FORUM
OF SLAVIC
CULTURES

SLEDI V ZRAKU
РИСУНКИ ИЗ ВОЗДУХА
TRAGOVI U VAZDUHU
TRACINGS OUT OF THIN AIR

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CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana

316.73:7

SLEDI v zraku = Risunki iz vozduha = Tragovi u vazduhu = Tracings out of thin air / [avtorji tekstov Doris Arztmann, Eva Egermann ... [et al.] ; uredniki Marina Gržinić ... [et al.] ; prevod v slovenski jezik Marina Gržinić, Jovita Pristovšek, prevod v ruski jezik Alexander Ivanov, Joana Monbaron, prevod v srbski jezik Aneta Stojnić, prevod v angleški jezik iz ruskega jezika (text by Ayman Eckford) Joana Monbaron]. - Ljubljana : Mednarodna ustanova Forum slovanskih kultur = International Foundation Forum of Slavic Cultures, 2018

ISBN 978-961-94274-3-9
1. Vzp. stv. nasl. 2. Arztmann, Doris 3. Gržinić, Marina
293382656

SLEDI V ZRAKU

Vzpostavljanje praks upora
in sodelujočih skupnosti v umetnosti in kulturi

РИСУНКИ ИЗ ВОЗДУХА

Конструирование сообществ
и практик сопротивления в искусстве и культуре

TRAGOVI U VAZDUHU

Uspostavljanje praksi otpora
i sudelujućih zajednica u umetnosti i kulturi

TRACINGS OUT OF THIN AIR

Establishing oppositional practices
and collaborative communities in art and culture

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FORUM
SLOVANSKIH
KULTUR

Mednarodna ustanova Forum slovanskih kultur, s sedežem v Ljubljani, je nastala leta 2004 na pobudo slovanske kulturniške srenje, danes pa povezuje že 300 milijonov Slovanov iz desetih držav clanic, Belorusije, Bolgarije, Bosne in Hercegovine, Črne gore, Hrvaške, Makedonije, Ruske federacije, Slovenije, Srbije in Ukrajine ter treh držav opazovalk, Češke republike, Poljske in Slovaške.

Forum slovanskih kultur aktivno povezuje in predstavlja slovansko kulturo, znanost in umetnost, ustvarjalni naboj in dedišcino, ter skrbi za prepoznaven prispevek h globalnemu kulturnemu dialogu. Projekte sodelovanja v slovanskem, evropskem in globalnem kulturnem okolju izvaja na podrocjih literature, jezikoslovja in prevodoslovja, muzeologije in arhivistike, izobraževanja, gledališca in glasbe.

OŽIVČUJEMO KREATIVNOST SLOVANSKIH KULTUR

FORUM
OF SLAVIC
CULTURES

The International Foundation Forum of Slavic Cultures, based in Ljubljana in Slovenia, was founded in 2004 on the initiative of Slavic cultural circles, so today it unites more than 300 million Slavs from ten member countries, Belarus, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Russia, Slovenia, Serbia and Ukraine, and three observer countries, Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia.

The Forum actively links and presents Slavic culture, science and art, their creative energy and heritage, while we also cultivate the recognizable contribution of Slavic cultures to the global cultural dialogue. The cooperation projects in the Slavic, European and global cultural areas are carried out in the fields of literature, linguistics and translation, museology and archive studies, education, theatre, architecture, film and music.

NERVING THE CREATIVITY OF SLAVIC CULTURES

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PREDGOVOR

V Mednarodni ustanovi Forum slovanskih kultur že od leta 2014 oživčujemo kreativnost slovanskih kultur. Naše temeljne vrednote se zrcalijo v različnih projektih in aktivnostih. Te so enakopravno in demokratično sodelovanje vseh slovanskih držav v globalnem kulturnem dialogu, spodbujanje, podpora in krepitev izražanja slovanske duhovne kulture, ustvarjalnosti ter inovativnosti in sodelovanje po načelu spoštovanja različnosti, strpnosti, odprtosti in vzajemnosti.

V časih, ko so ta načela pogosto le črke na papirju, enakopravnost in demokratičnost pa vsakodnevno na preizkušnji, smo z veseljem in odgovornostjo podprli idejni projekt Sledi v zraku ter se odločili za izdajo publikacije z istoimenskim naslovom.

S tem poskušamo konstruktivno prispevati k pogovorom o boljši prihodnosti več kot 300 milijonov pripadnikov številnih slovanskih narodov, ki so obenem Evropejci v polnem pomenu te besede, in o boljšem jutri vseh državljanov sveta.

Z obravnavanjem teme hendikepa in prepletanja študij hendikepa s kulturo, umetnostjo in socialnim delom ter z »javnim« premišljevanjem, kaj so subjektivnost, enakost, spoštovanje in opolnomočenje vseh, gradimo nove mostove in z njimi omogočamo poglobljen vpogled v fenomen hendikepa.

Iskrena hvala urednikom, piscem znanstvenih prispevkov in vsem ostalim, s katerimi smo se srečali pri nastajanju te publikacije. S svojim delom prinašajo zavedanje, kako pomembno je sleherno opozarjanje, v novodobni terminologiji izražena promocija tematike hendikepa za razširitev lastnih horizontov, pa tudi horizontov naše kulture ter kultur drugih. To je hkrati edinstven način vzpostavljanja vezi skozi medkulturni dialog, ki spodbuja medsebojno poznavanje in razumevanje ter spoštuje in ohranja kulturno raznolikost.

Ravno slednje je ena temeljnih vrednot mednarodne ustanove Forum slovanskih kultur, ki ji sledimo tudi s projektom Sledi v zraku. Verjamemo, da bomo sledi pustili tudi na zemlji ter v ljudeh. Danes in jutri.

Vse dobro,

Dr. Andreja Rihter
Direktorica Foruma slovanskih kultur

ВСТУПИТЕЛЬНОЕ СЛОВО

С начала 2014 года основной задачей Международного фонда «Форум славянских культур» является приумножение творческой энергии славянских культур. Наши главные ценности отражены в различных проектах и мероприятиях. Эти ценности – равенство и демократическое сотрудничество всех славянских стран в глобальном культурном диалоге, продвижение и укрепление самовыражения славянской культуры, её творческого потенциала и инноваций, а также поддержка сотрудничества, основанного на принципах уважения многообразия, толерантности, открытости и взаимности.

Во времена, когда эти принципы выполняются лишь на бумаге, а равенство и демократия ежедневно сталкиваются с трудностями, мы с радостью поддержали концепцию проекта «Рисунки из воздуха» и приняли решение выпустить одноименную публикацию.

Таким образом мы надеемся внести конструктивный вклад в дискуссию о лучшем будущем для более 300 миллионов жителей славянских стран, которые являются европейцами в полном смысле этого слова, и завтрашнем дне для всех граждан мира.

Обращаясь к теме инвалидности и соединяя исследования инвалидности с культурой, искусством и социальной работой, тем самым заставляя «публику» думать о том, что такое субъективность, равноправие, уважение и расширение прав и возможностей самых разных людей, мы строим новые мосты для глубокого понимания этого феномена.

Я выражаю искреннюю благодарность редакторам и авторам статей, а также всем тем, с кем нам посчастливилось взаимодействовать в ходе реализации данной публикации. Проделанная работа показывает важность разговора об инвалидности сквозь призму новых терминологий, расширяющих наши собственные горизонты и горизонты наших культур. В то же время это уникальный способ коммуникации посредством межкультурного диалога, способствующего стремлению к взаимному познанию и пониманию, а также к уважению и сохранению культурного разнообразия.

Последнее является одной из фундаментальных ценностей международного «Форума славянских культур», ценности, которой мы остаемся верны, оказывая поддержку проекту «Рисунки из воздуха». Мы искренне верим, что оставим следы на земле, а также в сознании людей. Сегодня и завтра.

С наилучшими пожеланиями,

Д-р Андреа Рихтер
Директор «Форума славянских культур»

PREDGOVOR

Internacionalna fondacija Forum za slovenske kulture je od početka 2014. godine postavila za cilj umrežavanje kreativnosti slovenskih kultura. Naše centralne vrednosti ogledaju se u različitim projektima i aktivnostima. Te vrednosti su jednakost i demokratska saradnja svih slovenskih zemalja u globalnom kulturalnom dijalogu, promocija, podrška i osnaživanje različitih formi ekspresije slovenske kulture, njene kreativnosti i inovantnosti, kao i podrška saradnji na principima poštovanja različitosti, tolerancije, otvorenosti i reciprociteta.

U vremenima kada su ti principi često prazno parče hartije, a jednakost i demokratija nailaze na svakodnevne izazove, mi smo sa radošću i odgovornošću podržali koncept projekta Tragovi u vazduhu i odlučili da izdamo publikaciju istog imena.

Na taj način, pokušali smo da damo konstruktivan doprinos razgovorima o boljoj budućnosti više od 300 miliona članova mnogih slovenskih zemalja koje su istovremeno i evropske u punom smislu te reči, i da doprinesemo boljoj budućnosti svih građana sveta.

Baveći se problemom hendikepa i povezivanjem studija hendikepa sa kulturom, umetnošću i socijalnim radom – stimulišući “javno” razmišljanje o tome šta su subjektivnost, jednakost, poštovanje i osnaživanje svih – gradimo nove mostove preko kojih prenosimo dubok uvid u u postojanje i uslove hendikepa.

Iskreno se zahvaljujem urednicima i piscima naučnih radova kao i svima drugima sa kojima smo morali da se sretnemo u toku realizacije ove publikacije. Svojim radom preneli su svest o značaju izražavanja i promocije osoba sa hendikepom kroz nove terminologije, kao bi se proširili njihovi horizonti i kulture, kako i horizonti i kulture mnogih drugih. Ovo je istovremeno jedinstven način uspostavljanja veza kroz interkulturalni dijalog, koji promoviše međusobno prepoznavanje, znanje i razumevanje u prilog poštovanju i očuvanju kulturalnog diverziteta.

Upravo je ovo poslednje jedna od fundamentalnih vrednosti Internacionalne fondacije Forum slovenskih kultura, kojoj ostajemo verni kroz podršku projektu Tragovi u vazduhu. Verujemo da ćemo ostaviti tragove na zemlji kao i u ljudima. Danas i sutra.

S najboljim mislima,

Dr. Andreja Rihter
Direktor Foruma slovenskih kultura

FOREWORD

Since 2014 the International Foundation Forum of Slavic Cultures has had as its goal nerving the creativity of Slavic cultures. Our core values are mirrored in various projects and activities. These values are the equal and democratic cooperation of all Slavic countries in the global cultural dialogue, the promotion, support, and strengthening of expressions of Slavic culture, as well as its creativity and innovation, and support of the cooperation on the principles of respect for diversity, tolerance, openness, and reciprocity.

At a time when these principles are often an empty piece of paper, and equality and democracy are challenged on a daily basis, we have gladly and responsibly sustained the concept of the project Tracings Out of Thin Air and have decided to issue a publication with the same name.

By doing so we are trying to contribute constructively to talks about a better future of the more than 300 million members of many Slavic nations that are at the same time Europeans in its full sense, and as well to contribute to a better future of all citizens of the world.

By addressing the issue of disability and linking the studies on disability with culture, art, and social work—stimulating the "public" thinking about what subjectivity, equality, respect and empowerment of all are,— we establish new bridges and with them provide a deep insight into the occurrence and circumstances of disability.

I sincerely thank the editors and writers of the scientific papers and all the others that we met in the course of the realization of this publication. With their work they conveyed an awareness of how important it is to expose and promote disability through new terminology in order to broaden our proper horizons and cultures and as well the horizons and culture of many others. This is at the same time a unique way of establishing links through intercultural dialogue, which promotes mutual recognition and knowledge and understanding in order to respect and preserve cultural diversity.

Precisely the latter is one of the fundamental values of the International Foundation Forum of Slavic Cultures, to which we also remain faithful by supporting the Tracings Out of Thin Air project. We believe that we will leave traces on earth and as well as on people's minds. Today and tomorrow.

With my best thoughts,

Dr Andreja Rihter
Director of the Forum of Slavic Cultures

UVOD

Osrednje izhodišče pričujoče publikacije je refleksija uporniških praks, ki vključujejo sodelujoče skupnosti v umetnosti in kulturi. V ta namen predlagamo obravnavo različnih zgodovin in izkušenj Evrope, sočasno s tem pa refleksijo in tudi spoprijem z umetniško-izobraževalnimi participatornimi projekti, ki sledijo tudi re-) in dez-)integrativnim ciljem. Zakaj je to tako pomembno?

Pojem skupnosti se na široko uporablja in zlorablja tako v umetniških kot izobraževalnih projektih, zato obstaja nepretrgan proces sokrivdne marginalizacije in getoizacije tistih, ki se jih tretira kot hendikepirane in bolne, tistih, ki so videni kot "moteči" z vidika sodobnih nasilnih normativnih "idealov". Ker gre torej za poskus nasprotovanja konceptualni in praktični instrumentalizaciji dela s skupnostjo znotraj umetnosti in kulture, avtorji prispevkov v pričujoči publikaciji izhajajo iz kritične analize različnih zgodovin in izkušenj evropskih in ruskih uporniških praks.

Poleg omenjenega izhodišča smo se prav tako odločili deliti izkušnje ambivalenc in kontradikcij, s katerimi se srečujemo – tako uredniki/urednice kot avtorji prispevkov – v lastnih praksah. Zakaj? Ker so nas naše življenjske in profesionalne izkušnje navdihnile, da razmišljamo o vrzelih med teorijo in prakso ter o napetostih med delanjem in proizvodnjo znanja, ki se pojavljajo v umetniško-izobraževalnih projektih, ki vključujejo diskriminirane in marginalizirane skupnosti. Za pričujočo publikacijo smo na avtorje prispevkov, ki prihajajo iz Avstrije, Finske, Ruske Federacije, Srbije, Slovenije, Švice in Ukrajine, naslovili naslednja vprašanja: na kakšen način se gradijo skupnosti znotraj sodobne umetnosti in kulture? Kakšna je vloga institucij, kot so denimo sodobni muzeji in galerije, pri omogočanju in onemogočanju uporniških praks, ki prevprašujejo normativizirano prizorišče umetnosti in kulture? Ali lahko participatorne prakse proizvedejo etično razmerje z "drugim"? Ali pogoji možnosti teh praks dovoljujejo oblikovanje prostora za drugačno védenje/delovanje/sodelovanje? Do kolikšne mere lahko oziroma bi morali umetniško-izobraževalni projekti prekiniti s pričakovanimi oblikami participacije in komunikacije v kulturi? Mar nismo kot pobudniki tovrstnih projektov obsojeni na reproduciranje procesov normalizacije in diskriminacije? In najpomembneje: kako lahko subvertiramo nenehno normativizacijo in omogočimo transformativno perspektivo, s katero naj razveljavimo binarno razmerje med normalnostjo in abnormalnostjo?

Na kakšen način pričujoča publikacija odgovarja na vsa ta vprašanja?

Publikacija se odpre z Zapiski o "Sledeh v zraku" (Delo v nastajanju) avtorjev Alexandra Ivanova in Joane Monbaron (Ruska Federacija, Švica), ki sta podala pobudo, da se celoten projekt publikacije skupaj z avtorji prispevkov, ki prihajo iz Slovenije, Srbije in Ruske Federacije, v letu 2018, predstavi v St. Peterburgu (čemur naj sledi še eno srečanje v Ljubljani, Sloveniji). Alexander Ivanov in Joana Monbaron sta s projektom, ki tako kot pričujoča publikacija nosi ime "Sledi v zraku" pričela v St. Peterburgu že leta 2015. Izhodiščna ideja projekta je bila, da se znotraj ruskega konteksta podajo prakse in refleksije na sodobne ruske umetniške, inkluzivne in izobraževalne pobude, ki se osredinjajo na participativno delovanje z dano skupnostjo. V prispevku Ivanov in Monbaronova podata temeljito analizo zadnjih dveh let (ko sta s projektom začela), hkrati pa raziskujeta zgodovino, umetniške strategije in institucionalni kontekst umetniškega studia, ki ga je leta 2001, v enem od obrobij St. Peterburga, kot ustanovo za oskrbo na domu (v ruščini "psiho-nevrološki internat"; krajše PNI), odprla velika dobrodelna organizacija. Avtorja ponudita skrben izbor pojmov znotraj besednjaka, ki omogoča introspektivno refleksijo, medtem ko ne brez dvomov in z vso skromnostjo skušata opredeliti praktični in konceptualni okvir projekta ter lastno prakso in predanost projektu.

Ivanov in Monbaronova sta k sodelovanju pri naslednjih fazah projekta povabila Marino Gržinić, ki prihaja iz Ljubljane. To je bila priložnost, da se razprava o hendikepu razširi na prostor nekdanje vzhodne Evrope in, bolj specifično, na prostor nekdanje Jugoslavije. Marina Gržinić je predlagala, da se razpravi o hendikepu, kulturi in umetnosti ter o možnostih za razmišljanje o novih skupnostih in ustvarjalnostih pridruži tudi Aneta Stojnić (Beograd). Tako vzpostavljen trikotnik Ruske Federacije, Slovenije in Srbije je ustvaril okoliščine za vzpostavitev stika z dr. Andrejo Rihter, direktorico Foruma slovanskih kultur, z namenom, da podpre projekt.

Marina Gržinić (Slovenija) v svojem tekstu Telo, hendikep in kritična umetnost obravnava zgodovine in sedanjosti "hendikepa", ki so v tesni povezavi z družbenimi strukturami in kulturnimi diskurzi v prostoru nekdanje Jugoslavije in širše. To pomeni nadaljnjo raziskavo nekdanje vzhodne Evrope ter analiziranje stereotipov in predsodkov do manjšin in etničnosti, starejših, fizično hendikepiranih ali duševno bolnih oseb, LGBTQI, posameznikov z aidsom, če jih naštejemo le nekaj. Gržinić izjavi, da je to, da razumemo kaj se dogaja s temi različnimi oblikami diskriminacije, getoizacije in rasializacije, bistvenega pomena, študije hendikepa pa ponujajo pomembne razlage za načine, prek katerih se označevalci norosti, nenormalnosti, prizadetosti in hendikepa uporabljajo kot prožni označevalci, ki nenehno re/producirajo vsaj dva tipa teles: kategorijo zmožnega telesa, ki so vredna drugih in nezmožnih teles, razumljenih kot inferiornih, odvečnih. Diskriminacija, ki temelji na telesnih sposobnostih (angleško *ableism*), je torej pojem, ki označuje sistem diskriminatornih oblik predsodkov izključevanja iz družbe in marginalizacije oseb s hendikepom.

Aneta Stojnić (iz Beograda in trenutno delujoča v New Yorku) v svojem tekstu Vprašanje hendikepa v sodobnih plesnih praksah prevprašuje do sedaj vzpostavljena razmerja hendikepa s teoretičnimi ter praktičnimi in zgodovinskimi raziskavami. Izhajajoč iz družb in skupnosti ter umetniških in kulturnih praks v vzhodni Evropi in po svetu, avtorica prevprašuje sistematično marginalizacijo hendikepiranih teles ter skuša na novo premisliti možnosti za njihovo opolnomočenje. Stojnićeva se fokusira na tri aspekte: a) specifičen primer obravnave zmožnih teles in hendikepiranih teles v sodobnem plesu, še natančneje, na možnosti dekonstrukcije normativnosti plesalčevega telesa; b) način kako je umetniško delo hendikepirane osebe obravnavano v širšem umetniškem kontekstu in kako lahko prekoračimo diskriminacijsko oznako "invalidnosti"; c) dostopnost formalne umetniške izobrazbe za ljudi s posebnimi potrebami.

V okviru projekta "Sledi v zraku" sta Alexander Ivanov in Joana Monbaron vzpostavila mednarodne povezave s številnimi strokovnjaki, ki so bili povabljeni, da v St. Peterburgu prebivajo, se srečujejo in delajo z umetniki, predavajo in izvajajo seminarje v različnih sanktpeterburških institucijah. Mira Kallio-Tavin (Finska) je ena izmed strokovnjakov, ki je tam bivala leta 2016. Njeno besedilo (Politično) delovanje oseb s posebnimi potrebami obravnava probleme marginaliziranih družbenih skupin, kot so hendikepirane osebe, s poudarkom na socialnih problemih in prizadevanjih za oblikovanje politično usmerjenih družbenih dogodkov in programov. V tem kontekstu raziskuje vprašanja normalnosti, političnega delovanja, sposobnosti/(z)možnosti in kulturne participacije oseb v sodelujočih umetniških projektih.

Ker je namen publikacije ustvariti nadaljnji kontekst, ki izhaja iz sanktpeterburških aktivnosti in refleksij in se potemtakem predstavlja v širšem evropskem prostoru, je Marina Gržinić povabila k sodelovanju Doris Arztmann in Evo Egermann (Avstrija), z namenom, da predstavita svoj dolgoletni projekt Kripljasti materiali, pripravljen v obliki časopisa, ter da hkrati izpostavita svoje delovanje in sodelovanje v obliki pogovora, ki ga objavljajmo pod naslovom Kiborški izstop iz učilnice. Telesne heteroglosije in Kripljasti materiali za umazano znanje v umetniškem izobraževanju. Avtorici se prav tako navezujeta na material iz časopisa Kripelj, ki nam ponuja sodobne in zgodovinske strategije upora. Egermannova je v letu 2012 pričela izdajati časopis kot samozaložniški zin in zbirko materialov, ki govorijo o temah, ki so povezane s "kriplji," oziroma se tičejo različnih povezav med pohabljenostjo in umetnostjo, kulturo in reprezentacijo, da bi se tako uprli in nasprotovali kategorijam normalnega in abnormalnega. Njuno izhodišče je, da se kategorije zmožnih in nezmožnih teles vzpostavljajo na vsakodnevni ravni ter da je ta fenomen konstruiran s strani specifičnih družbenih kontekstov (kot so denimo šole), skozi strukturne mehanizme, ki nenehno ponavljajo niz norm. Njuno stališče je jasno ter odraža izjavo ameriške avtorice Simi Linton, svetovalke in javne govorke, ki svoje delo posveča študijam hendikepa in ki pravi: "Oviramo družbeni red, saj kot gibanje Kripljev želimo prekiniti s tem reproduciranjem podob nezmožne žrtve." Seveda Doris Arztmann in Eva Egermann izjavita, da je umetniška vzgoja prav tako mesto, kamor lahko umestimo prakse odpora s kritične Kripelj perspektive in to tako, da uporabljamo konceptualna orodja, ki so jih razvili kvir, feministični misleci in/ali misleci s področja študij hendikepa.

Ko je bila struktura publikacije oblikovana, je Marina Gržinić predlagala, da se projektu pridruži še Darja Zaviršek, pionirka kritičnega mišljenja znotraj univerze ter predavateljica in teoretičarka na področju hendikepa. V svojem besedilu Postsocialistični paternalizem nege in nasilja razvija Zaviškova analizo tega, kar v kontekstu postkomunističnih družb imenuje preložena deinstitucionalizacija področja socialnega varstva in hendikepa, in ki ga prevede v proces, ki ga zelo natančno poimenuje kot postsocialistični paternalizem nege in nasilja, ki je rezultat ekonomskega pomanjkanja, strahu pred osiromašenjem in transgeneracijske averzije do hendikepiranih oseb. Avtorica izpostavi, da so (nekdanje) vzhodnoevropske družbe po 2. svetovni vojni in socialistični politiki družbeno-spolne enakosti skušale reševati "žensko vprašanje" skozi zaposlitev za polni delovni čas, kar je delno rezultiralo v širjenju zaprtih in polzaprtih institucij za osebe z različnimi težavami, vključno z duševno bolnimi. Zaviškova pokaže kaj te totalne represivne institucije predstavljajo; od "najboljše rešitve socialnega varstva" do "od zibelke pa vse do groba" oseb, ki so proizvedene in vzgojene kot hendikepirane osebe in brez (upoštevanja) individualnih potreb ali agend.

