get into like this... quickly and speaking like this), the art actually gained its autonomy in the socialist society and the artists, in general, believed they shouldn't get into these topics because they got quite scorched, or their predecessors that worked in the socialist realism did, by this relation of politics and art.

And then, this should be historically followed, with the crisis of socialism, the loss of its homogenous structures, its raise, cracks etc. the incursions of artists such as Mića Popović, as Novi kolektivizam occur within this body and they start causing public reactions of reactions by the politics. But the question of whether they were conscious of the consequences still remains. Maybe the intention to provoke wasn't that planned but rather happened in a context in which the political atmosphere was already so contaminated in many ways.. or maybe it was the circumstances, the context in which it was considered ...

MŠ: But maybe it is exactly that, if we start from a point of view...

JD: Yes.

MŠ: of a conspiracy theory...

JD: Yes.

MŠ: ... that both projects...

JD: Yes.

MŠ: ...were projects that implicitly counted on something.

JD: Something.

MŠ: And on the other hand, the stoppage of the exhibition caused that he sold all of the paintings.

JD (laughing)

MŠ: It was a very successful operation. And on the other hand, with Neue Slowenische Kunst: the Slovenian politics of the time

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actually supported the project and it's provocation and it was actually a whole cultural and political situation that made such a work possible. It means that maybe there are situations, when we are talking about the relationships between art and the public, when the public is not interested for certain acts, even in an immanently artistic sense of provocation. Those are the times when it happens within the professional audience or an intellectual-art audience. But there is also another situation, a situation where there is an interest of political centers of power or cultural centers of power, and in this situations the art becomes, not instrumentalized, because art isn't innocent in this sense...

JD: No, it isn't.

MŠ: ...it's hands are also dirty, because it is also using the center of power to get exposure and realize its effect. I don't say this whether in a positive, or in a negative sense. These are simply some mechanisms.

JD: Yes, yes. This is a very complicated question because it appears at a time when we realize that this neutral status of art in socialism in a way demobilizes art. In a way it doesn't have a more powerful vital energy and it is possible that some artists want a sharpening of the situation. Maybe through the media itself, the language, this and that... But something is really happening, and maybe it would be necessary to do a sort of an analysis, what are the real political profiles and the ideological positions of the performers of the occurrences we just mentioned and did they do this strategically, on the long run, was it planned to inject their opinion into a cultural environment, a situation that...

MŠ: maybe it is like what... as Art & Language used the term "heuristic". They did it in an "heuristic" way, meaning that it probably wasn't a clear plan in all of its aspects. It was rather a maneuver between something planned. an expectation of reactions from the public and the institutions and some intuitive actions that confronted all that.

JD: confronted...

MŠ: ... and I believe that this heuristic dimension is essential. But maybe the question is posed here, to get back to the beginning, to Nika's intervention, and that is actually: "What is the audience?" Maybe the question is really about what the reason or meaning of art in a certain time, culture or a global cultural space is. Because this meaning during the time of modernism (whether it was the socialistic one here or an international one) and today is obviously

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not the same. And the mechanisms of their functioning are not the same which means that the reason why some practices are being introduced, how they function and, more important, how they are supported, they are really determined by a global situation within a society and culture.

Why do, for example, biennials and triennials in the past and biennials and triennials today have a totally different effect and function. At one time they were, first of all, manifestations of identification that a society used to identify and to confirm that it develops and enables the autonomy of art. That is probably also how the Yugoslav triennial here came to be. The biennial and triennial exhibitions today are parts of networks and internationalizations that set up a horizon of similar discourses, similar productions and actually cover the planet with a net as such, in which the artist is, in fact, a used player in order to create this network. Here is a situation where I surprised Nika when I found in Armenia the catalogue of their biennial and in the catalogue was one of her works, written... (laughing)

JD (laughing)

MŠ: ...written in Armenian letters. I saw it and said: “Look, Nika is in Armenia and she never told me she exhibited“ while in fact she didn’t even know she was in the biennial.

JD: But how is it written?

MŠ: With the Armenian letters.

JD: Can you read it?

MŠ: Well... you only recognize the face.

JD: Only the face (laughing)

MŠ: It was photographs. In other words, biennial, triennial exhibitions today are a sort of cultural practice and politics that doesn’t identify within the national culture, but has a sort of realization that addresses, let’s say, a global network of art practices.

JD: But, for instance, these two examples we mentioned before actually irritated their surroundings by being political. If we take this last October Salon (Oktobarski Salon), that was definitely political art. It is ... we arrive at almost an opposed idea. It is expected that this works be impregnated with a political message, a relation towards a phenomenon that can be read as political. Because if that wasn’t so, almost nobody – or the curators that are the ones organizing this big manifestations – they wouldn’t be interested. It wouldn’t pose them a challenge it wouldn’t enhance

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them to include. But what is this saying? On one hand it says that the society has changed, that it is not sensitive to any taboo anymore, meaning there is no more unquestionable political figure as there used to be, there is no more ideological model one can not question. So anything is allowed and permitted. On the other hand artists are requested to be an active political subject, to participate in the dramas and crisis of contemporary world, because if it weren't so, it seems it is a person in the margins, or is not conscious of the time he lives in and his work is then simply not that, or not at all, interesting. On the other hand, all this politicizing that is being carried on and exhibited, they are not only tolerated, but also welcome. They are supported but somehow fit into a different context that... that disarms them in a way, makes them harmless because not only are they happening in a context of "anything goes", but are actually happening in a context of new circumstances that are gladly promoted and gladly pushed, the circumstances of political correctness. And now these statements, that are often parts of the content of these art works, in a way, hit what is expected to be said in a conformist way. And if it is not so, but there is a transfer to something else, or if such a situation is ignored, if this is ignored... this situation, then a new sharpening can occur or a friction between the artist and the public, between the arts and the politics and then we could talk again what is it that this relation is about.



Party MSU Zg, trokanalna video instalacija za LED ekran na fasadi



zgrade Muzeja suvremene umjetnosti, Zagreb prosinac 2009.





Nika Radić. Fotografija: Georg Elben



## **Nika Radić: Moramo se razgovarati**

Nakladnik	Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti <b>Gliptoteka</b>
Za nakladnika	akademik Pavao Rudan
Urednica	Ariana Kralj, upraviteljica
Recenzent	akademik Šime Vulas
Tekstovi	Niklas Luhmann, Katalin Timar, Miško Šuvaković. Rolf Wienkotter, Nika Radić
Prijevod	Niklas Luhmann, Komunikacija nije vjerojatna; Nika Radić s engleskog na hrvatski Razgovor Katalin Timar i Nike Radić; Nika Radić s engleskog na hrvatski Miško Šuvaković, Reception; Milena Benini, s hrvatskog na engleski Razgovor Rolfa Wienköttera i Nike Radić; Nika Radić s njemačkog na engleski, Anela Đukan s engleskog i njemačkog na hrvatski Transkript videa „Za promatrača“; Žarko Anić Antić sa srpskog na hrvatski Žarko Anić Antić
Lektor	Georg Elben, Nika Radić
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