Jasno je, da publikacija vzpostavlja zemljevid določenih izkušenj, dela in zgodovin. S tega gledišča sta Ivanov in Monbaronova povabila Ayman Eckford, katere izkušnja je – tako kot delo Zaviškove v Sloveniji – bistvenega pomena. Ayman Eckford je teoretičarka in aktivistka, ki v ruskem kontekstu trasira zgodovine in sedanjosti diskriminacije na osnovi telesnih sposobnosti. V svojem besedilu Ableizem v ruski aktivistični skupnosti izpostavlja, da hendikep ni medicinski, temveč družbeni in pravni konstrukt, prav tako pa tudi opozarja, da bi hendikep moral biti razumljen znotraj pogojev partikularne družbe. Koncept "hendikepa" torej prej govori o družbi, v kateri ta oseba živi, kot pa o njegovih/njenih telesnih, fizičnih zmožnostih.

Publikacija se zaključuje z umetniškim kolektivom *microsillons* (Ženeva, Švica), ki je v okviru projekta "Sledi v zraku" prišel v St. Peterburg in že sodeloval v pogovorih z umetniki. V svojem besedilu Opolnomočenje? microsillons dekonstruirajo pojem opolnomočenja skozi retrospektivno kritično analizo lastne raziskovalne prakse, na katero je vplivalo delo Paula Freireja, še zlasti pa dela bell hooks, Henryja Girouxa in Ire Shora. Branje teh pedagoških refleksij in eksperimentov, kot povedo, je bilo ključno pri snovanju njihovih zgodnejših projektov. Ta tesna vez med idejo "opolnomočenja" in tem, kar so skušali razviti pri delu z marginaliziranimi skupnostmi, pa se je skozi njihovo praktično izkušnjo bistveno spremenila. Lahko "opolnomočenje" v praksi spremeni razmerje, ki ga imajo te skupnosti do umetniškega sveta, ter s tem spremenijo tudi same umetniške institucije?

V zaključku naj dodamo, da ta uvod povzema glavne smernice publikacije v štirih jezikih: slovenskem, ruskem, srbskem in angleškem. Kot rezultat konsenzualnega dogovora so vsa besedila v celoti objavljena le v angleškem jeziku. To pa ne pomeni, da se v prihodnosti ne bomo spustili v prevajanje in objavo izvornih besedil na spletu ali kako drugače znotraj naših partikularnih kontekstov.

Prav tako bi želeli izpostaviti, da smo med pripravo pričujoče publikacije naleteli na tenzije, zlasti kar se tiče rabe terminologije hendikepa. Uredniki smo se pri prevodih v angleščino odločili za uporabo pojma "disabled", saj je v angleško govorečem okolju aktivistov in akademikov ta konsenzualen. Vendar pa je potrebno dodati, da se s takšno rabo genealogije izvornih pojmov nenehno izgubljajo v prevodih. Še več, gre za različne rabe besed v slovenščini, srbščini ali ruščini, odvisno od konteksta in razprav, ki v teh državah potekajo; te razprave so včasih nevtralizirane z generičnim prevodom v angleški jezik. V svojih prispevkih so avtorji izpostavili lastne refleksije na soočanja z vsemi temi odprtimi in produktivnimi vprašanji.

Ta pomembna publikacija ne bi bila možna brez prijazne podpore mnogih institucij in kolegov. Tako uredniki kot avtorji prispevkov so pridobili ogromno vsled velikodušnosti in podpore dr. Andreje Rihter, katere neizmerni in bistveni pomoči gre velika zahvala.

Ta publikacija je torej prvi korak, da bi ustvarili mednarodno skupnost, a tudi program predstavitev v St. Peterburgu, Ljubljani in Beogradu, da bi razširili teme in povezave, ki so bile vzpostavljene v procesu nastajanja te publikacije.

Marina Gržinić, Alexander Ivanov, Joana Monbaron in Aneta Stojnić

November 2017

ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

В настоящем сборнике собраны тексты, объединенные стремлением переосмыслить существующие в современной культуре и искусстве образовательные и художественные инициативы (названные в данной публикации «практиками сопротивления»), в основе которых лежит работа с сообществом. Авторы/-ки книги из Австрии, Финляндии, Российской Федерации, Сербии, Словении, Швейцарии и Украины обращаются к различным профессиональным траекториям и историческим контекстам в Европе и уделяют особое внимание анализу и критическому представлению проектов, затрагивающих темы инклюзии и дезинтеграции. Почему это важно? В то время как понятие сообщества все чаще эксплуатируется в различных арт и образовательных программах, процессы маргинализации и геттоизации тех, кого причисляют к людям с инвалидностью и рассматривают сквозь призму современных нормативных идеалов в качестве «неугодных», становятся все более сильными.

В данной книге мы также сочли важным сделать акцент на противоречиях в собственных профессиональных установках и методах. Для чего? Обращение к личному опыту побудило нас задуматься о несоизмеримости теории и практики, а также о конфликте между производством и применением знаний, который, по нашим убеждениям, неизбежен в проектах с участием маргинализированных и подвергшихся дискриминации сообществ.

Пытаясь обозначить сложный и неоднозначный контекст, в котором существуют современные социально-вовлеченные инициативы, участники/-цы представленной публикации обращаются к следующему кругу вопросов. Кто и по какому принципу объединяет людей в группы в рамках художественных и образовательных проектов? Какова роль институций, таких как современные музеи и галереи, в актуализации/подавлении практик, подвергающих сомнению нормативные установки в культуре и искусстве? Способны ли партиципаторные комьюнити проекты выстраивать этические отношения с Другим? Предоставляют ли данные проекты возможность для появления альтернативных способов производства знаний, опыта и форм солидарности? Каким образом художественные и образовательные проекты способны противостоять устоявшимся формам участия и коммуникации в культуре? В какой степени мы, занимающиеся подобными проектами, воспроизводим существующие нормативные и дискриминационные установки? И, наконец, что нам необходимо сделать, чтобы дестабилизировать процессы нормализации и трансформировать бинарную оппозицию соответствия/исключения из нормы?

Как данная публикация отвечает на эти вопросы?

Сборник открывают «Заметки о ‘‘Рисунках из воздуха’’» Александра Иванова и Жоаны Монбарон (Россия, Швейцария), которые являются инициаторами/-ками всего издательского проекта. «Рисунки из воздуха» — запущенная в 2015 году одноименная междисциплинарная программа, созданная в ответ на существующие в современном российском искусстве социально-вовлеченные и партиципаторные практики. В центре проекта – история, художественные стратегии и институциональный контекст арт-студии, открытой крупной благотворительной организацией при психоневрологическом интернате в одном из пригородов Петербурга. Статья, представленная в данном сборнике, рассматривает первые два года проведения «Рисунков из воздуха» и написана с целью помочь кураторам/-кам проекта концептуализировать собственную практику. Текст публикации предваряет подробный словарь терминов.

Работая над структурой и содержанием программы «Рисунки из воздуха» Александр Иванов и Жоана Монбарон пригласили Марину Гржинич (Словения) принять участие в проекте. Возникшее сотрудничество предоставило возможность расширить дискуссию об инвалидности, поставив ее в контекст Восточной Европы и, в частности, пространства бывшей Югославии. Позднее по приглашению Марины Гржинич к проекту присоединилась Анета Стойнич (Сербия). Объединенные желанием представить обсуждение статуса инвалидности в культуре и искусстве в качестве способа переосмысления идеи сообщества, указанный коллектив авторов обратился к директорке «Форума славянских культур» Андреа Рихтер с просьбой оказать поддержку проекту.

Марина Гржинич (Словения) в статье «Тело, инвалидность и критически настроенное искусство» размышляет над историей и формами присутствия «инвалидности» в социальных структурах и культурных дискурсах бывшей Югославии. Гржинич ставит вопрос о дальнейшем изучении пространства бывшей Восточной Европы, анализируя стереотипы и предрассудки, окружающие меньшинства и этнические группы, пожилых людей, людей с физической или ментальной инвалидностью, ЛГБТКИА, ВИЧ-инфицированных и другие сообщества. В своем тексте Гржинич призывает обратиться к анализу существующих форм дискриминации, геттоизации и расизации, подчеркивая, что исследования инвалидности способны выявить и объяснить те механизмы, при помощи которых символы безумия, аномалии, нарушения и физической неполноценности функционируют в качестве подвижных маркеров для производства двух типов тел: способных, *able* (имеющих ценность) и неспособных, *disabled* (низших, рудиментарных). Таким образом авторка заявляет, что эйблизм – это комплексное понятие, охватывающее всю систему предрассудков и форм дискриминации людей с инвалидностью.

Анета Стойнич (Сербия, США) в статье «К вопросу об инвалидности в современных танцевальных практиках» анализирует проблему маргинализации, обращаясь к понятию эмпауэрмента (*empowerment*). Текст Стойнич рассматривает: а) отдельные случаи работы со «способными» (*able*) и «неспособными» (*disabled*) телами в современном танце и, более конкретно, варианты деконструкции нормативности тела танцующего/-щей; б) оптику восприятия произведения искусства, созданного художником/-цей с инвалидностью в широком художественном контексте, а также то, как это произведение способно изменить представление о самой инвалидности; с) проблему доступности формального художественного образования для людей с инвалидностью.

В рамках проекта «Рисунки из воздуха» Александр Иванов и Жоана Монбарон провели в Санкт-Петербурге программу резиденций для специалистов/-сток в области арт-образования, критической педагогики и медиации, каждый/-ая из которых посетили арт-студию при интернате. Программа резиденций сопровождалась серией лекций на открытых городских площадках. Мира Каллио-Тавин (Финляндия) была участницей представленной программы в 2016 году. В центре внимания ее статьи «Независимость (*agency*) людей с инвалидностью» — вопрос создания политически ответственных комьюнити событий и программ. Текст рассматривает вопросы соответствия норме (*normalcy*), независимости (*agency*), возможности (*ability*) и культурной партиципации (*cultural participation*) людей с инвалидностью в рамках коллаборативных художественных проектов.

Проводя параллели между практиками в Санкт-Петербурге и другими европейскими проектами, Марина Гржинич пригласила Дорис Артсман и Эву Эгерман (Австрия) представить долгосрочный проект «Крип Материалы» (*Crip Materials*) в рамках данной публикации. Проект существует в виде журнала *Crip Magazine* и серии обсуждений, с содержанием которых можно ознакомиться в статье «Киборг в учебной аудитории. Телесные гетероглоссии и крип материалы для грязного знания в художественном образовании». Эгерман начала публиковать свой журнал в 2012 году в виде зина, посвященного тематике крип-исследований, искусства и культуры, а также репрезентации противоречивых категорий нормального/ненормального. По их мнению, категории «способных» (*able*) и «неспособных» (*disabled*) тел являются продуктом ежедневного становления и сконструированы специфическими социальными контекстами (такими как школы) при помощи структурных механизмов, нацеленных на воспроизводство совокупности норм. Подобный взгляд созвучен высказыванию американской авторки, экспертки и ораторки Сими Линтон: «Мы разрываем социальный порядок так, как нам нужно, потому что предназначение Крип-движения – прекращение воспроизводства образа беспомощной жертвы». Дорис Артсман и Эва Эгерман утверждают, что аудитория/класс, в которой обучают искусству, является местом, где нам следует искать методы сопротивления с критической крип-перспективы, используя концептуальные рамки квир- и феминистских исследований, а также исследований инвалидности.

После того, как общая структура книги была сформирована, Марина Гржинич пригласила присоединиться к проекту Дарью Завиршек – одну из первых университетских исследовательниц инвалидности в Словении. В тексте под названием «Постсоциалистический уход-насилие-патернализм» Завиршек анализирует феномен отложенной деинституционализации сферы социальной работы и инвалидности в посткоммунистических обществах. С ее точки зрения, связка «постсоциализм-уход-насилие-патернализм» представляет собой последствие исключения из экономики, страха обнищания и культивировавшейся поколениями неприязни по отношению к людям с инвалидностью. Завиршек, в частности, подчеркивает, что распространение закрытых и полузакрытых учреждений для людей с инвалидностью в (бывших) восточноевропейских обществах после Второй мировой войны отчасти является результатом политики гендерного равенства при социализме, которая стремилась решить «женский вопрос» через практики трудоустройства женщин на полный рабочий день. Завиршек также описывает, что представляют собой данные тотальные институции, «лучшие формы социальной защиты от рождения до самой смерти», для людей, воспитанных как инвалидов и лишенных независимости и индивидуальных потребностей.

Данная публикация собирает вместе своеобразную карту опыта, рабочих практик и историй. Для создания более объемного представления о заявленной теме, Александр Иванов и Жоана Монбарон пригласили Айман Экфорд, чей опыт в России является таким же важным, как опыт Завиршек в Словении, принять участие в проекте. Айман Экфорд — исследовательница и активистка, пишущая о современных и исторических формах эйблизма в российском контексте. В статье «Эйблизм в российском активистском сообществе», Экфорд обращает внимание на то, что инвалидность является не медицинским, но социальным и юридическим конструктом, который нужно рассматривать в контексте конкретного общества. Авторка текста подчеркивает, что концепт «инвалидность» в большей степени характеризует общество, в котором живет человек, чем его/ее физическое состояние.

Публикацию завершает текст коллектива «микросийон» (*microsillons*) (Швейцария), участники/-цы которого также посещали Санкт-Петербург в рамках проекта «Рисунки из воздуха» и имели возможность познакомиться с работой арт-студии. Статья «*Empowering?*» рассматривает понятие эмпауэрмента сквозь призму ретроспективного критического анализа исследовательской практики «микросийон», вдохновленной трудами Паулу Фрейре, белл хукс, Анри Жиро и Айры Шор. Идеи и педагогические эксперименты этих авторов/-ок легли в основу ранних проектов коллектива. Однако то, что в начале представлялось близким к идее эмпауэрмента, претерпело значительные изменения в процессе работы «микросийон» с сообществами, подвергшимися маргинализации. Отсюда, одним из главных вопросов публикации становится способность/ неспособность понятия эмпауэрмента менять отношение маргинализированных сообществ к миру искусства, трансформировать культурные институции изнутри.

Важно отметить, что данное предисловие затрагивает основные сюжетные линии публикации на четырех языках: словенском, русском, сербском и английском. По соглашению сторон полные тексты статей печатаются только на английском. Это не означает, что мы не планируем делать их переводы в будущем, а также выкладывать их в свободный доступ.

В процессе подготовки этой публикации, мы также столкнулись с «трудностями перевода». Так, в англоязычных текстах сборника мы приняли решение использовать понятие «*disabled*», являющееся результатом консенсуса в англоговорящих активистских и академических кругах. Лексика же, которая употребляется на данный момент в Словении, Сербии и Российской Федерации и которая во многом отражает уровень и состояние текущих социально-политических дебатов об инвалидности в этих регионах, была частично нейтрализована или утеряна в переводах.

Данная публикация была бы невозможна без поддержки многих людей. Редакторы/-ки и авторы/-ки сборника благодарят Андреа Рихтер за поддержку проекта и фундаментальную помощь в его реализации.

Представленный сборник является первым шагом к созданию международного сообщества через программу презентаций в Санкт-Петербурге, Любляне и Белграде с целью расширения дискуссии и международных связей, возникших в процессе подготовки данной публикации.

Марина Гржинич, Александр Иванов,
Жоана Монбарон, Анета Стойнич

Ноябрь 2017

UVOD

Centralno polazište ove publikacije je refleksija praksi otpora koje podrazumevaju sudelujuće zajednice u umetnosti i kulturi. Naš predlog je da razmotrimo različite istorije i iskustva Evrope uzimajući u obzir i istovremeno se suprotstavljajući umetničko-edukativnim participativnim projektima čiji je cilj re) i dez) integracija. Zbog čega je ovo značajno?

Dok je ideja zajednice široko rasprostranjena i često eksploatisana u umetničkim i edukativnim projektima, istovremeno deluje konstantni proces marginalizacije i getoizacije onih koji su percipirani kao osobe s hendikepom ili su bolesni, odnosno svih onih koji su viđeni kao “remeteći” za savremeni nasilni normativ “idealnog”. Stoga, sa namerom da pruže otpor konceptualnoj i praktičnoj instrumentalizaciji sudelujućeg rada u umetnosti i kulturi, autori objedinjeni u ovoj publikaciji, kreću od kritičke analize različitih istorija i iskustava evropskih i ruskih praksi otpora.

Uz navedeno centralno polazište, takođe smo želeli da podelimo iskustva, nedoumice i kontradikcije sa kojima smo se mi — urednice, urednici i autori — susretali u svojim specifičnim praksama. Zbog čega? Zato što su nas upravo naša životna i profesionalna iskustva podstakla na promišljanje jaza između teorije i prakse, kao i tenzija između činjenja i proizvodnje znanja, koje se javljaju u umetničko-edukativnim programima uključenim u rad sa diskriminisanim i marginalizovanim zajednicama.

Za ovu publikaciju pozvali smo autore iz Austrije, Finske, Ruske Federacije, Srbije, Slovenije, Švajcarske i Ukraine, da razmotre sledeća pitanja: kako se u savremenoj umetnosti i kulturi formiraju zajednice? Koja je uloga institucija, poput galerija i muzeja savremene umetnosti, u podsticanju ili ograničavanju praksi otpora koje propituju normativnost umetničkih i kulturalnih prostora? Mogu li sudelujuće zajednice da generišu etički odnos sa “drugim”? Da li je u uslovima mogućnosti ovih praksi moguće formiranje drugačijeg prostora znanja/stvaranja/saradnje? U kojoj meri umetničko-edukativni programi mogu ili treba da uzdrmaju očekivane forme participacije i komunikacije u kulturi? Nismo li i mi sami, kao inicijatori jednog takvog projekta, osuđeni da reprodukujemo procese normalizacije i diskriminacije? I, konačno, kako možemo da napravimo subverziju utvrđene normalizacije i da otvorimo mogućnost za poništavanje binarnosti između normalnosti/abnormalnosti?

Kako ova publikacija odgovara na ta pomenuta pitanja?

Otpočinjemo sa tekstom Beleške o “Tragovima u vazduhu” (Rad u toku) Aleksandra Ivanova i Joane Monbaron (Ruska Federacija, Švajcarska) inicijatora projekta koji će 2018. godine prezentovati u Petrogradu zajedno sa učesnicima iz Slovenije, Srbije i Ruske Federacije (posle ove prezentacije će uslediti i sastanak u Ljubljani u Sloveniji). Aleksandar Ivanov i Joana Monbaron otpočeli su u Petrogradu 2015. projekat “Tragovi u vazduhu” sa početnom idejom da se u ruskom kontekstu razviju prakse i refleksije savremenih umetničkih, inkluzivnih i obrazovnih inicijativa usmerenih ka sudelujućem radu u datoj zajednici. U svom tekstu Ivanov i Monbaron ponudili su temeljnu refleksiju prethodne dve godine (od kada je projekat pokrenut), ujedno istražujući istoriju, umetničke strategije i institucionalni kontekst umetničkog studija koji je 2001. godine u jednom od Petrogradskih predgrađa otvorila velika dobrotvorna organizacija, kao rezidencijalnu ustanovu za zbrinjavanje (na Ruskom: “psiho-neurološki internat”, skraćeno PNI). Autori su ponudili pažljiv odabir pojmova u okviru vokabulara koji omogućava introspektivnu refleksiju, dok, ne bez sumnji i nedoumica, skromno pokušavaju da definišu praktični i konceptualni okvir projekta kao i sopstvenu praksu i posvećenost.

Ivanov i Monbaron su pozvali Marinu Gržinić iz Ljubljane da uzme učešće u nastavku projekta. Ovo je otvorilo mogućnost da se pokrene debata o hendikepu na širem prostoru bivše istočne Evrope i posebno na prostoru bivše Jugoslavije. Marina Gržinić je predložila da pozovu Anetu Stojnić iz Beograda da se uključi u pomenutu diskusiju o hendikepu, kulturi i umetnosti, kao i mogućnostima da mislimo o novim zajednicama i kreativnim procesima. Ovaj trougao — Ruska Federacija, Slovenija, Srbija — je otvorio mogućnost da kontaktiramo Dr. Andreju Rihter, direktorku Foruma za Slovenske Kulture, koja je podržala projekat.

Marina Gržinić (Slovenija) u svom tekstu Telo, hendikep i kritička umetnost reflektuje istorije i savremenosti “hendikepa” tesno povezanih sa društvenim strukturama i kulturnim diskursima na prostoru bivše Jugoslavije i šire. Ovo podrazumeva dalje istraživanje prostora bivše istočne Evrope, analizu stereotipa i predrasuda prema manjinama i etničkim zajednicama, prema starijim osobama, prema osobama sa invaliditetom, fizički hendikepiranima ili mentalno bolesnima, LGBTQI, osobama sa HIV-om i obolelima od Side, da pomenemo samo neke. Gržinić tvrdi da je neophodno da razumemo šta se dešava sa ovim različitim oblicima diskriminacije, getoizacije, racijalizacije, te da studije hendikepa nude važne uvide u to kako se označitelji ludila, abnormalnosti, nesposobnosti, hendikepa i slično, koriste kao fleksibilni markeri za konstantu re/produkciju najmanje dva tipa tela: kategorije sposobnog zdravog tela kao vrednog i nesposobnog tela kao inferiornog i nepotrebnog. Diskriminacija na osnovu telesnih sposobnosti (eng. *ableism*) je koncept koji označava sistem predrasuda, isključivanja i marginalizacija osoba sa hendikepom.

Aneta Stojnić (iz Beograda trenutno bazirana u Njujorku) u tekstu Pitanje hendikepa u savremenim plesnim praksama propituje i problematizuje uspostavljene odnose u okviru teorije, prakse ali i istorizacije pitanja invaliditeta. Polazeći od društava, zajednica kao i umetničkih i kulturalnih praksi u istočnoj Evropi i šire, ona preispituju sistematsku marginalizaciju i pokušava da promisli mogućnosti za osnaživanje. U tom pogledu Stojnić se fokusirala na tri aspekta: a) specifični slučaj tretmana sposobnih tela i hendikepiranih tela u savremenom plesu, i mogućnosti za dekonstrukciju normativnosti plesnog tela; b) tretman umetničkih dela i umetnika s hendikepom u širem umetničkom kontekstu, te da li i kako mogu da prevaziđu etiketu "invaliditeta"; c) problem ne/dostupnosti formalnog umetničkog obrazovanja osobama s hendikepom.

U okviru projekta "Tragovi u vazduhu" Aleksandar Ivanov i Joana Monbaron su uspostavili internacionalne odnose sa brojnim profesionalcima, koje su pozvali da borave u Petrogradu, sretnu se sa umetnicima koji rade u studiju, održe predavanja i seminare u različitim petrogradskim institucijama. Mira Kalio Tavin (Mira Kallio-Tavin, Finska) je bila jedna od specijalistkinja na rezidenciji tokom 2016. U svom tekstu Agensnost osoba sa hendikepom ona se bavi problemima marginalizovanih društvenih grupa, poput osoba sa hendikepom, fokusirajući se na socijalne probleme i težnje ka razvoju politički osvešćenih društvenih događaja i programa. U tom kontekstu istražuje pitanja normalnosti, agensnosti, sposobnosti i kulturalne participacije osoba sa hendikepom u sudelujućim umetničkim projektima.

Kako je namera ove publikacije da polazeći od aktivnosti razvijenih u okviru projekta u Petrogradu, razmotri druge pozicije aktivne na prostoru Evrope, Marina Gržinić je pozvala Doris Arcman i Evu Egerman (Doris Arztmann, Eva Egermann, Austrija) da predstave svoj dugogodišnji projekat Krip materijali (Crip Materials) koji se sastoji od časopisa i njihovog angažmana o kom govore u formi dijaloga pod naslovom Kiborški izlaz iz učionice. Telo višeglasja i Krip materijali za prljavo znanje u umetnosti i obrazovanju. Arcman i Egerman govore o materijalima iz Krip magazina koji prikazuje savremene i istorijske strategije otpora. Egerman je počela 2012. da objavljuje magazin kao samizdat zin, odnosno kolekciju materijala o Krip temama, umetnosti, kulturi i reprezentaciji kontradiktornih kategorija normalnog i nenormalnog. Autorke polaze od činjenice da se kategorije sposobnih i nesposobnih tela uspostavljaju svakodnevno, te da je taj fenomen konstruisan u specifičnim društvenim kontekstima (na primer u školama), putem kulturalnih mehanizmima koji konstantno ponavljaju određeni set normi. Njihovo stanovište jasno se ogleda u izjavi Simi Linton, američke autorke, konsultanatkinje i javne govornice fokusirane na studije hendikepa, koja kaže: "osporavamo društveni poredak, jer kao Krip pokret hoćemo da zaustavimo reprodukciju slika nesposobne žrtve." Svakako da Doris Arcman i Eva Egerman tvrde da je umetnička klasa takođe mesto gde možemo da tražimo i lociramo prakse otpora iz kritičke Krip perspektive, koristeći tehnike koje su razvijene u okviru kvir, feminističkih i/ili studija hendikepa.

Kada je konačno struktura publikacije bila formirana, Marina Gržinić je analizirajući slovenački prostor predložila da se Darija Zaviršek, pionirka kritičke misli unutar univerziteta, koja predaje i piše o hendikepu u Sloveniji, pridruži projektu. U svom tekstu Post-socijalistički paternalizam brige i nasilja, Zaviršek analizira fenomen koji naziva odloženom deinstitucionalizacijom u post-komunističkim društvima cele oblasti socijalnog rada i hendikepa, prevodeći ih u procese koje je jako precizno nazvala "post-socijalističkim paternalizmom brige i nasilja", nastalim usled ekonomske oskudice, straha od siromaštva i transgeneracijske averzije prema hendikepiranim osobama.

Autorka pokazuje kako su društva (bivše) istočne Evrope posle Drugog svetskog rata socijalističkim politikama jednakosti polova, nameravala da reše "žensko pitanje" zapošljavanjem žena sa punim radnim vremenom, što je delimično rezultiralo širenjem zatvorenih ili poluzatvorenih institucija za ljude sa različitim vrstama problema, uključujući probleme mentalnog zdravlja. Zaviršek pokazuje šta predstavljaju te totalne represivne institucije, koje idu od "savršenog rešenja za socialnu negu" do "od kolevke, pa sve do groba" za ljude koji su proizvedeni i odgajani kao hendikepirani i ali bez individualnih potreba ili planova.

Jasno je da ova publikacija mapira određena iskustva, rad i istorije. Stoga su Ivanov i Monbaron pozvali Ajman Ekford (Ayman Eckford) čije je iskustvo od ključne važnosti slično radu Darije Zaviršek u Sloveniji. Ajman Ekford je teoretičarka i aktivistkinja koja radi na trasiranju istorija i savremenosti diskriminacije na osnovu telesnih sposobnosti u ruskom kontekstu. U svom tekstu Diskriminacija na osnovu telesnih sposobnosti i ruska aktivistička zajednica ona pokazuje kako hendikep nije medicinski, već društveni i pravni konstrukt, i tvrdi da hendikep mora da se izučava spram uslova konkretnog društva. Stoga koncept "hendikepa" više govori o društvu u kom osoba živi nego o telesnom, fizičkom stanju te osobe.

Publikacija se završava s tekstom umetničkog kolektiva microsillons (Ženeva, Švajcarska) koji su već dolazili u Petrograd u okviru projekta "Tragovi u vazduhu" i razgovarali sa umetnicima na terenu. Kroz retrospektivnu kritičku analizu sopstvene istraživačke prakse koja je inspirisana autorima poput Paola Fereire (Paulo Freire), bel huks (bell hooks), Henrija Žirua (Henry Giroux) i posebno Ire Šor (Ira Shor), microsillons dekonstruišu ideju osnaženja. Čitanje pomenutih pedagoških refleksija i istraživanja bilo je ključno za razvoj njihovih ranih projekata. Međutim, ono što je delovalo kao blisko ideji "osnaženja" koju su pokušavali da razviju kroz rad sa marginalizovanim zajednicama, suštinski se promenilo u svetlu praktičnog iskustva. Može li "osnaženje" u praksi da promeni odnos ovih zajednica i sveta umetnosti, te da promeni same institucije?

U zaključku, važno je istaći da smo ovim uvodom saželi osnovne ideje cele publikacije na četiri jezika: slovenačkom, ruskom, srpskom i engleskom. Dogovorili smo se da kompletni tekstovi u publikaciji budu samo na engleskom. Međutim, to ne znači da se u budućnosti nećemo upustiti u prevod i objaviti tekstove na originalnim jezicima onlajn ili na drugim specifičnim mestima.

Konačno, značajno je da kažemo da smo tokom rada na ovoj publikaciji nailazili na tenzije, pogotovo kada se radi o terminologiji hendikepa. Kao urednici smo se odlučili da na engleskom koristimo termin "disabled" koji je prihvaćen u aktivističkom i akademskom kontekstu engleskih govornih područja, ali moramo da istaknemo da se genealogija originalne upotrebe termina posledično izgubila u prevodu. Zaista, različite reči koje se koriste u slovenačkom, srpskom ili ruskom zavise od konteksta kao i debata koje se odvijaju u ovim zemljama, a te debate su povremeno neutralizovane generičkim prevodom na engleski. U svojim tekstovima autori su iskazali sopstvena stanovišta povodom ovih otvorenih i produktivnih pitanja.

Ova važna publikacija ne bi bila moguća bez podrške mnogih organizacija i kolega. Urednici su posebno zahvalni Dr. Andreji Rihter na velikodušnoj podršci, te ogromnoj i suštinskoj pomoći.

Ova publikacija je prvi korak u stvaranju internacionalne zajednice, kroz program prezentacija u Petrogradu, Ljubljani i Beogradu, sa ciljem širenja tema i odnosa uspostavljenih tokom procesa rada na toj publikaciji.

Marina Gržinić, Alexander Ivanov,
Joana Monbaron i Aneta Stojnić

Novembar, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The central point of this publication is to reflect on oppositional practices involving collaborative communities in art and culture. We propose to take into consideration the different histories and experiences of Europe while reflecting and contesting art-educational participative projects with re-) and dis-) integrative aims. Why is this so important?

As the notion of community is widely used and exploited in art and educational projects, there is a constant process of complicit marginalization and ghettoization of those seen as disabled and ill, those who are seen as "disturbing" from the point of view of contemporary violent normative "ideals." Therefore, as an attempt to resist the conceptual and practical instrumentalisation of community work in art and culture, the contributors draw upon different histories and experiences of European and Russian oppositional practices, without abandoning a critical stance in their analyses.

Along with this central point of departure, we have also decided to share experiences of ambivalences and contradictions encountered in our — the editors and contributors — respective practices. Why? Because these lived and professional experiences have urged us to reflect upon the gaps between theory and practice, as well as on the tensions between doing and producing knowledge that redundantly occur in art-educational projects involving discriminated and marginalised communities.

For this publication the contributors from Austria, Finland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine were asked to take into consideration the following questions: how communities are built in contemporary art and culture? What is the role of institutions, such as contemporary museums and galleries, in opening or suppressing oppositional practices that question normativized art and cultural settings? Can participatory community practices generate an ethical relationship with the "other"? Do the conditions of possibility of these practices allow the formation of a space to know/make/collaborate differently? To what extent can or should art-educational projects disrupt expected forms of participation and communication of culture? As initiators of such projects, are we not condemned to reproduce processes of normalization and discrimination? And, crucially, how can we subvert a steady normativization and open a transformative perspective for undoing the binary of normality/abnormality? How does this publication answer questions?

This publication opens with Notes on "Tracings Out of Thin Air" (Work in Progress) by Alexander Ivanov and Joana Monbaron (Russian Federation, Switzerland), who are the initiators of the whole publishing project, to be presented together with the contributors from Slovenia, Serbia and Russian Federation in St. Petersburg in 2018 (this presentation will be followed by another meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia). In 2015, in St Petersburg, Alexander Ivanov and Joana Monbaron started a project bearing the same name as this publication: "Tracings Out of Thin Air." The initial idea of the project was to develop in the Russian context a practice and reflection on contemporary Russian artistic, inclusive and educational initiatives centered on collaborative work with a given community. In their paper, Ivanov and Monbaron deeply reflect on the last 2 years as well as explore the history, artistic strategies and institutional context of the art studio opened by a large charitable organization at a residential care institution (in Russian: "psycho-neurological internat"; in short: PNI) in one of the suburbs of St. Petersburg in 2001. The authors offer a careful selection of notions inside a vocabulary that offers an introspective perspective, not free of doubts, while they modestly aim at defining the practical and conceptual framework of the project and their own practice and commitment.

Ivanov and Monbaron invited Marina Gržinić, from Ljubljana, to take part in the next steps of the project. This represented an opportunity to open the debate of disability to a wider space of the former Eastern Europe, and specifically the space of former Yugoslavia. Gržinić suggested inviting Aneta Stojnić (Serbia) to take part in the discussion relating to disability, culture and arts as a possibility to think communities and creativities. This established triangle of Russia, Slovenia and Serbia created a setting to contact Dr. Andreja Rihter, director of the Forum of Slavic Cultures, to support the project.

Marina Gržinić (Slovenia) in her Body, disability, and critical art reflects on histories and the presence of "disability" being in tight relation to social structures and cultural discourses in the space and beyond. This means to examine the space of the former Eastern Europe further, analyzing stereotypes and prejudices toward minorities and ethnicities, the elderly, the disabled, physically handicapped or mentally ill, LGBTQI, individuals with AIDS, and others. Gržinić states that we need to understand what is going on with these different forms of discrimination, ghettoization, and racialization, and disability studies offers important explanations on how signifiers of madness, abnormality, impairment, and handicap are used as flexible markers to constantly re/produce at least 2 types of bodies: the category of able as valuable, and disabled bodies as inferior or obsolete. Ableism is therefore a notion that designates a system of discriminatory forms of prejudice and discrimination against people with disabilities.

Aneta Stojnić (from Belgrade, presently based in New York) in her The Question of Disability in Contemporary Dance Practices problematizes the established relations of practical and historical examinations; departing from societies and communities and artistic and cultural practices in Eastern Europe and worldwide, Stojnić questions the systematic marginalization of disabled bodies and tries to rethink the possibilities for their empowerment. Stojnić focuses on three issues: a) a specific case of treatment of able and disabled bodies in contemporary dance, and more specifically the possibilities for dismantling the normativity of the dancer's body; b) how artwork by artists with disabilities is treated in the wider artistic context and how it can transgress the labels of "disability"; c) the availability of formal artistic education for people with disabilities.

In the framework of the project "Tracings Out of Thin Air," Alexander Ivanov and Joana Monbaron established an international connection with many professionals who were invited to St. Petersburg to meet and work with the studio's artists and to give lectures and seminars in various St. Petersburg institutions. Mira Kallio-Tavin (Finland) was one of the specialists in residence in 2016. Her text Agency of People with Disabilities addresses the concerns of marginalized community groups, such as people with disabilities, focusing on social issues in order to strive towards developing politically-aware community events or programmes. Her article explores the questions of normalcy, agency, ability and cultural participation of people with disabilities in collaborative arts projects.

As the intention of the publication is precisely the creation of a context that first traces back the activities in St. Petersburg and then reflects and opens up towards other positions active in the space of Europe, Doris Arztmann and Eva Egermann (Austria) were invited by Gržinić to take part in the project. They present their project of Crip materials, which consists of a journal and as well reflect on their engagement in and with the topic in a a conversation published under the title Cyborg Exits in the Classroom. Body Heteroglossias and Crip Materials for dirty knowledge in Art Education. They also draw on materials from the Crip Magazine which offer us contemporary and historical strategies of resistance. Egermann started to publish the magazine in 2012, as a self-published zine and collection of materials on Crip Issues, Art, Culture and Representation in order to oppose and to contradict the categories of the normal and of the abnormal. Their point of departure is the fact that categories of abled and dis-abled bodies are established every day, and that that phenomenon is constructed by specific social contexts (such as schools) through structural mechanisms that constantly repeat a set of norms. Their point of view is clear and reflects a statement by Simi Linton, the American author, consultant, and public speaker whose work focuses on disability studies: "We disrupt the social order as we want as a Crip movement to stop reproducing images of the helpless victim." Of course, Arztmann and Egermann state that the art class is also a place where we seek to locate practices of resistance from a critical Crip perspective, using conceptual tools developed by queer, feminist and/or disability studies thinkers.

Finally, Gržinić, through analyzing the Slovenian space, proposed that Darja Zaviršek, a pioneering critical thinker inside the university and a teacher and writer on disability in Slovenia, join the project. In her essay Postsocialist care-violence-paternalism she develops an analysis of what she names the postponed deinstitutionalization in post-communist societies of social work and disability, that she translates into a process which she names the postsocialist care-violence-paternalism, an outcome of economic scarcity, fear of impoverishment and a transgenerational aversion towards disabled people. She exposes that (former) Eastern European societies after the Second World War and the socialist policy of gender equality had aimed to solve the "women's question" through women's full-time employment, which partly resulted in a profusion of closed and semi-closed institutions for people with different kinds of problems, including mental health issues. Zaviršek engages in the presentation of what these total institutions are — from a "perfect solution of social protection" to the "cradle to the grave" of people produced and nurtured as disabled but without individual needs or agendas.

It is clear that the publication is assembling a certain map of experiences, work and histories. In this perspective, Ivanov and Monbaron invited Ayman Eckford, whose experience is of central importance, as is the work of Zaviršek in Slovenia. Eckford is a theorist and activist working on tracing histories and the presence of ableism in the Russian context. In her essay Ableism in the Russian Activist Community, Eckford shows that disability is not a medical, but a social and legal construct, and states that disability also has to be perceived in the conditions of a particular society. Therefore, the concept of "disability" rather characterizes the society in which a person lives, rather than his/her physical condition.

The publication concludes with the artist collective microsillons (Geneva, Switzerland), who came to St. Petersburg in the framework of "Tracings Out of Thin Air" and talked to the artists in situ. In their text Empowering?, microsillons deconstruct the notion of empowerment through a retrospective critical analysis of their own research-based practice influenced by the work of Paulo Freire and the writings of bell hooks, Henry Giroux and Ira Shor in particular. As they state, reading about those pedagogical reflections and experiments was key in the conception of their early projects. However, they felt that a close connection between the idea of "empowerment" and what they were trying to develop in working with marginalized communities substantially changed throughout their practical experience. Can "empowerment" in practice change the relationship these communities have towards the art world and change the art institutions themselves?

In conclusion, it is important to state that this introduction recuperates the main lines of the publication in four languages: Slovenian, Russian, Serbian and English. As a result of a consensual agreement, all of the texts in their entirety are published in English only. This does not mean that we will not translate these texts in the future and publish them online or elsewhere.

Finally, it is important to note that while working on this publication we encountered tensions, specifically when using the terminology of disability. It has been decided by the editors to use the translation "disabled" in English, since it is consensual in the English-speaking activist and academic worlds, but it must be stated that the genealogies of the original terms used are consequently lost in translation. Indeed, different words are used in Slovenian, Serbian or Russian depending on the contexts and the debates taking place in these respective countries, and these debates are sometimes neutralized by a generic translation into English. In their articles, the contributors exposed their own reflections while facing all these open and productive questions.

This publication would not have been possible without the kind support of many constituencies and colleagues. The editors and the contributors have benefited greatly from the generosity and support of Dr. Andreja Rihter, whose help was essential to the project.

In closing, this publication represents a first step in creating an international community, though a program of presentations in St. Petersburg, Ljubljana and Belgrade that aims at expanding the topics and connections explored here.

Marina Gržinić, Alexander Ivanov,
Joana Monbaron and Aneta Stojnić

November 2017

NOTES ON “TRACINGS OUT OF THIN AIR” (WORK IN PROGRESS)

ALEXANDER IVANOV AND JOANA MONBARON

“Tracings Out of Thin Air,” which started in 2015, was conceived as a hyperlocal multidisciplinary program created in response to contemporary Russian artistic, inclusive and educational initiatives centered on collaborative work with a given community. Arising out of a sense of professional frustration and a desire to practically confront the ideals of corporate public pedagogy, “an all-encompassing cultural horizon for producing market identities, values, and mega-corporate conglomerates, and for atomizing social practices” (Giroux 2004, 497), the project was conceptualized and implemented in this overall setting, but outside the sphere of influence of large institutions. This modest, small-scale initiative was organized independently, albeit with a critical awareness that no one is ever free from any institutional behavior. The project explores the history, artistic strategies and institutional context of the art studio opened by a large charitable organization at a residential care institution (in Russian: “psycho-neurological internat”; in short: PNI) in one of the suburbs of St. Petersburg in 2001.

This paper is an attempt to reflect upon “Tracings Out of Thin Air,” the whys and wherefores, after a year and a half of work. It offers an introspective perspective, not free of doubts, and modestly aims at defining the practical and conceptual framework of the project’ curators’ own practice and commitment.

I. Glossary

Since this article describes a complex and imbricated institutional situation specific to the contemporary Russian context, the preliminary definition of the main constituencies involved might prove useful for readers unacquainted with the specificities of such an environment. Apart from the project’s organizers, we identified four main constituencies:

PNI Residents

PNI is short for “Psycho-Neurological Internat”—Russian residential care institutions. Their residents are living in these institutions on a long-term basis and they are administratively registered there.

Psycho-neurological care institution staff

The “Psycho-Neurological Internats,” or residential care institutions, are Russian state institutions that employ a vast amount of personnel. All the doctors and caretakers, from the cleaners and cooks working in the psycho-neurological care institutions, are state employees (though there are now experiments in Moscow to hire outsourced personnel, but this do not concern the "Psycho-Neurological Internat" in which our project is implemented).

Charity staff

The "Psycho-Neurological Internat" in which our project took place is collaborating with a large charity organization. This charity's staff and volunteers are allowed to work inside this "Psycho-Neurological Internat." They are paid by and depend directly on the charity's administration and established rules.

Art Studio staff

The charity mentioned above has opened an art studio inside the building of the "Psycho-Neurological Internat." The artists working in the studio reside in the "Psycho-Neurological Internat," but the art studio's accompanying staff is employed by the charity.

II. The current conditions of norm, ability and dependency at the psycho-neurological residential care institution: mapping the possible

PNI are part of the general system of psychiatric care of the Russian Federation and at the same time are social care institutions (see Klepikova, Utekhin 2012). Despite the fact that, by their purposes and objectives, the PNI differ from the psychiatric hospitals of the health care system, and that the PNI residents are not "treated patients" but actually reside there, the activities of such institutions are built not on the social, but on the medical model of disability. Such a *modus operandi* has its roots in the Soviet rehabilitation paradigm and is derived from the assumptions fixed in the current Russian legislation on the origin and social status of "normal" and "defective" (sic) corporality. According to the Law on the "Social Protection of Invalid Persons" (and contrary to the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, also ratified by the Russian Federation in 2012), "limited capacity" is not a direct consequence of economic, political or cultural inequalities, but the result of "the disorder of one's body functions as a consequence of diseases, injuries or defects resulting in the limitation of any life activity."[1]

The Russian psycho-neurological care residences are large administrative and bureaucratic institutions. According to the official statistics, as of 10 October 2016,[2] Russia had 514 psycho-neurological residential institutions, in which more than 152 thousand people lived.[3]

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[1] Article 1 of the Federal Law of 24.11.1995 N 181-FZ (as amended on 01. 06. 2017) "On the social protection of disabled people in the Russian Federation" <Http://www.consultant.ru/document/Cons_doc_LAW_8559/>

[2] Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation: "Mintrude Rossii sostojalosj pervoe zasedanie rabochej gruppy po reformirovaniju psikhonevrologicheskikh internatov" [The Russian Ministry of Labour held the first meeting of the workgroup on reforming the psycho-neurological residential institutions] <http://www.rosmintrud.ru/ social/service/111/Russian>

[3] The psycho-neurological institution, in which the project "Tracings Out of Thin Air" is conducted, has more than 1000 residents.

The demographic composition of these institutions is difficult to delineate. Among those living in PNI, one can meet people who were somehow diagnosed as disabled; people who found themselves in a difficult life situation; young adults coming from orphanages for mentally ill children; people with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or musculoskeletal disorders; autistics; elderly people; people who survived a stroke; people without a home and means of subsistence. Researcher and anthropologist Anna Klepikova states that these people "are placed together in these institutions based not on their mental health status but rather on their inability to take care of themselves and live independently. All of the residents are labelled as *disabled* or *invalids* (in Russian), meaning they are not fit for a so-called normal life" (Klepikova 2017, 23).

According to Russian sociologists Pavel Romanov and Elena Iarskaia-Smirnova, analogous practices of "incarceration" of people categorized as "Other" are due to the post-Soviet cultural codes of citizenship, based on the ideology of ethnic nationalism. The assignment of disabled persons in closed institutions "acts like an imprisonment, and continues to be an act of denial of their citizenship. Although the deprivation of liberty without proof of guilt is illegal, the motive of their crime is their body or mental condition" (2011).

The Russian psycho-neurological residential institutions are closed and protected areas: one can enter and exit only with a badge. Residents are isolated from the outside world, deprived of personal space, have limited private property, and are heavily dependent on the staff and the temporary rules established by the institution. Men and women live separately (on different floors and at different departments), and share a room for 4 to 15 people. In addition, there are also "closed" psychiatric departments for people whom the staff of the residential care institution considers having a pronounced psychiatric symptomatology or an auto-/aggressive behavior.

The rights of PNI residents are regularly violated. The most serious violations, recorded by public inspections,[4] activists and journalists, include forced medication and abortion, rape, suicide, beating, binding, locking in a punishment cell, labor exploitation and unconsented deprivation of the resident's legal capacity status.[5] In a situation of insufficient state control and almost complete absence of publicness, violence in PNI acquires a systematic and everyday character.

In the institution in which "Tracings Out of Thin Air" is being conducted, there are also volun-

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[4] The results of public inspections can be found on the official website of the Coordination Council for the Affairs of Disabled Children and Other Persons with Disabilities under the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation <Http://invasovet.ru/reforma-pni/rezultaty_proverok/>, as well as on the website of the Moscow Helsinki Group <http://www.mhg.ru/publications/389CEE8>

[5] PNI residents also have different legal statuses: according to the Russian legislation, a person can be recognised as capable, partly capable or incapable. For PNI residents, the deprivation of legal capacity is a massive, non-transparent and highly subjective procedure (see Klepikova 2013).

teers and caretakers working next to the PNI staff members. These volunteers and caretakers are employed by a charity, which started its activity in the early 2000s. At the initiative of this charitable organization, a special "department of normalization" was created, intended for disabled young people, and a few ateliers were opened, including the art studio mentioned above.

These ateliers are a rare example of a space opened by a non-governmental organization inside a state institution, allowing its staff to participate in the residents' everyday life. This unique "institution within an institution" situation makes visible the ideological and practical conflicts at stake between the charity's and the psycho-neurological institution's staff: the first promote a social model of disability and the defense of the residents' rights, while the second are institutionally bound to a medical approach of disability. Thereby, issues of access, control, rules, knowledge production and whose knowledge is valued, whose interests are represented, whose needs are considered, mechanically engender serious professional disagreements and raise the issue of the (im-) possibility of mediation.

To be fair, we must say that the paradigm of normalization, actively promoted by Russian charitable organizations as an alternative to the medical model of disability, has its share of contradictions. Indeed, while most of the PNI residents have spent all their life in closed institutions, the charity staff makes an effort to include them in "normal" cultural practices, which would make them seem more tolerable in the eyes of the institution's staff and volunteers. However, this practice of integration often remains unquestioned and ends up being inconsistent (Klepikova 2017, 28). Hence, a constant practice of critical unravelling leading to "moments in which the paradigms we inhabit cease to be self-legitimating and in a flash are revealed to be nothing more than what they are, paradigms" (Rogoff 2007, 98) became in our eyes a compulsory aspect of the practice we wished to develop in and around the art studio.

The art studio

The art studio was opened at a state psycho-neurological residential institution in 2001 and exists on the basis of the charity organization mentioned above. Since its foundation, it has an active artistic, pedagogical and exhibition practice and currently has an archive that contains over 3000 works of a broad genre spectrum—from abstract painting to photography and digital art.

The art studio works five days a week. Each of the days is divided into two sessions, which the charity staff and PNI residents call "lessons." The frequency of the PNI residents' visits depends on both objective and subjective factors: the schedule, the availability of space, the amount of work of the charity staff, as well as the motivation of the PNI residents themselves. Currently, there are about forty artists working in the art studio, living in nine departments, including the closed psychiatric one.

On a regular basis, the studio is visited by twenty-two people who make up the “core” of its artistic community (most of them are men). Most of the artists work independently; people with musculoskeletal disorders or cerebral palsy work in tandem with the staff of the studio. Formally the art studio’s managing team consists of a manager, a psychologist and an assistant. In practice, these functions overlap and combine pedagogical (conducting consultations, discussions, workshops and short presentations) and administrative work (preparation of reports, budget management, purchase of artistic materials, negotiation with cultural institutions for the organization of exhibitions, interaction with PR and fundraising and other departments of the charitable organization, etc.). Work in the art studio ultimately has a collective nature and has been formed throughout many years of professional and personal relations between the artists living in the residential institution and the art studio’s staff.

The particularities of the PNI construction as a total institution, which activities are sanctioned by legal and social contradictions that are part of an advanced economy of discrimination, also raise the issue of the status of pedagogical, curatorial and artistic practices in the art studio. Facing various types of institutional violence against the residents on a daily basis, the art studio staff takes an active part in human rights activities: they record cases of violence, participate in their investigation and possible elimination, as well as in the resolution of existing conflicts. The very fact of moving a PNI resident from the department where he/she lives to the demedicalized “creative” space of the art studio, is often perceived as a political act.

The combined roles of an “art world” agent and of a representative of public control over the PNI activities, whose practice in the art studio is legitimized by “aesthetics” and structured by human rights functions, permit considering the activities of the art studio staff as an interesting case of infrastructural activism. Such a status complicates stances and at the same time allows creating new opportunities and trajectories within the institution, and also gives the opportunity to present the artistic activity conducted inside the residential care institution as a complex social and infrastructural phenomenon.

Having said that, it comes as no surprise that the practice of exhibiting the artists’ works of art is embedded in the complex controversy surrounding their artistic and social statuses and is structured by the contradictory desires of the art studio staff to focus on the “depoliticized” aesthetic value of the artworks and at the same time to make visible the political issue of closed social institutions.

In the context of the neoconservative patriotic model of Russian culture, mixed with forms of neoliberal economics and social Darwinism, which equally affect the policies of cultural and charitable organizations, these contradictive desires make the adherence to the principle “to generalize without minimizing and to specialize without ghettoizing” particularly problematic (Cachia 2013, 263). Indeed, the works of art of the studio's artists are often associated with the extremely blurred but commercially viable category of "outsider art," being deprived of the opportunity to be considered in alternative cultural, political and artistic contexts.

Beside this, the art studio's artists, as residents of a large semi-medical institution, periodically become the target audience of educational programs and events intended for "people with mental disabilities." As a rule, these programs position themselves as an agent of change and seek to restore violated social justice. At the same time they are focused on the nature of mental illness and the PNI residents' personality rather than on society's problems and processes provoking exclusion. The absence of a critical approach and the reproduction of existing categorizations lead to the fact that these programs become themselves part of the discriminatory processes they originally planned to contest. Therefore, inviting PNI residents to take part in projects for "people with mental disabilities," these programs ignore the social construction of the status of mental illness and the associated notion of "capacity" and, as a result, often contribute to the normalization of the medical model of disability. Bearing all this in mind, the search for curatorial solutions aimed at investigating and critically reflecting upon disability discourses, ableism and limited agency in art is one of the most difficult tasks facing the art studio today.

III. History of the project and the ethics of frustration: the issue of educational practices in the contemporary art system

As the project's initiators, we first encountered the art studio's group of artists while working for the education department of the European contemporary art biennial Manifesta 10, which took place in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg in 2014. Alexander Ivanov devised a project together with the then head of the art studio Natasha Petukhova, which involved some of the studio's artists. The project was conceptually referring to Eric van Lieshout's artwork and comprised a series of workshops culminating in an exhibition.

The very institutional context of the temporary European biennial—aiming at contributing to the collective imagination of "Europe"—taking place inside the most well-respected Russian museum, with its internal labor organization and behavioral rituals, made us acutely conscious of the contradictory aims of the dispositive of arts education. Regarding both organizations' agendas, the educational apparatus served to include and attract visitors to the exhibition, make their experience enjoyable and meaningful, while at the same time being inclusive of colonial practices and normalizing processes that remained unquestioned.

That particular experience and our overall involvement with Manifesta 10 allowed us to articulate a critical perspective on art institutions as powerful sites (re)producing and establishing canons and values that could be—sometimes—countered and critiqued by the implementation of a marginal practice situated at the crossroads of an educational, artistic and curatorial approach. Such a practice, however, never remains fully innocent (Sternfeld 2013, 3)—a conscious aspect that made us think about the ethics of one's own engagement while working with discriminated communities.

While we were still digesting our complex experience and trying to conceptualize the way we should organize ourselves, we made the decision to devise a project in its own right that would respond to issues raised by the institutional, economic and social structures fabricating the art studio. Inspired by the philosophy behind projects such as the Centre for Possible Studies, initiated by London's Serpentine Gallery in 2009 and led by the mediator and artist Janna Graham, which focused on investigating the center's neighborhood future together with local interest groups, we started to visit the art studio once a week in December 2015. Our first aim was to participate in the studio's set of relations formed between artists and transversal constituents such as the charity staff members, volunteers and the state psycho-neurological personnel, and to establish a climate of relative trust with the studio's artists and, expectantly, build friendships. We exposed our initial ideas to the artists and discussed a possible title for the project. After a particularly productive brainstorm, we finally voted and chose Konstantin Salamatin's version "Tracings Out of Thin Air" [Рисунки из Воздуха].

After complicated beginnings and an extended discursive process—which was judiciously facilitated by the collective *microsillons* —on the project's potential structure, it has been defined that it should trace a constellation of satellite activities of co-research named "attempts," taking as a starting point the practices and working conditions in the art studio. Through these attempts, we were encouraged to consider the complexities, the problematics and the potentials of the current and possible spaces in which art and education combine, to question relationships of power and cross-examine disability as a complex social, political, and cultural construction.

IV. Creating Circumstances for an Institutional Pedagogy: genealogy of the project

As the fundamental element of our strategy, we supported the social constructionist analysis of disability, in which domineering institutions and policies, prejudiced attitudes, discrimination, cultural misrepresentation, and other social injustices are seen as the primary causes of disability, but without reducing attention to those disabled people whose bodies are medicalized because of their suffering.[6]

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[6] Here we refer to Susan Wendell's suggestion to pay more attention to impairment while supporting a social constructionist analysis of disability, mainly if we focus our attention on the phenomenology of impairment, rather than accepting a medical approach to it. It is indeed undeniable that some unhealthy disabled people, as well as some healthy people with disabilities, experience physical or psychological burdens that no amount of social justice can eliminate (see Wendell 2013, 165).

Moreover, we perceived disability ("in its mutability, its potential invisibility, its potential relation to temporality, and its sheer variety" as Michael Bérubé puts it in his foreword to Robert McRuer's *Crip Theory*) as a particularly elusive element to introduce into any critical pedagogical and curatorial practice, because it always interestingly complicates it (Bérubé in McRuer 2006, viii). Considering disability enabled us to confront the omnipresent system of compulsory able-bodiedness reproduced in the art world and, paradoxically, in the PNI itself. Convinced by the potential of intersectional discourses, and mainly by the fact that a critique of neoliberal institutional strategies of behavioral conformity can be illuminated by the case of disability (see Hartblay 2012), it became clear that "Tracings Out of Thin Air" should concentrate on latent convergences between disability justice and critiques of public educational discourses and the politics of representation.

For that, we adopted a soft parasitic strategy that would turn inside out the logic of "audience reaching" policies applied by cultural institutions. Indeed, instead of trying to attract a specific discriminated community to a museum or a gallery, the "target group" would actually reach us—the cultural workers—and we would start from the institutional conditions in which that community lives. With working groups comprised of local and international university researchers, educators and artists from inside and outside the psycho-neurological residential institution, the aim of "Tracings Out of Thin Air" is to develop ongoing, collaborative research projects that simultaneously explore group work, aesthetic production and the social exclusion of disability. That conceptual framework relates to Janna Graham's interpretation of Felix Guattari's term "Institutional Analysis," which the philosopher developed to describe the radical re-working of institutions through their "permanent reinvention." This referred to the heterogeneous opening up of people to "otherness," both in their work within institutions and those, which fell outside their normal modes of existence (2010, 135).

The writer and pedagogue Fernand Deligny had in common with Guattari and other intellectuals of the second half of the XXth century their refusing of fixations about identity and their metaphorical thinking of discontinuity: to the terms "derivations" or "rhizome," he preferred "detours," "landmarks" or "chevêtres." He controversially perceived the asylum, the psychiatric hospital as networks, as antidotes for the concentration of powers and identities, and developed within it frail and fleeting pedagogical experiences as a way to avoid being targeted. What is interesting for us in Deligny's institutional critique is that it does not tackle the material, spatial and social structure of the institution, but the integration of abstract norms which come and obstruct invention, the "mass of possibles" and efficiency. His strategy of "evasion," consisting in taking advantage of both the opponent's weakness and the institutional confusion in order to subvert rules and have the administration confront its own corruption (Alvarez de Toledo 2007,23), at the same time contradicted and played an inspirational role in the development of our initiatives in the psycho-neurological residential institution.

A crucial part of Deligny's pedagogical practice that he carried out in the Cevennes in the 1960s consisted in transcribing the displacements of autistic children. Together with these children, Deligny and his collaborators began to trace these lines, perceived as the reflections of the circulations of the autistic young people in their space of life and to speak of "chevêtres": knots by which the young people passed and stopped incessantly. For Deligny, who envisaged autistic children as resistant to the colonization and the domestication of symbolic spaces by language, these cartographies constituted a way of offering them a space that escaped speech (Deligny 1968, 659). He saw these pedagogical experiments as the fruit of circumstances and subsequently characterized the educator as a "creator of circumstances,"ready to welcome the unknown, from which new configurations will stem.

For "Tracings Out of Thin Air," we like to think of ourselves as "creator of circumstances." But more than a nice appellation, Guattari's and Deligny's practice of institutional analysis brought a depth to our approach in turning the perspective of education upside down, taking the focus away from the residents or the participants and training it on the educators. This encouraged us to be self-reflexive about the rhetoric and terminology that has been used by different players in the projects to shape people's experiences. Throughout the research project, we also reconsidered the notions we would have previously taken for granted. Working together with disabled artists made us critical of our own actions as educators and aware of the implicit, unintended and unrecognized knowledge that takes place in any learning process (the so-called Hidden Curriculum).

Finding the work of Mira Kallio-Tavin on what she names an "encountering pedagogy" led us to think about how we understood our own pedagogical involvement. Arguing for a pedagogy that should not be reduced to something already known (2013, 138), we felt encouraged to question our own assumptions and, instead, to pay attention to elements of embodiment and sensorial knowledge in art pedagogy. This has been enriched by a collective reading of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Touching Feeling*, in which she analyses the prevalent discourse produced around artists categorized as "outsiders," repeatedly diagnosing "outsider" artists in terms of lack, applying to them a "language of emphatic negation." Looking at Judith Scott's sensory relationship with her sculptures, Sedgwick argues that it conveys an affective and aesthetic fullness that can attach itself even to experiences of cognitive frustration (2003, 22—24). Bearing this in mind, it became clear to us that the art studio is a thought-provoking place of encounters, in which the research of informal forms of knowledge that fall outside of structured curricula gains particular meaning. By involving the artists and the charity staff in looking at these institutional structures from within, we try to find ways not only to unlearn, but to rethink these.

V. Open conclusion

Working with artists living in a closed care residential institution, we encounter difficulties every time we have to speak about the project's aims and conceptual framework or when we are asked to define our roles. These difficulties are multiplied or transformed depending on the audience we address (would it be for a grant application, an academic conference, or a meeting with local activists). How to speak about the project without trivializing? We also meet (self-) criticism every time we organize activities with the artists as a group, since the only thing they have in common outside of being artists is their disabled status. Is that justifiable? Aren't we reproducing the very discrimination we denounce?

Coming from the art field, we are very aware that hidden discriminatory processes often reveal themselves in the context of public programs and discussions that raise socially important topics. Ignoring the problems of inequality within the world of art itself and using critical theory "to satiate an endless demand for circulation of the 'new'" (Graham2010), such projects become part of processes of the "culturalization" of socio-political conflicts. As a result, these events become "public programs without a public sphere," staging "alternative" political debates, while deactivating their passage into significant consequences (Graham, Graziano, Kelly 2016, 30—32).

"Tracings Out of Thin Air" is our modest attempt to generate forms of political agency through transdisciplinary associations and frictions generated by bringing areas that have come to be artificially disentangled from one another through disciplinary boundaries into an insistent proximity. This proximity might expectantly subvert pre-learned knowledge and rules and have players from the art studio, the charity, the care institution, and the art world confront what is hidden in their/our curriculum. By opening up the transformative potential of dislocation that decenters the very basis of normality, we hope to develop with the studio' artists a practice that art education theorist Carmen Mörsch names a critical praxis, by which art education becomes a context in which one confronts society, institutions and oneself (Mörsch 2009).

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Alevtina Kakhidze, 2017, for »Tracings Out of Thin Air.«

BODY, DISABILITY, AND CRITICAL ART

MARINA GRŽINIĆ

I am interested in what I will call the futurity of "dis/ability" with rethinking the body, community, and processes of marginalization taking into account geopolitical, historical and cultural differences in Europe and worldwide. This is meant to further examine the space of the former Eastern Europe, analyzing stereotypes and prejudices toward minorities and ethnicities, the elderly, the disabled, physically handicapped or mentally ill, LGBTQI, individuals with AIDS, to mention just a few of them. We need to understand what is going on with these different lines of discrimination, ghettoization, racialization, and disability studies offer important explanations how signifiers of madness, abnormality, impairment, and handicap are used as flexible markers to constantly re/produce at least two types of bodies: the category of able as valuable; and disabled bodies as inferior or obsolete. Ableism is therefore a notion that designates a system of discriminatory forms of prejudices against people with disabilities. Doing this creates also a division, reinforcing the stigma that bodies constructed as disabled are inferior to those bodies that are abled or non-disabled.

Therefore histories and the presents of "disability" are in a tight relation to social structures and cultural discourses that form the discourses on bodies, their control and the relation of the body to power structures, ideologies, the nation-state and governmentality. Finally, social structures and cultural discourses define the system of representation, in/visibility, and normativity of bodies.

Dis/ability as litmus test for democracy

A change can be witnessed with a new reorientation in the analysis of disability named "the critical disability discourse," which exposes disability directly in relation to social processes and not exclusively, as in the (not-so-distant) past, part of medical and bio-medical approaches. Simply, social processes, political and economic processes, and the ways of re-presentation of dis/abled bodies is connected and reproduced by society. Disability henceforth functions as a litmus test for democracy and the basic levels to guarantee equal human rights to numerous minorities that are seen as deviant in regard to "normalized" and majority hegemonic structures of neoliberal global capitalism.

To make things very clear, disability is a social, economic, political and ideological construct (inherently and openly connected to capitalism, modernity, colonialism) and therefore disability has different histories depending on relations to capital, authoritarian institutions, etc., that frame and support or minimize, hide and trivialize discrimination, dispossession and inequality imposed onto people that are seen and made/constructed as disabled to serve capital profit and privatization.

Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell emphasizes that today disability and impairment are regarded as important dimensions of lived experience, and therefore demands to talk of the relation of body, society and disability as a social embodiment; it conceptualizes "disability" in the ways bodies are participants in social dynamics and "impairment" in the ways social dynamics affect bodies (Connell 2011, 1371). This classification presents clearly that disability and impairment are directly connected to structures of capitalist power and its neoliberal ideology, differentiating what counts for disability and which impairment (damages, deficiency) will deserve social, health and financial support.

The topic of disability is fundamental for understanding how nation-states manage people, bodies and institutions. Michel Foucault conducted a genealogical exploration of how societal understandings of madness have shifted from antiquity through the 20th century. He found that madness was not always interpreted as a form of mental illness to be scientifically and medically treated as it was in the modern era (Foucault 1965). According to Foucault, asylums became "homeland to the poor, to the unemployed, to prisoners, and to the insane. It is within the walls of confinement that Pinel and nineteenth-century psychiatry would come upon madmen; it is there —let us remember— that they would leave them, not without boasting of having 'delivered' them. From the middle of the seventeenth century, madness was linked with this country of confinement, and with the act which designated confinement as its natural abode" (Foucault, 40).

Foucault and our research connect these topics under the umbrella of governmentality and further emphasize the division that is at the center of neoliberal governmentality. Today we have biopolitics and bio-power (regulation of life, "bio," for the population and individuals in the West) and necropolitics and necro-power (management of death, "necro," in the East and South) that is increasingly present as war machine, total ghettoization and massive incapacitation.

In 2017 Brandon Fletcher's graduate thesis, which theorizes the relation between disability rhetoric and international relation, was made available (see Fletcher 2017). He showed that the vocabularies of disability in recent years are permeated with describing political leaders in the global arena as ill, mad, insane; this shifts to whole societies or groups of people (refugees are seen as a fully disabled category in global capitalism, and/or as terrorists), for example the LGBTQI population is seen as an ill, disabled category of citizens in the space of post-socialism or in the post-colonial "Third world" (where the level of discrimination was set up historically by the imperial colonial entities through massive dispossession of wealth and bodies). In the meantime the imperial Occident "emancipated," but left in poverty, disposed land and ruined populations, embedded with a colonial Occidental heteronormative violence. Fletcher shows clearly that insanity, madness, etc. are taken from a vocabulary of terms used to describe disable conditions, now referring to global leaders (mad Chavez, insane Kim Jong-Eun, etc.). As these vocabularies are fully constructed, we need to break with any natural relations when thinking about politics, society, economics and the body and disability.

To return to the question of futurity and disability, the relation changed also due to new media technology and its transhumanist perception, which is developed in the neoliberal global capitalist West, which in the last instance, cynically speaking, "universalizes" the "disabled" body, claiming that any-body needs a technological or pharmacological prosthesis, therefore every-body is a defective body vis-à-vis new media technology and biotechnology. Ria Cheyne, who researches representations of disability in contemporary literature, cautions us against the connection between the disability cure narrative in SF and eugenics. She explains that "Read from a disability studies perspectives, narratives involving the eradication of impairment are likely to raise the specter of eugenics." (Cheyne quoted in Broyer, 2016). Eugenics was part of Nazi Germany genocidal politics in the Second World War. Following the war, with the institution of human rights, many other countries gradually began to abandon eugenics policies, although some Western countries, among them the United States, continued to carry out forced sterilizations. This was also the case in the former Eastern European territory.

Besides "the critical disability discourses" researchers such as Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky have proposed a "new disability history," with a collection titled *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, published in 2001. New disability histories (I will pluralize it) demand to historicize disability, to understand it through temporal perspectives, and that we see a massive involvement of disabled people in the political process of rediscovering their own histories (see Longmore and Umansky 2001). Disabled people radically change perspective from being victimized to being empowered with agency. Furthermore, as new disability implies, it is necessary to look at disability studies through the lenses of specific geographical-historical and social contexts — in our case we focus in a parallel between the Occident and the Post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav spaces.

Performativity, precarity, disability and sexual politics

All these notions of performativity, precarity, disability and sexual politics are an anathema to the space of the former Eastern Europe—a geographical, historical and cultural space that shows a very ambiguous (violent, dismissive, nationalistic) relation toward the body, sexuality, normality, and visibility. We need this path into a geopolitical and historical differences of these topics in Europe and worldwide to re-conceptualize disability and ableism in relation to specific histories, social processes, politics, economy and culture. Despite differences between post-socialism and capitalism, hegemony, violence, and discrimination echo with Christianity, whiteness, heteronormativity, masculinist and sexist rhetorics, though the forms of these linkages are different.

We have to be aware that the fact that disability came into a wider focus after 2001 is an outcome of a neoliberal global capitalist accumulation strongly connected with the war machine. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 that resulted in the disappearance of Eastern Europe, forming Fortress Europe and dividing all those outside the European Union, global capitalism succeeded to develop a new relation toward what is still perceived as "communist" or post-socialist countries. Connell states that "Capitalism takes different shapes: in communist China being symbiotic with a party dictatorship, in the US and India with populist oligarchies, in Saudi Arabia with a puritan patriarchy, in Scandinavia with a struggling social democracy. And it continues to evolve" (Connell, 1376).

Disability is today, to put it simply, directly connected with poverty, a deterioration of working conditions and new racialized labor divisions in the global capitalist world. As formulated by Connell global capitalism and its neoliberal ideology makes profit from: "[B]odies: biotechnology and more. There is the international 'tissue economy' that includes the shipment of blood and organs from Third World bodies to First World bodies. There is a commodification and redefinition of women's bodies in global electronic media, via pornography, celebrity and the beauty industry. The beauty industry too is globalizing: it now has a presence in some developing countries as a cosmetic-surgery industry. Both the tissue economy and the redefinition of bodies have effects on disability: the former by literally manufacturing impaired bodies in the global periphery (the 'donors'), the latter by circulating fantasies of the perfect body and inciting desire among the global rich to buy perfection. Both produce, as the dark side of the pursuit of health and desirability, a category of rubbish people (to use an Australian indigenous expression) who can be seen as contemptible and expendable" (Connell, 1376).

What does this mean? Connell puts it clearly: "Under workfare regimes that claim to end paternalistic care and dependence—in fact re-regulating the relation between welfare and the labor market—some disabled bodies are defined as work-able, others as deserving of welfare. To enable labor market participation becomes a key form of treatment or rehabilitation. To enforce this view of disability, rising levels of surveillance are required. The globalization of neoliberal capitalism has extended this logic of disability around the world" (Connell, 1375—1376).

Looking historically, in socialism and capitalism, impaired productivity or exclusion from the labor market (in the past in the strictly divided international labor markets) were, as it is today, key ways for defining the disabled body (Connell, 1375—1376). We still remember that in socialism the outcasts were those called parasites (many contemporary artists in former Yugoslavia, Slovenia and Serbia and especially those not producing concrete paintings and sculptures, but involved in new artistic practices, conceptual and body arts, were seen as parasites of society). In a review of the history of disability within the Soviet Union, anthropologist Sarah Phillips recounts, "During the 1980 Olympic games in Moscow, a Western journalist inquired whether the Soviet Union would participate in the first Paralympic games, scheduled to take place in Great Britain later that year. The reply from a Soviet representative was swift, firm, and puzzling: 'There are no invalids in the USSR!'" (see Phillips, 2009).

Today poverty, class difference and violent racialization establish the division of who can work and who is made disabled. This forms continually new categories of socially, economically, politically, and culturally produced disabled people, or people impaired for work. But it does not stop only at this point — at the same time processes of differentiation based on gender and also on the fully constructed category of "race," saturated with class difference, structure the international labor market division.

These views are today fundamental to sketch a new history of disability in the global world and in the former East of Europe, specifically in Post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav territories, that are both, albeit sharing histories of transformation from socialism to post-socialist to neoliberal global capitalism, different. The space of the former Yugoslavia that includes all the new states established violently after the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), from Slovenia, to Serbia, to Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, display at least three lines of directions. The first regards the self-empowerment and self-organization by people themselves, being made disabled, minoritized and ghettoized, they intervene strongly in public spaces, media and institutions demanding their rights; the second line is the space of state policy, institutions and governmentality (the whole sector is fully neoliberal and widely privatized); the third is artistic, cultural interventions, building counter-histories.

There is a whole list of discriminations that re-construct disability in turbo neoliberal post-socialism from economy (completely unequal possibilities to work and be paid) to public access (disability is repeatedly not connected with structural discrimination but is always individualized) to culture. The cultural work of images changed historically and presently. Still, photography as the most remarkable apparatus to "capture" disabled people travels from its indexicality (the power of photography over words) to function currently as a "trophy image," that seizes (literally) the exoticized impaired body as a trophy and makes it visible — but socially and politically mute and therefore invisible. Names and dates, groups and programs need to be listed, although I can only sketch some important points of this history and this present.

The Space of the former Yugoslavia and the Culture of Handicap

The pillar of the struggle in Slovenia regarding disability is the Association for the Theory and Culture of Handicap (YHD). The informal movement YHD (Youth Handicapped Deprivileged) was established in 1992, and later changed into YHD — Association for Theory and Culture of Handicap. They formulate a proper position as: "The YHD group (Youth Handicapped Deprivileged) was shaped from the need of young disabled students who wanted to taste freedom and independence. The theory of handicap and revolt against medical comprehension of disability are the principal guidelines to which the Associations' projects and actions adhere. Other associations for disabled people are centered on medical diagnoses of its members, whereas YDH aims to bring about positive changes concerning the position of handicapped people in the society. For YHD, disability is a social status and not a characteristic of the body or a mental condition, difficulty or 'special need'" (see YHD).

In the beginning of 2000 Elena Pečarič, one of the most prominent in the group and a public figure in Slovenia (Pečarič, suffering from severe disability, ran as an independent Slovenian presidential candidate in 2007), presented the project *Independent Living of Disabled People*. In the same year Darja Zaviršek, a prominent figure from the field of social work, also professor and theoretician, published a seminal book in Slovenian in the field: *Handicap as a cultural trauma. Historicization of images, bodies and of everyday practices of disabled people* (Zaviršek 2000). Zaviršek showed that physical and mental barriers are not inherited and do not exist from birth, but are mostly acquired during individual's' lives. She argued that it is not possible to talk about disability without taking into account poverty, racism, and other forms of violence. In 2014 Zaviršek, with another remarkable theoretician Jelka Zorn, edited a special issue of *Socialno delo* (Social Work), as part of the field of social work in Slovenia, published by the Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana, and focused entirely on disability studies in post-socialist countries and South-East Asia. This special issue identifies three topics by significant theoretical positions throughout the former Yugoslavia.

Vjollca Krasniqi (Kosovo) stated that social policy, politics and cultural representations of disability in post-war regions (as in the Balkan or ex-Yugoslav region) are key for thinking about disability in the whole territory of the former Yugoslavia, as well as in Slovenia (which seems at first the least affected by the war). Zaviršek asked to urgently rethink how normality has been created and constructed in a society like Slovenia and shows the socially-constructed responses towards bodily specificities which determine the quality of life of persons with impairments in different societies. Kristina Urbanc, Daniela Bratković, and Natalija Lisak have written that the current crisis of Croatian society has harmed people with disabilities and their families, as well as their position in society and their participation in everyday life. Sanela Bašić identified that in Bosnia and Herzegovina people with disabilities are often denied full participatory citizenship through different mechanisms of social exclusion. She tackled one of the most urgent and complex topics of contemporary disability studies: naming sources and mechanisms of social exclusion of people with disabilities in a post-conflict, transitional post-socialist country at Europe's semi-periphery.

Krasniqi reflected on Kosovo, which proclaimed independence from Serbia in 2008. She analyzed the relationship between the (post-independent) Kosovo state and the disability movement and explored the ways in which disability, as an embodied condition and a form of social identity, functions in the cultural imagination and systems of representation. Krasniqi indicated that the legislative instruments concerning disability ensure *de jure* but not *de facto* equality.

From 2007 an international trans-disciplinary art festival *Extravagant Bodies* was initiated in Zagreb, Croatia as a triennial project that deals with societal demarcations of normal and pathological physicality, appearance, behavior, sexuality and/or life style. In 2016 at the fourth edition of *Extravagant Bodies*, subtitled Crime and Punishment, topics that were put forward were social, legislative, scientific and ideological constructions of criminality and social norms that delineate criminal from non-criminal behavior. As they formulated: "Once again the key question remains: what is outside the norm? How are the boundaries between the criminalized and the non-criminalized?" (see *Extravagant Bodies*).

Vesna Mačković, performer and musician, when asked to describe the situation for disabled artists in Croatia, stated that "Zagreb and Rijeka (the capital and port in Croatia) have good workshops for developing disabled dancers. (...) But I think the main issue causing lack of disabled performative artists in Croatia isn't actually lack of inclusive workshops or academic programs but the lack of a critical number of interested disabled artists. As it was for me before, (...) we ourselves, or society, has reinforced a mindset that a performative body is strictly one type of non-disabled body and no other" (see Mačković).

Therefore it is time to intervene in the theory of performance and performativity, in art and culture, and at the same time not to dismiss the massive processes of disenfranchisement that are an outcome of a new poverty imposed by neoliberal global capitalism and their brothers in arms, the post-communist ultra-liberalized states.

In June 1991 Dah Theatre was established in Belgrade by Jadranka Anđelić and Dijana Milošević, and in 1993 the theater expanded its activities by forming the Theatre Research Centre. From the beginning Dah Theatre, with other important sites and groups, always connects proper work to the position of an individual in dark times and history. Dah Theatre, Women in Black (a civil society group that started in 1991 in Belgrade with a public nonviolent protest against the war, the Serbian regime's policy and militarism) and *Off Frame* Festival (an independent and alternative festival working with different forms of discrimination), since the 1990s, have worked together on the aesthetic formation of the anti-patriarchal resistance. In 2011 at the Theatre for Young Audiences in the UK, Sanja Krsmanović Tasić, another core member of Dah Theater and Program Director of Dah Theatre Research Centre, gave a seminar on theater techniques to be used by disability performers.

Olivera Simić, another notable academic writer, based in Australia and who publishes extensively on a variety of topics regarding disability and international justice, and Dijana Milošević, presented "Enacting Justice: The Role of Dah Theatre Company in Transitional Justice Processes in Serbia and beyond" in 2014. They maintained that "Dah Theatre gives public voice to survivors of mass human rights violations—in particular to women. The theatre and its members employ performance as a strategy for truth-seeking, resistance and intervention, while actively promoting social and symbolic reparation—a process that is much needed but overlooked by the Serbian state" (Simić and Milošević 2014).

To conclude, I spoke in the very beginning of a necessity to break with the constant victimization of people labeled as disabled. In such a context Olivera Simić, in another text, exposes that victims are in constant need of rescue and rehabilitation and therefore she demands the possibility of emancipation from such an oppressive context of master and slave. She quotes another renowned author from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jasmina Husanović, political philosopher and theoretician, who states when reflecting on the same problem "it is time to deal with loss, rupture, break — mend it, repair it, restore it, repoliticize it, reimagine it, make it creative, politically productive, turn it into the politics of hope, of emancipatory politics!" (Husanović in Simić 2013).

In conclusion, our interest lies in the possibilities of transdisciplinary work, building knowledge, sharing information and finally producing textuality that serves as an engine for activation, empowerment and reflection. This is where we stand in order to continue on this path.

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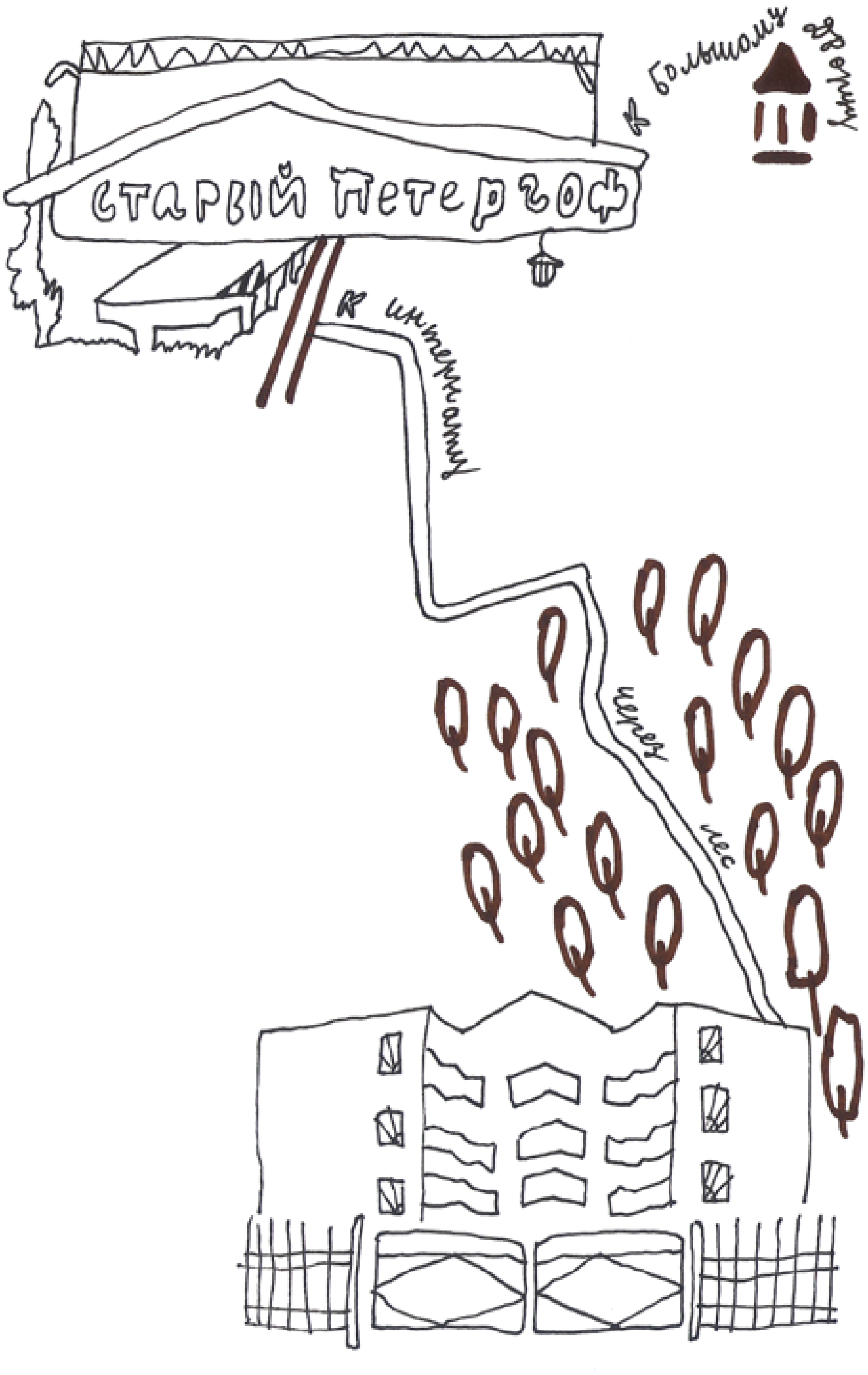

Alevtina Kakhidze, 2017, for »Tracings Out of Thin Air.«

THE QUESTION OF DISABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY DANCE PRACTICES

ANETA STOJNIĆ

Within the larger context of questioning disability in relation to artistic and cultural practices in Eastern Europe and worldwide, questions of systematic marginalization, and rethinking the possibilities for empowerment proposed by this volume, in this brief text I shall focus on three issues: a) specific case of treatment of able and disabled bodies in contemporary dance and more specifically the possibilities for dismantling the normativity of the dancer's body; b) how artwork by artists with disabilities is treated in the wider artistic context and how it can transgress the label of "disability"; c) availability of formal artistic education for people with disabilities.

Emphasizing the specific position of disabled dancers in relation to other disabled artists Ann Cooper Albright claims that dance as a form of cultural production makes the body visible in the artwork itself (Albright) — or I would add, in dance the representation is always embodied. "Thus" Albright continues: "when we look at dance with disabled dancers, we are looking at both the choreography and the disability" (Albright).

Such a situation can be problematic from different aspects, one of the issues being: does the non-normative body on stage become exposed to the gaze of normative able-bodied audiences, who applaud inclusion while expecting a lesser quality of art-work? In order to contest such marginalization we need to pose the question: what kind of embodied practice is realized in the performance by and with disabled artists? And what representational codes of dance and the performer's body are being challenged in such a situation?

The disabled performer appears on stage as a political subject who re-claims the non-normative position exposing the traditional ideas of a flawless, perfect, skilled able-bodied dancer body as anachronistic. This is also important because it undermines the ideology of the cultural paradigm of health and fitness, and as Albright emphasizes, disabled dancers expose and challenge the strong preconceptions of the dance world about which bodies and movements can constitute a dance and/or a dancer: "In order to examine ableist preconceptions in the dance world, one must confront both the ideological and symbolic meanings that the disabled body holds in our culture, as well as the practical conditions of disability. Watching disabled bodies dancing forces us to see with a double vision, and helps us to recognize that while a dance performance is grounded in the physical capacities of a dancer, it is not limited by them" (Albright).

In order to elaborate on the above-mentioned issues I will look at the example of work by the artistic-activist group “Let’s...”1 (in Serbian “Hajde da...”) from Belgrade, Serbia. Active since 1999, over the years they have realized a number of contemporary dance and theatre projects (performances and workshops) with artists with various physical disabilities as well as with those with mental health problems and youth with developmental difficulties. Their activism also includes work with other marginalized and “sensitive” groups but here I will focus only on these two groups. In their inclusive performances the group “Let’s...” made a significant effort against ableism and towards the empowerment of disabled artists in the context of contemporary dance and theatre in Serbia. Specific to their approach is to work together in the same production with disabled dancers and dancers without disabilities. One of the important issues that they raise in their work has to do with the lack of availability of formal artistic education for people with various forms of disabilities. As one of the models of marginalization they recognize the fact that artists with disabilities are not accepted as equal participants in a professional artistic context because they often lack formal academic artistic education. The reason for this is that art academies and faculties do not accept them as “regular” students. In most cases even the facilities of art schools, faculties and academies are not accessible, which should be the most basic, let alone any more substantial practice such as providing programs and study materials that would be adequate to accommodate the material conditions for people with different kinds of disabilities. Therefore we have a double-bind situation that perpetuates the circle of further structural marginalization and discrimination.

With the aim to prompt and facilitate the collaboration of contemporary dance choreographers and people with disabilities interested in studying dance, the collective “Let’s...” realized a long-term program of free inclusive contemporary dance workshops, that were open for both persons without and with disabilities, for working and learning together. According to Marko Pejović, one of the founders of collective: “When the group “Let’s...” (Grupa “Hajde da...”) started working on the development of inclusive theatre in Serbia, it was not possible to see the entire picture. We were not completely sure what we were dealing with [...] I believe that the greatest obstacles were psychological. A number of experts in the field of disability, as well as part of the community of people with disabilities, believed there was no possibility of success. They didn’t think that a paraplegic or a person with muscular dystrophy could be engaged in artistic dance” (Pejović).

This was also the topic of their inclusive performances, such as “Hegel and long list of frauds,” where they challenged the idea of a wholeness and totality established through the standardized “able body image” while all other bodies are rendered in terms of lack. The authors try to dismantle such preconceptions, offering the idea that every possible body can be under-

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[1] See http://hajdeda.org.rs

stood as a dance body, calling for educational institutions in performing arts not to discriminate against disabled bodies.

In their artistic process, the group relies on the long tradition in contemporary and conceptual dance which aims to dismantle the social construct of the normative "dancer" body, by opening up and including in dance forms a variety of different non-normative bodies that were unthinkable to appear in classical ballet forms: from untrained bodies, old bodies, obese bodies, queer and trans bodies to bodies with different forms of disabilities. It is a tradition of contemporary dance where, as Leigh Foster argues, choreographers appear as facilitators more interested in the cultural and social connotation of an action performed by specific performers' bodies than the physical articulation of such action: "choreographers began to ask: How do these actions signify identity? What kinds of cultural milieus do they represent? What had begun with Cunningham as an embrace of all movement as articulation soon transformed into an interest in all movement as varieties of signifying cultural and individual identity" (Foster, 205).

In this context the performing bodies in inclusive theatre open the possibility for critical re-articulation of manifestations, representations and transformations of the body and the corporeal, as socio-cultural, political, psychological, physiological, material and virtual entities.

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Alevtina Kakhidze, 2017, for »Tracings Out of Thin Air.«

ARTISTIC AGENCY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

MIRA KALLIO-TAVIN

Collaborative arts projects

Collaboration has become characteristic for much of the contemporary art practices in the twenty-first century.[1] According to Foster (1996), community-based art is defined as collaborative and interactive art-making between an artist and a local group. Logically, it follows that people who take part in art-making are seen as co-producers and participants, rather than audience or viewers. The boundary between the collaborative partners and the artists becomes ambiguous, and the role of the artwork is understood in a potentially novel fashion through the collaborative process. Often, the artist is conceived of as a collaborator and producer of situations and events rather than a person who creates art objects (see more Kallio-Tavin 2014).

Participatory arts practices are considered by many to be a logical step toward a meaningful relationship between artists and participants and an efficacious means of shrinking the distance between the traditionally separate poles of art production and reception. As such, collaborative arts projects are often considered artistically and politically critical and progressive practice. Criticism has been directed to how right-wing, neo-liberalist, and consumerist culture has dominated the art world through art market-centered thinking. As Claire Bishop (2012) has stated, among others, for many artists and curators, participation is important as a project, to critique the consumerist-centered art world. Bishop (2012) refers to Paulo Virno, who pointed out that while historic avant-garde practices were encouraged by centralized political parties, today's collective practices are connected to the decentered and heterogeneous net of social co-operation. Social justice and human rights has been the key role for activist artists through collaborative art-making. For example, artists working with people with disabilities have wanted to increase the societal knowledge of people with different needs and to offer a voice for those who have been silenced in society.

Bishop (2012) emphasizes that, "collectivity and collaboration have been some of the most persistent themes of advanced art and exhibition making of the last decade.... Individualism...

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[1] Portions of this paper were previously published in Kallio-Tavin, M. (2017). "Participatory and community-based contemporary art practices with people with disabilities" In John Derby & Alice Wexler (eds.), *Contemporary art and culture in disability studies. Critical Perspectives on Disability*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

(has been) viewed with suspicion, not least because the commercial art system and museum programming continue to revolve around lucrative single figures." (p.12) Collaborative practices were, hence, strongly connected to new liberalist critiques of art world market values, first advocated by artists and curators on the political left.

Ten years after the early social networks that Virno and Bishop discuss, the critique has moved on to question the real possibilities of democratic collaboration and, ironically, at the same time, new liberalist practices have benefited from the participatory discourse. Due to this new capitalist approach to collaborative practices, what started as a critique of dominant art markets supplying artistic commodities has lost its greater criticism and unfortunately serves the markets better than critical art-making. New liberalist politics, such as New Labour in the UK from 1997 to 2010 (Bishop 2012), are busy benefiting from the avant-garde and interested in changing its practices quite flexibly, according to the customer's will. If people (audience, visitors, participants, customers) want collaborative activities, why should' the art market not follow that direction? That is how the market works, after all.

Gerald Raunig (2013) criticizes the word *participation* because it suggests that people take part in something that is whole. Like the idea of a presupposed community, one can then only gain a (small) part of something that is already predetermined. Raunig states that so-called *community building* often remains as rhetoric of participation and involvement and actually becomes pseudo-participation. The terminology is appropriated and made dominant by the creative industry and right-wing politics, and does not give true agency to the people involved.

There are, however, artists, educators and curators who *critically* work in collaboration, who "are interested in devising social situations as a dematerialized, anti-market, politically engaged project to carry on the avant-garde call to make art a more vital part of life." (Bishop 2012, 13) What remains as relevant questions are: what are the inherent problems with collaborative and participatory work?; how should artists, educators and curators work in collaborative projects, especially when working with people with disabilities?

Criticizing normalcy

I will next focus on the meaning of disability in society, as I understand it (see also Kallio-Tavin 2015a; 2015b). I think it is important to include this perspective to clarify why agency is so important when working with people with disabilities, and to understand why good intentions are not enough when working with people with disabilities in arts projects. Similar to the discrimination of people based on ethnicity or gender, historically people with disabilities have been objects of abuse and control. This is why it is crucial to draw attention to the practices of artists, educators and curators, who work in collaborative art projects.

Throughout history, disability has been difficult for normative people to relate to, even though it has always been part of human societies. Simo Vehmas (2012) sums up how during Antiquity and the Middle Ages, disability was believed to be a consequence of a transgression, a result of moral wrongdoing. People with disabilities were either isolated from society or killed (Stiker 1999; Vehmas 2012).

During modern times, disability has been understood, controlled, and managed through scientific and medical classifications and diagnostics (Vehmas 2012). For these same reasons, disability became an individualized physical or mental deficit, and an object of treatment and oversight. The origin of disability was connected, and is often still connected, to bad luck (an accident), bad habits (wrong diet and intoxicants), or bad genes (p. 270). Normalcy became a measurement of humanity, a standard that we learn early in life, and *abnormalcy* an undesirable deviation from the norm. The definitions of, and reasons for, abnormalcy have been changing throughout history. What has remained constant, however, is that people want to keep a distance from abnormalcy (disability), partially from fear of our own mortality (Swain & French2000; Wexler 2005).

Both approaches to disability—the moralist and the medical—are criticised for their paternalism. The freedom of individuals and the right to make their own decisions are limited, which are sometimes imposed against their will (Vehmas 2012). In the medical approach, disabilities are perceived as potentially treatable via various therapies. This idea is largely accepted in societies and is problematic for many reasons. Disability studies scholars aim to show how disability is not primarily a biological condition, but at the intersection of society and its discourses, which create and maintain disability through values, conventions and significances (Davis 2006; Osteen 2008; Siebers 2006; Vehmas 1998; Wilson & Lewiecki-Wilson 2004). This so-called social model, or socio-political approach to disability, has challenged earlier approaches. Acknowledging all bodies as socio-politically constructed, and disability as other than a personal tragedy or distinguished from impairment, has helped to represent disability as a socially constructed phenomenon. As Tom Shakespeare (1992) has stated, the real cause of disability is discrimination and prejudice, not an impairment.

While non-disabled people might assume that disabled people lack "normalcy," this is rarely experienced by people with disabilities themselves, who consider disability to be a natural part of their identity. Disabled people are subjected to many disabling expectations, such as "adjusting" to and "accepting" their situation. These types of expectations can be more disenfranchising than the impairment itself (Swain & French 2000).

More recently, the socio-political notions of disability have been developed towards a so-called affirmation approach. The affirmative approach directly challenges the presumption of personal tragedy and the determinations based on the values of nondisabled people. While the social model, also generated by disabled people, offers a viewpoint of those living within a disabling society, the affirmative approach to disability values disabled individuals' own lifestyles as culture and cultural identity (Swain & French 2000).

While disability is recognized as a cultural identity comparable with other cultural minority identities, it is clear that there is not just one disability culture. Disability culture refers to a diverse group of people with diverse physical or mental conditions, who often experience cultural discrimination, stigmatization, segregation and medicalization (Eisenhauer 2007). These diverse groups and individuals also have different identities and different understandings of their own (dis)abilities. It has often been demonstrated that individuals with disabilities do not want to be treated as "special" (Derby 2011), live in segregated spaces, receive a segregated education, and suffer a loss of rights (Blandy 1994). Also, people experiencing disabilities often do not want to be perceived as "curious," or whose artistic production is categorized by such designations as "outsider art," "mad art," or "l'art brut" (Blandy 1991; Wexler 2005).

Towards artistic agency

In arts projects, nondisabled artists are often working with people with disabilities who offer possibilities for artistic expression and societal inclusion. Many participatory projects have made a significant difference to the lives of the participants (Jokela, Hiltunen, and Härkönen 2015; McLeod and Ricketts 2013; Powell 2008). Indeed, they are extremely important, self-critical, and well-planned participatory activities. In countries not identified as so-called welfare states, and in which the state does not offer certain services to its citizens, community arts projects have sometimes taken a substantial role in improving conditions in people's lives. While these projects are well-intentioned and the artists, organizers, audience, and most importantly, the participants are often quite pleased with the process and the outcome, there could be even more ambitious goals for cultural participation and agency.

Issues, such as who creates the community and by what means, need to be discussed. What are the politics behind the groupings, and whose interests are being met as a result of these groupings? Naming a group based on its participant's abilities is questionable. It is also important to raise questions such as how do we define a community without stigmatising the people participating in it? How do we see a person's personality above and beyond his or her disability when the group is externally defined by that particular disability? How can artists, educators and curators create a positive identity instead of limiting one's personality? The defined characteristics for any community, be it self-organised or organised by an external authority, reveal the values, wishes and aims of contemporary society.

“Nothing about us without us” and “art belongs to everybody” are well-known disability rights slogans. Academics, artists and activists have been working for two decades towards the fulfillment of these slogans. Still, people with disabilities as equal representatives in public and private art and media institutions, and decision-making bodies are rare. People with disabilities are still controlled and regulated by nondisabled “experts.” While there might be services available, there are few possibilities to actively produce and implement actions in art and culture, or to take part in policy-making decisions in society. How might artists, educators and curators work in collaborative projects, especially when working together with people with disabilities? If one is interested in working with dematerialized, anti-market, politically engaged projects with pro-social justice with human rights perspectives, what should be kept in mind? Is it even possible to work in participative manners so as not to allow collaboration to become an empty rhetoric of neo-liberalism?

Recent developments in the arts, education, and curating fields have emphasized the actions of “thinking together” and “self-organizing.” There are projects which have turned more towards the ideologies of historic avant-garde practices, and instead of participation, they invite individuals to think and act together. Activist and critical approaches are crucial when collaborative arts projects are about to become all-purpose handy tools.

It is always important to ask whose interest, agenda, ideology or orientation is being driven when working and thinking together. Who provides spaces, who funds the collaboration, and for what reasons? It is also important to recognize and critically evaluate the level of democracy the collective claims to practice. And, it is important to encourage self-organization among disabled people rather than encouraging nondisabled people to organize projects on their behalf. First hand perspectives instead of the interpretations of external specialists are more accurate representations of disability culture. Maintaining the freedom of individualism and avoiding paternalism should be a leading principle for many projects. Perhaps artists, educators and curators would benefit working as participants with a self-organized disability artist community who are too often defined, organized, and understood as “just” participants.

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CYBORG EXITS IN THE CLASSROOM

BODY HETEROGLOSSIAS AND CRIP MATERIALS FOR DIRTY KNOWLEDGE IN ART EDUCATION

DORIS ARZTMANN AND EVA EGERMANN IN CONVERSATION

Don't swallow your tongue

The system got your tongue

Stiches stigmatas

Our incompetences open a whole field of new competences

Eva: Donna Haraway writes "Bodies are maps of power and identity" (1991a, 180), when considering how cyborgs could offer a "way out" of the "maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves." (1991a, 181) The idea of this body "heteroglossia"[1] is to both build and destroy machines, identities and categories […] (Ibid).

Dualisms such as "normal" (as a bodily ideal) and "abnormal," marking everything that deviates from it, are practices that shape social inequality and help to uphold social hierarchies. To break with this, we were interested in doing something different: to conceive the classroom, or art education, as a realm of possibility where concepts of plural identities and bodies can be negotiated and to introduce body heteroglossias as a practice in art education.

Haraway's notion of bodies speaking multiple languages inspired the title for the workshop "Body Heteroglossias. Inscribing practices of resistance in art education" that we held at the Institute for Art Education at the Zurich University of the Arts in June 2014.[2] In this workshop, we approached the topic from the perspective of bodily norms and cyborg "ways out." The idea was to enable alternative ways of reading and producing images, and inscribing practices of resistance in the classroom. Which cyborg perspectives can be found through art production in the framework of art education?

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[1] The term heteroglossia describes the coexistence of distinct varieties within a single "language" (in Greek: hetero- "different" and glōssa "tongue, language"). In this way the term translates the Russian разноречие [raznorechie], which was introduced by the Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin in 1934.

[2] The workshop was part of a network of events called "Persönlichkeitsverwicklung #3: gut aussehen. Geschmack und Schönheit im Kunstunterricht" and was facilitated by Carmen Mörsch at the Institute for Art Education at the Zurich University of the Arts. The workshop participants were students of art education from Zurich, Geneva, Luzern and Basel.

Doris: Like Donna Haraway, we were interested in imagining a "feminist speaking in tongues," (1991a, 181) that is, in plural ways of speaking feminism. I do not dream of one common queer-crip-feminist language, but of many: an empowering, undogmatic heteroglossia[3]—of a body heteroglossia.

In her *Cyborg Manifesto*, Haraway refers to cyborgs as a way of imagining gender and embodiment as fluid and partial. In this workshop, together with the participants, we sought to enter into a "cyborg mode," as we called it, in an attempt to overcome well-rehearsed, restrictive, and opposition-based speech-acts, thoughts and actions, so that we may be able to "both build and destroy machines, identities and categories" and to imagine a way of being that entails an awareness of being part of a process, mutable and interwoven with other living creatures and things.

Looking at "being" from another vantage point opens up new perspectives. This reminds me of a conversation between disability activist and artist Sunaura Taylor and philosopher Judith Butler on a walk together in San Francisco.[4] They discuss the question "what can a body do" instead of asking "what is a body," which, on the one hand, draws attention to the capacity or ability to act, that is, what a body is capable of within a given social context. At the same time, it also enables one to critically question what a body is allowed to do within a given social context.

We are both concerned with dissolving restrictive norms and limitations of what bodies are allowed to do. We are also concerned with looking at nonconformist conceptions of the body and political movements, not only as a site of discipline and normalization, but also as a site of desire. I do this in my life, for instance, by negotiating spaces with disability activists and those with dissident genders and desires in order to make counterhegemonic and oppositional ways of being-in-the-world shareable and livable. What has to happen for art education to become such a space?

I. By "Inscriptions of Practices of Resistance," we mean...

Eva: Simi Linton also writes about non-conformist embodiments and dissident experiences in her text "Claiming Disability. Knowledge and Identity":

"We have come out not with brown woolen lap robes over our withered legs or dark glasses over our pale eyes but in shorts and sandals, in overalls and business suits, dressed for play and work—straightforward, unmasked, and unapologetic. We are, as Crosby, Stills, and Nash told their Woodstock audience, letting our 'freak flag fly.' And we are not only the high-toned

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[3] I/We were not content with the "hetero" element of heteroglossia, because it references dualisms like hetero and homo in addition to a notion of "normal" (as a bodily ideal). These are examples of oppositions based on exclusions, which function as markers for social injustice and serve to stabilize social hierarchies.

[4] This is part of the film *Examined Life* (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0HZaPkF6qE).

wheelchair athletes seen in recent television ads but the gangly, pudgy, lumpy, and bumpy of us, declaring that shame will no longer structure our wardrobe or our discourse. We are everywhere these days, wheeling and loping down the street, tapping our canes, sucking on our breathing tubes, following our guide dogs, puffing and sipping on the mouth sticks that propel our motorized chairs. We may drool, hear voices, speak in staccato syllables, wear catheters to collect our urine, or live with a compromised immune system. We are all bound together, not by this list of our collective symptoms but by the social and political circumstances that have forged us as a group." (Linton 1998, 3)

This quote also appeared in the first issue of *Crip Magazine* and, during the workshop, parts of Simi Linton's text, which reads like a manifesto, gave ample input for a lively discussion. In her text, Linton refers to the "Disability Rights Movement" and to the beginnings of academia's engagement with disability. "Disability Studies" approaches "disability" as historically contingent, cultural, and socially organized or constituted. From this vantage point, Disability Studies formulates a critique of ableism (the notion that a person always functions in a healthy and able manner and the creation of an opposition based on everything that is in any way deficient). A key point in this "project of ableism," as Fiona Kumari Campbell calls it (2009, 3), is the normative notion of a bodily, ideal standard that can be fundamentally distinguished from everything that deviates from it. The "healthy" body norm is constituted through distinguishing it from bodies considered "disabled" or "dysfunctional." In this sense, "disability" does not refer to a physical impairment, but to the entire context of practices, structures, institutions, that is, mechanisms of exclusion that discriminate and, as such, create disability in the first place.

Reading on in Simi Linton's text, and in the work of other Disability Studies authors, we find critical interrogations of knowledge, science and educational institutions and their roles in reproducing social values and normative notions of bodies. Thus, "knowledge about disability is socially produced to uphold existing practices." (Linton 1998, 4)

Linton continues saying: "We have been hidden whether in the institutions that have confined us, the attics and basements that sheltered our family's shame, the 'special' schools and classrooms designed to solve the problems we are thought to represent, or riding in segregated transportation, those 'invalid' coaches, that shuttle disabled people from one of these venues to another. The public has gotten so used to these screens that as we are now emerging, upping the ante on the demands for a truly inclusive society, we disrupt the social order." (Linton 1998, 3) Throughout history, the knowledge and experience of crip subjects have not been endowed with any authority.

Doris: This clearly shows the extent to which the social position of the person speaking/signing influences the kinds of knowledge that are endowed with any authority. In that same text, Simi Linton also refers to the curriculum as a manifest expression for what a society considers to be the right/appropriate or incorrect behavior (see Kliebard 1992). For instance, if we take a look at the curricula of art universities, specifically at the criteria, aims and processes of any given educational program, the power dimension of knowledge becomes tangible. Certain subjects are more visible and attributed value as techniques or topics "worth knowing." Other topics and meanings recede into the background, as Elizabeth Minnich writes in reference to women's studies in the early 1990s: "invisibility itself teaches something. It is not just an absence. Students who never hear of a woman philosopher have trouble believing in such a creature." (1990, 78) The curricula of study programs are saturated with ableist notions. Norm requirements for those teaching or learning are a part of the curriculum that is not made visible. Thus, they are implicitly present as "hidden" requirements for knowledge, art and cultural production.

There are, however, ways to influence and change what is considered a legitimate act or notion. In our workshop, we attempted to produce knowledge collectively and, using two of Donna Haraway's terms that describe how knowledge emerges, we sought to expand the realm of what is conceivable and livable. We worked with the notion of "situated knowledge" (see Haraway 1991b), which refers to a body of knowledge that includes in its analysis one's own social embeddedness, privileges and unperceived spots and those of the scientific field from which it emerges. Situated knowledge is local, does not speak in the name of all people, but instead approaches the notion of scientific objectivity by interweaving various perspectives. The second term we adopted for the workshop was "dirty knowledge" (see Haraway 1997), which refers to a body of knowledge that emerges to make a difference in the world. "To do that, one must be in the action, be infinite and dirty, not transcendent and clean." (Haraway 1997, 36) "Dirty knowledge" refrains from producing knowledge from nowhere. Knowledge, the production of knowledge, and conveying knowledge in the classroom are local, contextual, plural and mutable.

Eva: On the one hand, the classroom is a site where approved knowledge is reproduced, on the other, it is a site that opens up room to maneuver and possibilities to intervene. Thus, it is also a place where various social practices can find their way in… a place we desire, where we make arrangements, but also where rebellion can be practiced. Although norms and social identities (as "hidden" requirements) are implicitly conveyed, the knowledge is still—as you emphasized already—plural and mutable. An involvement in which to intervene – for example, by means of heteroglossias and polyphony, through the common production of dirty, situated knowledge or, in leaving the classroom behind, following the cyborg.

Art classes could be attributed a special significance. US cultural theorist bell hooks ascribed the art class in school to be a place with exceptional potential for resistance.[5] In her collection

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[5] Here, bell hooks contextualizes her point of departure for the volume "class works, contributions to educational,

of essays *Art on My Mind. Visual Politics*, bell hooks recalls her time in school and writes: "In high school I painted pictures that won prizes. My art teacher, a white man whom we called Mr. Harold, always promoted and encouraged my work. I can still remember him praising me in front of my parents. To them art was a play. It was not something real —not a way to make a living." (hooks 1995, n.p.)

And although the teacher had assured her she was an artist, she could never really believe it. Having grown up and been socialized in a segregated environment, it was difficult for her to trust in his firm belief. The unusual degree of acceptance and attention seemed to have no real meaning, except to the students. "We ran to his classes. We escaped there. We entered the world of color, the free world of art. And in that world we were, momentarily, whatever we wanted to be." (Ibid.) For bell hooks, art class was a place where she could make her own critical distinctions, construct identities and actively participate in shaping and intervening in society (Egermann/Pritz 2009, 11).

Doris: Dis/Ability and Crip Theory are critical lenses through which we can ask questions. We examine what it means to be perceived/marked as not normal/able/functioning in everyday life, and try to develop a way of looking that enables us to see where normalization, ability and functionalizations are rendered invisible.

For me, as a researcher from the social sciences, the concrete context in which I address these questions is a project called *Grenzgänge* at a comprehensive school in Vienna. The people I conduct research with—17 school children between the ages of 9 and 14—approach the topic of "boundaries" or "limitations" (*Grenzen*) and practices of drawing boundaries in their everyday lives at school in a participatory manner. We are interested in negotiating the different experiences and ways knowledge is produced, as we all have different experiences of life at school. For instance, we also work with artistic exercises, because art is a language of so many diverse forms, it creates different possibilities for communication and expression. We are especially focused on finding out about how difference is established in the classroom. Disability is not only a physical status, but rather a social status, which always establishes abled bodies as well as dis-abled bodies. Within the context of schools in Vienna, we approach these processes together with the students, conducting small research projects centered on various questions, such as "which differences do we want to do away with?" or "what is cool—or stupid—at school?"

Art education is also a place where we seek to locate inscriptions of practices of resistance from a critical crip perspective. At the workshop in Zurich we presented and discussed conceptual tools developed by queer, feminist and/or disability studies thinkers. We also drew on materials from *Crip Magazine*, which offered us contemporary and historical strategies of resistance.

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artistic and research practices," which I edited in 2009 with my colleague Anna Pritz in the Art and Communication department headed by Marion von Osten at the Academy of Fine Art Vienna.

Eva: The fact that both abled bodies and disabled bodies are established—as you described above—takes place in everyday life and specific social contexts (such as the school context), through mechanisms, the constant reproduction of routines and practices, a certain form of social order. "We disrupt the social order" writes Simi Linton about a new self-understanding of a crip movement that wants to stop reproducing images of the helpless victim. In her discussion, she references the history and culture of the radical crip movements. In her text "Staring Back: Self-Representations of Disabled Performance Artists," which is also in the workshop reader, Rosemary Garland Thompson (2000) brings up the problem with the question that is most often asked of people with an impairment: "What happened to you?." In her analysis, these "stare-and-tell rituals" that take place when this question is asked are technologies of domination. Dis/ability is something that emerges through this judgment people make about each other in certain relations. Mary Duffy, a performance artist Garland Thompson mentions in her article, presents these social rituals of judgment, taking them to the point of absurdity. The workshop offered us a space, to consider counter-rituals (a response to the stare-and-tell ritual) for specific social contexts, such as the school context… It also gave us an opportunity to think about art education projects that, as bell hooks describes, can offer space for expressing plural notions of identity and conceptions of the body, or a self-reflective way of speaking—in the "cyborg mode"—without habitually resorting to the usual associations and ascriptions.

Doris: A further conceptual tool we used in the workshop came from an excerpt from a text called "Disability Aesthetics" by Tobin Siebers (2010). Here, the author speaks about justifications made for disqualifying certain people on the basis of aesthetic principles combined with a claim of mental or physical inferiority. What Siebers calls "disability disqualification" (Ibid.) is specified in the excerpt as a form of social domination that gains legitimacy based on the claim that these relations are "natural" or "inevitable." The inferior mental and/or physical attributes ascribed to deviant bodies thus appear to be "natural" symbols of inferiority. Based on this, discrimination against disabled bodies in public discourse also appears as a "natural" consequence of biology, instead of an expression of social inequality. The trope of disability disqualification also applies to other minority groups and bodies. In addition, Siebers's concept of the body is rather broad, including a wide range of embodiments from human bodies to sculptures, images, animals, from buildings to artifacts. The author describes aesthetics as the domain in which the feeling of being different becomes strongly, strangely or uncannily tangible. These affects that bodies produce give rise to a process of valuation that determines if these bodies should be accepted or rejected. Siebers describes this entanglement of the emotional and physical experience of being different and "disability" as a process of aesthetic devaluation, which is always also a political process.

II. Crip Materials for Art Education Contexts

Checklist for Normalos:

You are normal, if

(x) you have all your body parts

(x) you don't stick out

(x) you are agreeable

(x) no idea

Eva: Another vantage point from where we spoke of practices of appropriations in the workshop and an example for places of dirty and critical knowledge production, or alternative knowledge from crip subjects, is the *Crip Magazine*, which I edited some time ago. For the first issue, 7000 pieces were produced in a newspaper format using reel-fed offset printing, which were then distributed free of charge on the street at numerous venues. It was distributed as a supplement to the urban magazine *Malmoe* in Vienna and *Mole* in Innsbruck, and was taken up in many different contexts, for instance in seminars at universities.

The magazine was a collection of artistic contributions, images, articles, and interviews that contradicted the categories of normal/abnormal. The perspective was based on conflicts and forms of resistance that enable alternative conceptualizations, representations and productions of images. It referred, among other things, to the "radical cripple movement," appropriating a walking cane as a club, the Socialist Patient Collective (SPK) that saw illness as a form of protest (or a weapon) to fight for a classless society, or the organization of anarchist "outcast nights" around the turn of the century. The idea was to provide material that opposes the dominant narratives based on stigmatization and paternalism. The magazine took up theoretical ideas, such as re-appropriating derogatory terms (Bhabha, Schweik, McRuer), creating "sites of affinity" (Haraway) and the "right to opacity" (Glissant), and asked unusual questions… What are ways out of normative circumstances? Via the figure of the freak, that rejects any definition of a norm? Or via a society of body subjects that are equal to one another? Or via a strategy of creating ambiguity and the right to opacity? Or thorough representation that is not aimed at depicting but at constructing reality? Through telling alternative stories of appropriation and resistance from the past?

Another idea from Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto" was taken up in the magazine: writing as a technology of cyborgs. Cyborgs struggle against perfect communication, the one "code" that translates and transmits all meaning perfectly. This is why cyborgs insist on noise and advocate pollution. Noise Publishing!

The magazine is a collection of contributions by various artists and authors, for instance, Linda Bilda's "Cosmic Creatures," the cover by Anette Knol, photographs by Wiebke Grösch and Frank Metzger, or the lyrics to a song by

Nina Stuhldreher. Further contributions were provided by Swiss cultural theorist Cornelia Renggli, the author Philmarie, or Karin Michalski and Sabian Baumann's *Feeling Bad* magazine. Artist Susanne Schuda provided works that create a constructed reality. Re-constructions of deformations of the usual allow social mechanisms to become visible. It also included material from the Socialist Patient Collective (SPK) from Heidelberg, along with the Crip ABZ on ableism, and a collage of texts and images about a situation at a hospital. An article entitled "Anger Brings Everyone Together" is a conversation with Volker Schönwiese where he speaks about the dawn of the *Krüppelbewegung* (cripple movement) in Austria, actions of disrupting public events, annoyances and alliances (for instance, using wheelchairs to block the entrance to the Imperial Palace in Vienna or telephone actions). In "A Cold Is Not the Measure of All Suffering," a conversation with Heike Raab, she speaks about "disability" in media, and subcultural, leftist and queer contexts. In addition to speaking about subversive bodies, she also expresses a wish for "spaces for crip/queer culture," that is, (crip-)queer, alternative, subcultural spaces where normative identity ascriptions simply do not apply. In this sense, I think it would be a great idea to think about spaces of (art) education as possible spaces of crip/queer culture.

Practices of resistance with and around "abnormal," dissident and "deviant"subjects are retraced even further in "Unlikely Encounters in the Fog." Ben Reitman's map from 1910, which I came across in the book *The Ugly Laws*, by the disability studies scholar Susan Schweik from U.C. Berkeley, illustrates the repression of different deviant subjects in Chicago in the early 19th century and conveys an impression of their resistance. During the workshop, we used this map as a point of departure for sketching forms of outcasting in Zurich in 2014.

Doris: We started the workshop by experimenting with the idea that Ben Reitman's map (reprinted in *Crip Magazine*) travels through time and space, from Chicago 1910 to Zurich 2014. The question that was the point of departure for drawing up this map, then and now, was and is: how are collectives and practices of resistance written into the city? What relationships do they enter into? These questions register horizons of possibility of crip politics: on the one hand, such a map can depict strategies, for instance, politically including impairments within a norm-oriented, ableist society, and on the other hand, a questioning of these politics of inclusion can be reflected in such a cartography of a city, thus opening up spaces for envisioning a utopian crip future—criptopias! The term "criptopia" connects utopian ideas with the political (made political through appropriating it as a self-designation) term "crip," derived from the word cripple, which is related to the German word *Krüppel*.

When I think about criptopias, I imagine a world that is not founded upon ableist ideas and representations. Criptopias offer critical perspectives on the norms of a society, as well as on neoliberal forms of socialization and the ways in which these produce disabled bodies. To use

Robert McRuer's words: "And in contrast to an able-bodied culture that holds out the promise of a substantive (but paradoxically always elusive) ideal, a queer/disabled perspective would resist delimiting the kinds of bodies and abilities that are acceptable or that will bring about change. Ideally, a queer/disability studies—like the term queer itself—might function oppositionally and relationally but not necessarily substantively, not as a positivity but as a positionality, not as a thing, but as a resistance to the norm" (McRuer 2013, 375). In my opinion, it is this resistance to the norm that is at the core of a critical crip perspective. Can this be found on Ben Reitman's map, and what is it like in Zurich in 2014?

Eva: A beginning of conceiving a kind of criptopia was the utopian writing exercise in the workshop, inspired by the cassette cover of the English punk band The Epileptics with the title "System Rejects" from 1970. Excerpts from the collective "stream of consciousness" writing exercise served as a basis for the quotes in this text.

In addressing the question of what emancipatory and exciting approaches to teaching art for the classroom might look like, the workshop participants drew up various sketches of teaching scenarios. How can a change of perspective in regards to "disability" be carried out? Is it even possible to overcome the stigmatizing, paternalistic perspectives that society has on disability? The outcome, a number of sequences, was extremely exciting for us! There were projects that were self-reflective and process-oriented, sequences where students were asked questions, and approaches of working with artist biographies or with perception itself. For instance, one group suggested a casting scenario for a fictional film project, thus discussing ideal bodies and affective work.

The discussions that followed confirmed that a critical crip perspective is relevant, also in art classes, or within art education contexts. Inventing and finding "ways out" of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves (Haraway 1991a, 181)… Getting involved in criptopias, and body heteroglossias or in other interventions in the given normative space of the classroom/school, and getting *dirty* in the process…

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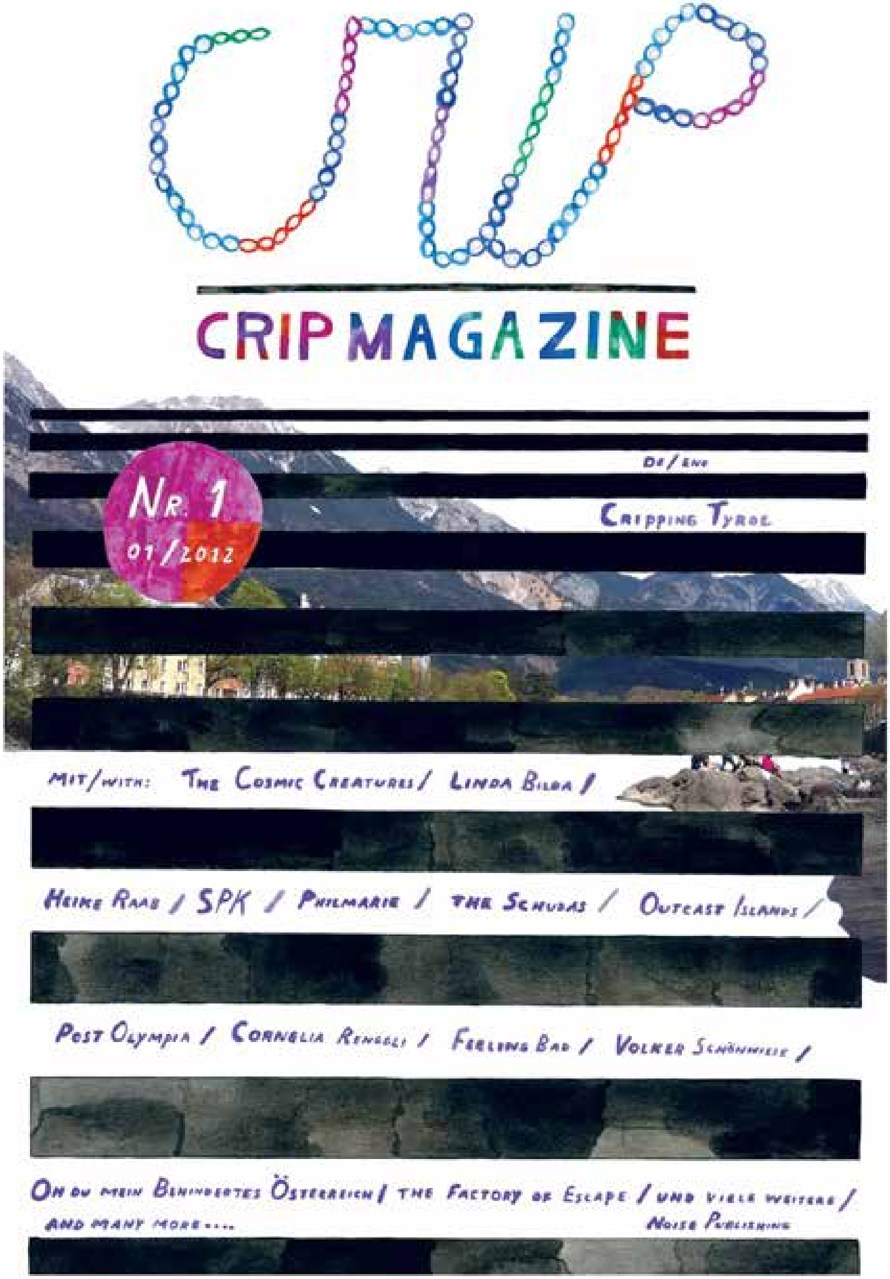

Cover of the Crip Magazine Nr 1, Design Printeretto, Eva Egermann©, 2012

POSTSOCIALIST CARE-VIOLENCE-PATERNALISM

DARJA ZAVIRŠEK

The belated deinstitutionalization in post-communist societies is part of postsocialist care-violence-paternalism, economic scarcity, fear of impoverishment and a transgenerational aversion towards disabled people. In Slovenia alone, more than 22.000 children and adults experience today spatial segregation, loss of choices, and long-term institutionalization.

Taking a look into history, the belated modernization of Eastern European societies after WWII and the socialist policy of gender equality was aimed to solve the "women's question" through women's full-time employment, which resulted in part into a profusion of closed and semi-closed institutions for people with different disabilities including mental health issues (Zaviršek 2015).Boarding schools and large long-stay public care institutions were seen as the perfect solution of social protection from the "cradle to the grave," regardless of a person's individual needs or abilities.

Paternalistic relationships, control and care for basic material needs were the main priorities of welfare institutions. The residents were neither entitled to any rights nor perceived as persons with their own life trajectory. There was no life beyond staying in confinement. People with the same diagnosis were placed in the same building, and the institution became a collection place for children and adults with different impairments across Slovenia.[1] This consolidated residents' invisibility and inability to keep contacts with the outside world, the relatives, local community and to live an ordinary life. Encounters with relatives were rare, as the latter often did not have the necessary funding to afford a weekly or monthly visit to the remote place. Therefore, the staff had unlimited power over the residents. Now and then some institutions, like the largest psychiatric hospital Polje in Ljubljana, incarcerated the homeless, "drunkards" and other socialist "lumpenproletariat" to implement the biopolitical "cleaning of the city's streets." They were locked in overnight when the highest political delegations with President Josip Broz Tito visited Slovenia (personal communication with one of the directors of the psychiatric clinic, 1992).

After the late 1980s social activists started to question the spatial segregation of disabled persons. New grassroots organizations of disabled persons refused the institutionalization as well as the dominance of the medical model and the old-fashion "invalid organizations' representatives," who after 1991 kept their privileged status granted to them during Commu-

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[1] Slovenia was part of Yugoslavia from 1945 until 1991.

nist rule. But critical voices were marginalized and instead of deinstitutionalization, new institutions were built[2].

Institutional violence

From the late 1990s few small-scale studies on institutional violence in disabled children' and adults' institutions appeared.[3] Some of the persons testified to physical violence they went through in the 1970's and 1980's; long-stay institutions for disabled children had isolation rooms or wooden lattice framed spaces large enough to accommodate a child's bed, or isolation spaces (at least until 2007); for adults they were called a "bunker." People recalled the restraining of residents by means of a straitjacket, by strapping the person onto the bed, by administering forced injections of high dosage psychiatric drugs, and the use of isolation rooms. These different forms of institutional pedagogy functioned as a constant threat for others and helped to internalize the power relations between workers and residents.

One of the directors of a large social welfare institution for the disabled stated in April 2014: "In 2007 we decided to stop using force, and we realized that it is possible to work without it. It is better and the residents are calmer. But employees are still divided on this issue. Half of them believe we should start using force again. Sometimes older psychiatrists, when we call them to report on the illness and violent behavior of a resident, ask us: 'Where do you have that room?' [meaning isolation room, D.Z.] Then we tell them we don't have it anymore, so he would need to come and see the patient. But these are only the old doctors; the younger are different." A social worker who worked in one of the large institutions for adults for more than 30 years reported, when asked to give details on injections, that: "We were four workers holding the resident and then we forcibly injected him. It was not a pleasant situation!" (Zaviršek 2015) An employee from another institution for adults with different disabilities recalled (April 2014): "They were kept in the 'bunker' for 12 to 14 hours."

Violence and sexual abuse of women within institutions is also hardly researched. Layers of institutional maltreatment were silenced and happened without witnesses. Cases of sterilization or the forced removal of children appears in personal vignettes or even gossip (e.g. "they told me I would get my appendix removed, and then I was sterilized"; a woman with intellectual disabilities who lives in one of the long-stay institution gave birth to six children, all of whom were taken away from her).

The perpetrators, as emphasized by Lewis Herman (1997), always try their best to cover the traces of abuse and to make violence invisible and hidden. Silence is not "gold," as glorified by the Slovenian proverb (*molk je zlato*), but an effective protection for the violators who

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[2] In 2014 the National Reform Programme of the Slovenian government defined deinstitutionalisation as a governmental strategy, but so far the strategy has not been implemented.

[3] See my referenced publications.

expect that the victims, as well as the public, will remain silent. Its "no-appearance" makes it extremely difficult for the victims to recognize and define it as violence, and even more for researchers to document it. A woman with physical impairments who lived in the rehabilitation institution Stara Gora in 1960s recalled one of the invisible violent events as well as the double face of the socialist welfare institutions: "For me the hardest punishment was when they locked me in the bathroom and showered with cold water, even in winter. I never told anyone. But when a political delegation visited us, we got sweets and other goods we never got otherwise. They were so nice with us on these occasions" (Zaviršek 2000).

The nights were as dangerous as the days. Up to 40 children lived in the same room; the night staff dwelled in the "tea room" (čajna *kuhinja*) situated in the middle of the ward. One of their duties was to turn the child on their side from time to time. Klaudija, today in her forties, who was able to do it herself, remembered the invisible violence of this non-event when she recalled: "I will never forget those voices of the children, who very silently called, almost whispered, each night, to reach one of the workers by calling them to come to the room and turn them on the side: *'Tovarišiiiiicaaa,*[4] *tovarišiiiiicaaaa'*… ('teeeeeacher, teeeeeacher…'). These silent screams went on and on, every night over half an hour before someone came and turned them" (Personal testimony, 2016).

Personal stories reveal that the semi-medical and semi-asylum-like institutions did not only relieve pain, but instead produced it. The employed staff, terrified by the disabled body and the everyday pain, or being taught that the disabled are just bodies without emotions, suppressed their own trauma as well as toxic knowledge with showing no empathy towards the children and adults. They objectivized the disabled body and did not even recognize the importance of friendship among the inmates.

One of the historically-constructed images of the disabled was that people with intellectual disabilities have no memory, and as memory makes a person a human being, they saw them as a human being of a lower nature. Even today some staff in long-stay institutions see the residents as people who "feel less," who do not feel the pain or notice it only partially. Not having memory means that the person is unable to recognize, witness, testify and narrate the stories of invisible violence in the first place.The staffs who control the place (possessing the keys to the rooms and bathrooms, intruding on the privacy of the residents, etc.) also subjugated the residents' bodies to the administrative power of the institution; they created volatile bodies, low self-esteem, and emotional lethargy.

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[4] "Teacher" was a common name for staff in long-stay institutions for children during socialism. The socialist word 'teacher' is based on the word *tovariš*, meaning male comrade, and *tovarišica*, female comrade. The word has been changed after 1991 into *učitelj/učiteljica*.

Remembering as a political act

Public silence and censorship, which allows some memory to become part of public knowledge, turns some invisible and unspoken personal stories of people who survived long-stay institutions inevitably into a political act. The memory of persons with disabilities is mostly not part of the public memory, as professional power-knowledge, parental voices and public-common sense dominate and influences the socially-constructed forms of remembering and forgetting. Social welfare institutions are the places where the processes of forgetting take place all the time. Remembering and testifying about institutional violence are rare because the places from where the people speak are already stigmatizing places, preventing public narration. Their narratives are not perceived as heroic or a valued part of public remembrance, but as the whispered stories of outcasts. Not having public permission makes people incapable to talk and to narrate their personal histories. Therefore silence becomes an inevitable part of the lives of disabled persons and often their relatives as well. The inability to bear witness for oneself becomes a traumatic memory; and trauma becomes part of their life, which is seen as valueless. Nevertheless, some people do remember, for themselves and for others; they talk in order that the events do not fall into oblivion and to motivate change of the oppressive structures.

Narrating events of violence for oneself and for others also implies the wish to develop a meaning and sense of events which are truly senseless. Disabled people living in long-stay institutions remembered these times as "lost time"—the time when people did not live, but "died through," to recall Langer's metaphor (Langer 1994). Therefore, the right for memorizing the experiences of visible and invisible violence is very fundamental for the processes of the democratization of everyday life. In postsocialist countries the public and personal silence of people who survived long-stay institutions during Communism needs to be transformed into public knowledge and remembrance. Many stories of survivors demand regret and apology by politicians and professionals who were responsible for lost lives and the institutional violence of people in the past. Memory work is therefore part of the democratization of everyday life, and part of the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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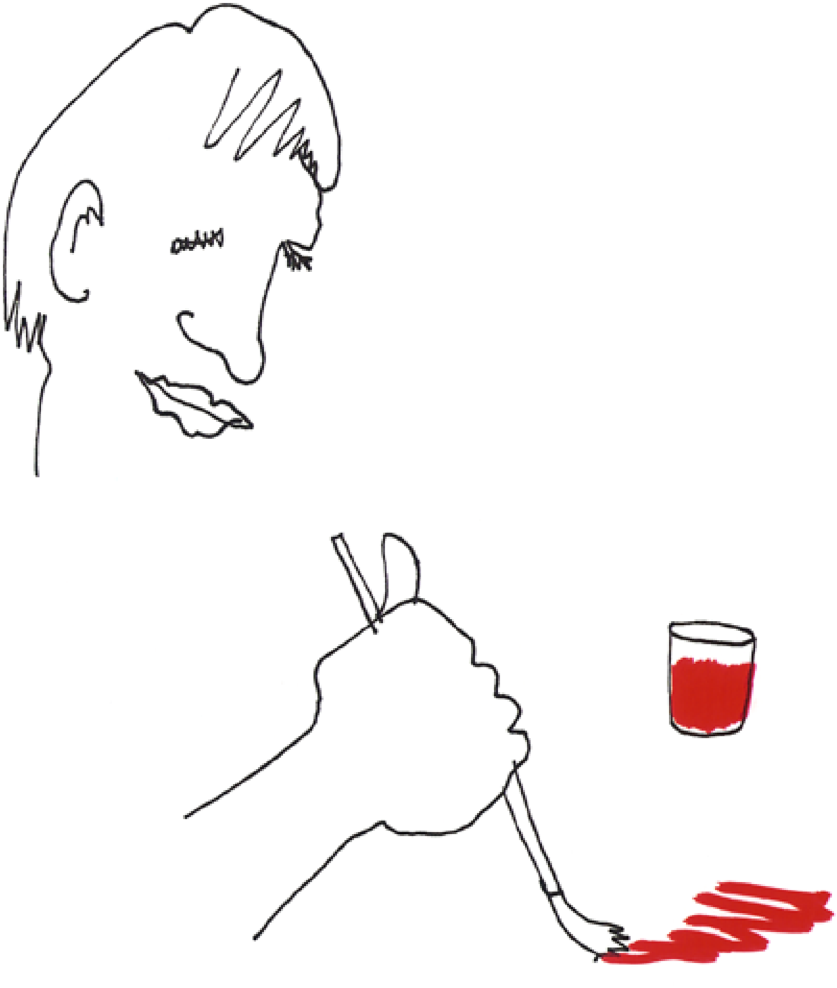

Alevtina Kakhidze, 2017, for »Tracings Out of Thin Air.«

ABLEISM IN THE RUSSIAN ACTIVIST COMMUNITY

AYMAN ECKFORD

Introduction

About three years ago, I created the first Russian-language website about autism, which treats autism from the standpoint of neurodiversity—the idea that autism (like some other neuro-differences) is not a disease that must be treated and eradicated, but is actually a part of a personality. My activism began with this initiative. Since then, I have developed several online projects, consulted various organizations on the conception of an inclusive environment, held lectures and seminars on autism and disability, and organized single-person pickets.

All this time, I interacted with people and organizations who considered themselves progressive and inclusive. These were people and organizations dealing with human rights and social activities, and sharing neoliberal or leftist views. It must be said that they are not typical representatives of the Russian public sphere, but they can be judged as somehow representing the "progressive" part of the post-Soviet society that wants to support disabled people in order to achieve equality. In addition, many of these people in the past were employed by organizations that have been helping disabled people. I cannot talk about the experience of all disabled people, and about the general attitude to all types of disabilities. Consequently, what I wrote concerns first and foremost my personal experience in creating an inclusive environment for autistic and neuro-different people.

Part 1: Understanding Disability

Most people in the post-Soviet space consider disability to be exclusively a medical problem, and something shameful. When it comes to disability, people generally think about the "defect" that a person has, and their good attitude towards disabled people is expressed in their attempts to hide or ignore this "defect." In fact, this approach is not entirely correct. Disability is not a medical construct, but rather a social and legal one. The term "disability" means that due to the particularities of one's body or because of the characteristics of one's brain, the disabled person has fewer opportunities than most people in a given society. In itself, this feature is not necessarily something negative. Disability can be perceived only in the conditions of a particular society. Therefore, the concept of "disability" rather characterizes the society in which a person lives than his/her physical condition. For example, a sighted person in a world of blind people would have a physiological advantage, but would be socially disadvantaged, because the surrounding world (all public and cultural institutions) would be designed for blind people who are not "distracted" by visual images. In many Western European countries, dyslexia is a disability. But in a society in which most people cannot read, it becomes invisible. In this society, people with dyslexia and people without dyslexia have the same opportunities, and therefore, there is no need to define dyslexics as being disabled.

Therefore, it is obvious that disability and disease are not the same. In our world, almost all autistic people agree that autism is a disability, but many autistic people, including myself, do not consider autism a disease. Autism affects how I perceive the world around me, how I communicate and how I treat my interests, and therefore it is inseparable from my personality. The autistic way of thinking has its advantages and disadvantages, like a non-autistic way of thinking. However, our culture, education system, health system, political institutions and even the settings in shopping centres are designed for nonautistic people. Therefore, the state should compensate for the lack of inclusion of autistic people. That is, autistic people need to be defined as disabled, until our society is calculated for autistic people as much as it is for nonautistic ones. As an autistic person, I want to talk openly about my disability, because when I talk about disability, I say that I belong to a minority whose needs are not met. I am not ashamed of this, because it is a problem of our society, and not a problem of my own perception. In fact, any talk about disability is a conversation about the problems of a given society.

For example, paralysis is a medical problem when we talk about its physiological aspects in the doctor's office. Nevertheless, when we agree on the installation of a ramp so that paralyzed people can get into a hospital building in a wheelchair, we are talking about a legal and social problem. We are talking about social segregation as the reason why people cannot receive medical care solely because of the characteristics of their body.

At the same time, activists who are struggling with social problems prefer not to notice this. Their rhetoric is aimed at disguising disability. They insist on using the expression "a person with a disability," and not the word "disabled," thereby showing that disability must be separated from a person. Such insistence shows that, in the opinion of society (including its progressive part), a person becomes "worse" if he/she is disabled. After all, no one believes that intellectuals should talk about themselves exclusively as "people with high intelligence," and women should be called "people with female sexual organs and gender," because both female sex and high intellect are not considered something that should be separated from a person for the sake of "political correctness." In this case, disability is considered to be just such a phenomenon. Among activists, there is a widespread stereotype which states that, when dealing with a disabled person, one must "look at a person, not a disability," despite the fact that it is impossible to adequately perceive a person when ignoring a significant part of his/her experience. Moreover, what kind of equality can we talk about if we ignore the source of inequality?

All the "progress" of most of our "progressive society" is to ignore problems and differences. To do this, members of the progressive society use another not very successful linguistic device: "screen-words," which, apparently, are more correct to use in place of the word "disability." These "screen-words" do not help in creating equal conditions. For example, the expression "a person with disabilities" indicates that the problem is personal, not societal. It is simply absurd, because the opportunities of all people (including the "health opportunities" of all people) are limited. The expression "a person with special needs" is no less absurd, and again poses a human problem, while leaving society unaccounted for. This expression "justifies" society, showing that the disabled person has "special needs" that this society should satisfy, although in fact it is about the most ordinary human needs — the opportunity to get a normal education, to get into buildings and safely cross the road are not special needs but rather the most ordinary human needs.

Speaking of language, it is worth noting that one of the problems of the Russian word "disability" is that it is associated in many people with the notion of "weak" or "not valuable", because of its linguistic origin and connotation. But the conversation is not about how to change the associations that this word causes, and how to "reappropriate it," getting rid of the negative connotation, and not even how to create a new legal term, but how to clean up the inaccurate "screen" for an existing term. This perfectly shows the general mood amongst people who understand how language influences the perception and thinking of the majority.

Part 2: Double Standards

Double standards and language

The way most people are accustomed to perceive disability is made evident not only by the words they use to designate disabled people, but also by the words they use to swear. I have often faced situations where, at first glance, "progressive" people called their opponents "morons", "downs," "mentally retarded," "blind," and "cripples." The features of the body and mindset of the disabled are used as an insult, thereby showing that these things are considered something terrible by definition. Usually the use of such vocabulary is justified by the fact that people who use it do not "mean what they say," and that these words are "just metaphors." But things that are considered neutral traits are not used as metaphors to explain something extremely negative.

I came across more sophisticated ways to discredit opponents by comparing them with disabled people. For example, after Donald Trump was elected president of the United States, many Russian and foreign LGBT activists, feminists and anti-racists began to oppose his presidency, using the alleged presence of mental diagnoses for discrediting him. That is, they opposed Trump's presidency not because of his homophobic, sexist and racist stance, but because, in the opinion of these protesters, he looks like a person with mental disorders. It turns out that in the opinion of those who fight for the civil rights of minorities, hate speech and possible criminal policy towards minorities is a less terrible "crime" than the presence of mental diagnoses. I am now talking about activists from those communities, among which (due to the pressure of society faced by these minorities), in percentage terms, there are more people with mental disorders than in the general population (see Meyer, Northridge 2007).

Obviously, such an approach forms a negative attitude towards disability, and leads to the fact that even in a "friendly" feminist or LGBT environment many people are afraid to talk about their disabilities and the disabilities of their close relatives. There is another no less important factor. People who use ableist vocabulary and ableist arguments are struggling themselves with hate speech. They can explain for a very long time how the word "heifer" engenders a negative attitude towards women, why the word "faggot" cannot be used as an insult, and what stereotypes are fixed by the expression "stingy like a Jew." At the same time, they use similar discriminatory vocabulary in relation to people with disabilities. They would never cooperate with people who attribute the sexist policy of the president to his sexual orientation or race, but consider it normal to attribute it to mental disorders and neuro-difference.

Double standards in activism (in practice and rhetoric)

Similar double standards exist in a variety of spaces. I will look at the problem through the example of LGBT organizations, but comparable problems exist in various social movements defending the rights of minorities and other stigmatized groups. I often advise LGBT organizations on the creation of inclusive environments at various events, and conduct lectures on LGBT disabled people in activist forums. The most common arguments that I heard, according to which there is no need to attend events on LGBT disabled people and to deal with inclusion issues are, as one participant in the St. Petersburg Forum on "the health of the LGBT community" said to a friend who visited my event: "disability does not concern you"—that is, it makes no sense to be interested in disability issues and to think about how to create an inclusive environment for disabled people if you are not disabled yourself.

LGBT "invalids" are too much an insignificant category, for which it is not worth spending the resources necessary for "normal" homosexuals, bisexuals and transgender people. Both arguments are erroneous and rather dangerous. According to the WHO, about 15% of the world's population has some type of disability.[1] These statistics do not include those who, for one reason or another, did not declare a disability but

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[1] World Health Organization (WHO) website <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs352/ru/>

may receive disabled status. This means that in reality people with disabilities — people who need additional support, so that they can have the same opportunities that most have — are much more than 15% of the world's population. Moreover, amongst gays, bisexuals and transgender people there are more disabled people than amongst the cis-hetero population, given the negative impact of discrimination and stigma on health (see Meyer, Northridge 2007).

Disability most often isn't congenital. Many people become disabled when they are adults or very old. So why do many argue that disability does not "concern" them? Why did they never think of such a possibility? Probably, many people deny this possibility, because they perceive disability as something terrible, and definitely negative. As Susan Wendell wrote, "Disability tends to be associated with tragic loss, weakness, passivity, dependency, helplessness, shame, and global incompetence. In the societies where Western science and medicine are powerful culturally, and where their promise to control nature is still widely believed, people with disabilities are constant reminders of the failures of that promise, and of the inability of science and medicine to protect everyone from illness, disability and death. They are the 'Others' that science would like to forget." (1996, 63)

Probably, for the same reason, and because of the lack of representation of disabled people in mass culture, most people do not think that there may be disabled people among their friends and acquaintances. Most people associate the word "disabled" with an elderly person with various chronic diseases, or with a person with a "visible" disability (a person who moves around on a wheelchair, a blind person with a guide dog, a person with Down's syndrome, etc.). The existence of invisible neuro-differences, mental and cognitive disabilities, is most often forgotten.

In addition, disabled people generally prefer to hide their disability from acquaintances (including in the LGBT community), while some people do not know about their diagnosis. For example, I met a lot of people who had serious problems with reading, and who at first characterized themselves as "bad readers" or "movie watchers." In fact, they were dyslexic. These people were ashamed to talk about their problems. The culture of shame that surrounds disability is firmly embedded in their minds. The priority is to separate oneself from "these abnormals" due to a misunderstanding of the concept of disability and a fear preventing them to recognize their diagnosis, even though a disability does not necessarily prevent them from properly studying, working and researching subjects they are interested in. Such people exist in the LGBT community, and the rhetoric that separates LGBT-disabled from other members of the LGBT community only intensifies such problems. The reluctance to openly recognize a disability leads to the fact that many people in the LGBT community are sure that there are no disabled people among their acquaintances. It becomes a vicious circle—people with disabilities do not attend events because they do not have an inclusive environment, or come to events, suffer discomfort and remain silent, thus creating the feeling that there are no disabled people among LGBT people, which leads to LGBT activities and community centres remaining non-inclusive. This brings us to the second myth, that LGBT invalids are too insignificant to spend resources on or take into account their eventual needs.

This is exactly what I mean when talking about double standards. To understand what is "wrong" with this statement, imagine that an activist who said such a thing decided to draw the attention of the Commissioner for Human Rights by inviting him/her to a special event, and received such an answer from the Commissioner: "Why should I come? I am not going to change sex, and I am sleeping with a person of the opposite sex ..."

I do not think that the activist would appreciate it. The reasoning of the Commissioner is logical in its own way—that he/she may not be interested in the problems of LGBT persons. He/she can consider that the problems of LGBT persons will not affect him/her and his/her relatives. He/she can think that it is better to spend time on more urgent issues. However, by saying this, the Commissioner shows his/her incompetence, because the discrimination of LGBT persons at a state level is a human rights issue. The overwhelming majority of LGBT activists would consider such an answer unacceptable. But, at the same time, they consider it perfectly normal to say such things to disabled people.

This "double rhetoric" extends to other aspects of activism. For example, most LGBT activists advocate coming-out (revealing their non-heterosexual orientation and non-gender-specific identity). This is quite logical, because the more people say that they are homosexual, bisexual and transgender, the more their friends will understand that there is nothing to worry about in homosexuality, bisexuality and transgenderism. Horror stories about "terrible gay perverts working for a foreign power" are not working in a society in which people see these same gays every day, who do not correspond to the stereotypes disseminated by the media, and who actually differ little from the general population. World experience shows that many homophobes become more tolerant when they learn that there are gays among their loved ones.

In addition, the closed nature of LGBT communities negatively affects their mental health, prevents them from seeking justice in the case of discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and creates a fertile terrain for blackmail. The situation with disability is similar. The more people interact with disabled people, the more habitual disability becomes. In the case of an increased visibility of disabled people, the public sphere begins to perceive disabled people not as a mysterious and small category of the population, but as members of society that help fight ableist prejudices, and contribute to the construction of inclusion. From my personal experience, I can say that almost all people I know who have friends with a certain type of disability consider with great attention and understanding the needs of people with similar disabilities. Hiding an invisible disability also has a negative impact on health, creates a fertile terrain for blackmail, and does not help against cases of ableism.

At the same time, many LGBT activists do not see the meaning in the act of making one's disability visible, as they say that some people with disabilities are themselves to blame for discrimination because they "stick out, instead of trying to live like everyone else." They also forget that the same argument is used by homophobes against them. Another, much more terrible example of a double standard is that many LGBT activists are categorically opposed to negative eugenics towards LGBT people and abortions of female embryos based on their gender, but they advocate negative eugenics for people with disabilities. They consider those who say that a large number of homosexuals seem terrible to them to be "fascists," but they do not take my claims about large organisations seriously, which are frightened by the alleged "increase in the birth rate of autistic people." From all this, it can be concluded that most people do not tend to look for parallels between their discrimination and other's, and that it is much more common for them to reproduce prejudices in culture, no matter how often other cultural prejudices were unfair to them.

Part 3: The Normalization Of Neurotypicality

I want to devote the last point of this work to online resources and organizations, which are the most inclusive at the moment. Recently, many feminist groups on Vkontakte (the Russian equivalent of Facebook) began to raise the topic of mental disorders. Many feminist and transgender communities (and all intersectional feminist communities) oppose the use of ableist vocabulary, and refuse to use "screenwords" (a person with disabilities, a person with special needs, etc.) in relation to disability. The LGBT initiative group Queer-Peace has repeatedly addressed the issue of disability with organizers of large LGBT projects, which has helped to create an inclusive environment at events such as the LGBT International Film Festival "Side by Side" and the international LGBT rights festival "QueerFest" in 2016. At the same time, even at first glance, inclusive spaces are often unsafe. First, if we are talking about physical spaces (that is, those that are outside the internet), not all of them are accessible. Creating an inclusive environment is usually partial. Not all activities can be accessed by wheelchair, not all events use alternative communication or allow service animals for all activities, etc. Even when the creation of an inclusive environment is made possible, disabled persons do not always know about it, and therefore they either do not use it (for example, they refuse to participate in the discussion because they were not told that alternative communication can be used), or they do not come to the events at all. Secondly, non-disability is perceived as a natural version of the norm, and the needs and characteristics of disabled people are often simply not taken into account.

Indeed, Russian feminist and LGBT rhetoric is completely based on neurotypical standards, and the theme of neuro-difference is covered in LGBT and feminist resources as an "additional" or "special" topic. Even on intersectional resources, neuro-differences are not considered as a common and natural variant of differences, such as racial, gender and sexual differences. In the opinions expressed in most articles', the experience of all people is similar, and all people equally perceive the dominant culture. In fact, because of the characteristics of the brain, people can have a different perception of the culture in which they grew up, and they can absorb it differently. For example, neuro-different people (autistic people for instance) hardly perceive facial expressions and nonverbal signals from other people, and they have a poorly developed imitation mechanism. Therefore, many cultural features may remain unnoticed or incomprehensible to them. However, many feminists believe that "all women" suffer from internal misogyny, anti-racists believe that a person cannot understand a culture in which he did not grow up better than the culture in which he was brought up, and gay activists' claim that "all homosexual people" suffer from internal homophobia. Attempts to challenge such claims often result in accusations of lies and this very homophobia/misogyny/racism, etc.,—even if the person challenging these statements describes his/her personal experience or the experience of his/her closest friends, and explains the nature of these differences.

Ignoring such a state as alexithymia, many activists claim that it is very important for all people that others tell them about their feelings and that all people can say what they feel. In fact, people with alexithymia often find it difficult to understand words that express feelings and emotions or describe their own feelings and emotions. Many feminist conversations about sex are based on the idea of oral consent, despite the fact that not all people can use oral speech, and that oral consent can be replaced by any nonverbal sign. Articles about personal experience are, by definition, considered simpler than academic literature, despite the fact that it is easier for some neuro-different people (especially people with alexithymia) to understand scientific texts than texts with many emotional descriptions. These and other errors could be avoided if the activists and authors of the articles used the phrase "all people" as less as possible, and instead would say "many people," "most people," "most representatives of our culture," etc.

Another common mistake is that activists and authors of "progressive" texts use existing normative systems, without trying to analyze existing stereotypes. For example, in certain social circles, higher education is considered compulsory for understanding a topic, and many activists with higher education believe that only people with higher education can comprehend some texts. In many LGBT organizations, higher education is required even in spheres for which it is not necessary. The same goes for issues such as employment (which some consider simple and mandatory for everyone, despite the fact that it is very difficult for disabled people to get a job), communication with relatives (which some disabled people are forced to support because of financial dependence, and others cannot because of discrimination inside their family circle), etc. Thus, activists who oppose the existing system of discrimination against minorities actually participate in the strengthening of this very discriminatory system by unnoticeably supporting general stereotypes and ignoring their own privileges.

Open Conclusion

Most members of the activist and human rights community say that they want to create an inclusive society where all people have equal opportunities, but they often support and spread the dominant prejudices about disability. Due to the fact that there is no strong community of disabled people in the post-Soviet space, and because of the paternalist coverage of disability in the media, disabled people are rarely perceived as a social group. Despite the fact that disability is a social construct, most people, including many human rights activists, consider disability to be a medical, not a social, problem. At the same time, many things that are considered normal to say in relation to disabled people are considered inadmissible in relation to other minorities (for example, in relation to black people, or in relation to LGBT people). Even among people who recognize the problems of disabled persons and recognize them as a social group, certain stereotypes remain. Most “understanding” people, who declare that their activities and the internet are a safe environment for everyone, have not sufficiently reflected on disability issues, and therefore they unintentionally reproduce the oppression of disabled people. Therefore, the best way to overcome these problems is to rethink the question of disability, and to promote the idea that all people are different, and therefore those whose experience and needs differ from the experience and needs of the majority must be treated with understanding and trust.

Translated from Russian into English by Joana Monbaron.

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Alevtina Kakhidze, 2017, for »Tracings Out of Thin Air.«

EMPOWERING?

MICROSILLONS

In 2009 we curated the exhibition *Utopia and the Everyday. Between art and pedagogies*,[1] presented at the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (thereafter: Le Centre). A section of the show, entitled "*To empower?*," questioned the potential of art projects with a pedagogical dimension to do so.

This interest for empowerment emerged from our own research-based practice – at the time of *microsillons*' formation, we read Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*[2] and writings from teachers/thinkers directly applying his thinking into their pedagogical practice: bell hooks, Henry Giroux, and Ira Shor in particular. As Anne-Emmanuèle Calvès shows in her genealogy of the term "empowerment," since the end of the 1970's, in different fields (social and health services, education, et al), Freire's work has been central in the development of the concept (Calvès 2009, 737), even though Freire rather used the terms "conscientization" or "liberation." Feminist movements in the 1970's and 1980's were then the main channels spreading the term (see Bacqué, Biewener 2007, 12). Our own interest for feminist pedagogies therefore consolidated our will to use the semantic of "empowerment" to situate our practice.

Freire himself, but also hooks (hooks, Mesa-Bains 2006, 73), Giroux (1988), and Shor (1992) wrote about how empowerment could concretely happen in real situation, be it in literacy processes with rural populations for the Brazilian pedagogue or in North American classrooms for his followers. Reading about those pedagogical reflections and experiments was key in the conception of our early projects. We immediately felt a close connection between the idea of 'empowerment' and what we were trying to develop—without having yet developed a clear theoretical frame for it—in working with people who are marginalized by the contemporary art institutional spheres toward collective productions that could change their relationship to the art world and change the art institutions themselves.

Srilatha Batliwala in her article "Putting power back into empowerment" (2007, 2) presents a definition of empowerment (as understood in South Asia by grassroots women's and development organisations) as "a process […] shifting power in three critical ways":

—by challenging the ideologies that justify social inequality (such as gender or caste),

—by changing prevailing patterns of access to and control over economic, natural and intel-

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[1] About the exhibition, see: *microsillons* (no date) *Utopia and the Ev*eryday.

[2] A key reference in the CCC study program (at the HEAD—Genève) we were both following.

lectual resources,

—by transforming the institutions and structures that reinforce and sustain existing power structures [...].

Translating this view into a European contemporary art context, we could say that our goal was to produce transformation of the cultural *status quo*:

—by challenging the distinction between experts, art publics and the so-called "non-publics"[3],

—by giving better access to cultural resources (mainly the institutions) to more people, not to increase the number of culture consumers but to turn them into cultural (and critical) co-producers or actors ,

—by working critically from within the institutions to initiate some structural changes concerning their relationship to society, beyond norms and repressive reproductions of power discourses.

To do so, we developed (in particular as an art collective responsible for the gallery education projects at Le Centre [between 2008 and 2010]) several projects in which we would co-produce, with groups of people usually excluded by the art institutions, works that would then be presented inside those very institutions.[4] A good example of that strategy is the project *Lieux communs* that we developed in 2008. Through this project we wanted, from our *insider* positions, as critical art educators and artists, to see whether we could challenge the usual hierarchies at play in contemporary art and include, at the centre of the institution, people who are usually understood as *outsiders*, in this case artists with special needs. We did not want to negate differences but we wanted to affirm the need for a circulation of power, of discourses, of aesthetics, of people.

The project emerged from a discussion with a friend who was working as an educator in a workshop dedicated to the development of multimedia productions by people in situations of severe disabilities. She was underlining the importance for several of the participants to define themselves as artists even though they never received any recognition by the art world. The people producing these multimedia projects were adults living in a specialized institution named Clairbois, a well-recognized structure in Geneva. In that frame, over a long term, residents were engaging—with the help of their educators—in visual productions about their daily lives, their difficulties or their aspirations. We proposed to invite the artists who wished to do so to show some artworks at the Centre, to present their work beyond the usual "outsider art" contexts.

A meeting to present the project to the residents and gauge their interest to participate

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[3] A problematic term used in French gallery education discourse. See the critical analysis of the term in Mörsch & Chrusciel 2013, Mörsch 2011 and Moeschler 2013.

[4] For a description of the projects, see *microsillons* (since 2005).

was then organised. Four educators and eight residents took part. Everyone presented her/himself (some of the residents could do it themselves, others could not and were presented by an educator). We then spent some time looking at the artworks of the residents/artists and understood that the workshop animators were playing an important role in the productions. It appeared that the productions were the result of a process based on collaboration and dialogue, made possible because trust had been established between the artist and the animator. Several residents worked with video, while others used photography, painting or text. Besides the support of an educator and an animator, each artist benefited from a specifically designed suitable equipment, which they presented to us. This diversity, in the means and results, surprised us and further defined the design of our exhibition project.

The next meeting took place at the Centre, and some problems related to the reception of the wheelchairs of our guests were quickly identified by the group. Six of the residents attended the first meeting and were motivated to work with us. It was only thanks to the service elevator that the artists were able to access the exhibition floors, even though, for security reasons, it was supposed to be forbidden to visitors. We visited an exhibition together and then went into the space that would be dedicated to the presentation of their works. It was a separated space, ideally located next to reception, but a space that was not usually dedicated to exhibitions. However, with its white walls, its concrete floor and its neon lighting the space was able to serve as a "white cube."

We defined our role in the project as curators, not willing to interfere in the long term relationship between the animators, the educators and the artists. In doing so, we hoped to distance ourselves from the production itself and to open a dialogue about the relationship of that production with the exhibition context. We wanted our presence to allow their works to assert themselves, to give themselves means of visibility that they did not have previously (in the past, their works were always produced with modest means and presented in exhibition frameworks that were exclusively dedicated to artists with disabilities). We wanted to highlight their work, help to bring it out of the "art of disabled people" category. Keeping a "white cube" frame was a way to *stream* into the traditional institutional framework of contemporary art. It was not on the curatorial level that we wished to produce change but rather, by conservatively inscribing ourselves in the codes of contemporary art, we wanted to produce a change in the perception of marginalized artistic practices.

The works that the artists produced were directly related to the Le Centre context, and one of them was realized *in situ*: a several meters-long fresco by Alexandre Baumgartner, who thus gave a new dimension to his drawings recounting his life and those of his relatives. Sabrina Renlund proposed a video where she tried the impossible: come as an ordinary visitor to the Centre d'Art Contemporain. In a tragic yet comical video sequence one could see her wait nearly 15 minutes for a technician to come and help her to access the exhibitions. Daniel Rabina produced a series of photographs in a shadow theatre style, showing him being caught by a recalcitrant elevator and dealing with an angry museum guard. Other proposals were not related at all to a form of critique of the institution, as the artists simply used the invitation to show their work.

We also organized an opening in which the artists invited their relatives. The contacts of the Centre were also invited, but the public was not as diverse as we expected, as mostly the artists' circles attended. Here again, we felt how separated the different scenes of artistic production were.

The project definitely achieved its goal of making those productions visible in the art world, as very positive articles were written about the exhibition;[5] some of the institution's visitors included a visit of *Lieux commun* in their tour, and one of the works was sold during the opening. We tackled some issues, made certain problems visible, and brought physical mobility issues to the attention of the institution. But was this action challenging power relations on a longer term? Reflecting on our work, we identified two major paradoxes in our expectations that we could address in future projects. First, how can we wish to emancipate people from categories, but address them because they are part of a marginalised category? Second, how to react to participants' disinterest in producing a critique of the institution that could reinforce their position as contemporary artists?

If for some years we used the empowerment rhetoric mainly in an unquestioned way, developing projects like *Lieux communs* led us to gradually understand through practice that a more complex approach to the concept was necessary. Hence the question mark after "to empower" in the *Utopia and the Everyday* section.

In *Lieux communs* as in other projects, we felt that many of the participants were not looking to be "empowered." Some exceptions apart, they were rather willing to use our projects as a space for encounters, discussion and debate (internally within the participants' group or publicly through the institution). Second, most of them were less interested in challenging the institution's structures than to proudly be part of its program. As critical artists/gallery educators, can we then impose *empowerment*? Finally, the groups were never homogenous in terms of relationships to the institution or society in general, so no general discourse about empowerment could really describe our actions. We tried, from this situated position and through digging deeper into the theory and reflections on *empowerment*, to clarify how we could relate to it more accurately. From there, we collected a series of critiques of the concept that helped us to tackle it in a more cautious way in more recent projects.

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[5] See the copies of the articles on the *microsillons'* website (*microsillons* (no date) *Lieux communs*).

Looseness of the concept

Referring to the term when describing our positioning as artists/critical gallery educators, we soon noted the difficulty to find tools to apply the concept in concrete situations, particularly because both the subjects and the objectives of empowerment were fluctuating from one project to another and from one person to another. Elisabeth Ellsworth (1989, 307), a feminist writer thinking back on her own pedagogical experiences and considering that empowerment is a "repressive myth […] that perpetuate relations of domination," notes that "critical pedagogues consistently answer the question of 'empowerment for what?' in ahistorical and depoliticized abstractions." Wanting to avoid this, we feel the need to go beyond that abstract level of "empowerment."

Difficulty "to give power"

Starting from a reading of the circular conception of power in Foucault's writings (power is *exercised* rather than *possessed*, and is expressed within a relation rather than existing as a fixed entity), many feminist writers in the 1980's and early 1990's have criticized the idea of *empowerment*. A Jennifer Gore's (1992, 57) observation summarizes: "Another major shortcoming of constructions of empowerment in critical and feminist pedagogy discourses is that they conceive of power as a property, something the teacher has and can give to students."[6] "To give power" appears to be an even more difficult task when working within institutions. If for Freire and his followers, to gain counsciousness of one's own situation and to develop an understanding of the structures one is part of could lead to the transformation of power dynamics, working inside art institutions or schools, as we usually do, makes it challenging to transform those structures. Being artists, gallery educators or teachers, we occupy specific positions in those existing power structures. In her critique of "empowerment" as used by critical pedagogues, Ellsworth (1989, 306) states "theorists of critical pedagogy have failed to launch any meaningful analysis of or program for reformulating the institutionalized power imbalance between themselves and their students, or of the essentially paternalistic project of education itself." To that, working independently—with institutions but not directly for them—became an important move for us, as a way to shift our position regarding the participants, as we did in the project we will present below.

Devaluation of the educator's work

Quite often after a project, we had feelings of underachievement, feeling that the changes we

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[6] In the mid-1990's, coming back to the reading of Foucault by feminist scholars, Monique Deveaux (1994, 231—32) feels that this argument is partly based on a wrong reading of Foucault and that shortcomings in Foucault's theory need to be overcome by feminist thinkers, in particular in "tak[ing] seriously the issue of women's empowerment, their capacities for self-determination and freedom […]" (244).

were looking for were never fully happening. If doubts and modesty about one's action and its effects is an earnest element of a critical and non-paternalistic approach, this can still at times be somehow demoralizing. Reading the researcher in psychology Valerie Walkerdine (1992: 19-20), we understood how the critical pedagogy discourse, in particular around "empowerment", could partly be a reason for developing that feeling. Indeed, she points out that the idea of empowerment constructs a fiction in which the teacher is trapped; having integrated the idea of a need to empower each and every learner, the educator has assigned to himself/herself an unreachable goal, constantly feeling as if in the position of a failure.

Generalization and redefinition of the term

Giving a course at the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste a few years ago, we turned on the beamer installed in the room and saw the following message on the screen: "Acer, Empowering People." This generalization—but above all neutralization—of the term today is problematic for critical thinkers willing to still use it. In their analysis of the history and current uses of the term "empowerment," Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener observe three models of empowerment, showing how wide the understanding of the term can be today:

—a radical model inspired by Freire and feminist movements and looking for both transforming social structures and challenging the capitalist system,

—a liberal model that can take into account socio-economic conditions but that is not interrogating structurally social inequalities,

—a neo-liberal model, centred on the economy and aiming at giving tools to individuals to be actors in the market economy, to be an "entrepreneur of their own lives."

Batliwala (2007, 3—4) claims that, despite its seizing and re-definition by populist politics, fundamentalist and neo-conservative ideologies and corporate management, the term is still worth being reclaimed and used as a resistance tool. In that regard, keeping the collective dimension of empowerment and its faculty to serve a critique of social and political structures seems to be key. Drawing from those reflections and doubts, in more recent projects like *Vive le théâtre questionne*, our discourse somehow shifted from an "empowerment" vocabulary to a work around the tensions and agonistic exchanges inherent to the participants' groups and in the relationships of the participants with the cultural institutions involved.

In 2013, we worked for several months with a historian and specialist of theatre, Mathieu Menghini,[7] to develop a critical mediation of theatre. We wanted to articulate our respective methods and approaches, and we proposed an experimental project to the Théâtre de Carouge. We looked for possible synergies in the theatre program to build a collaboration with a

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[7] For that specific occasion, we formed a collective named Groupe L'Aventin.

group of people whose voices are usually not audible in this rather classical institution. We contacted the Geneva association Camarada, an association welcoming and informing migrant women. We proposed to discuss, starting from the theatre play *Antigone* that we saw together, how their contemporary perspective of migrant women could resonate with the personal and political fight of the young Antigone against her tyrannical uncle, Creon. The discussions were aiming at the conception of *answers* in the form of a collective visual production that would be displayed inside the Théâtre de Carouge. The association helped us to constitute a group of eight volunteer women.

Within this context emerged one of the paradoxes we already identified in *Lieux communs*: if we address individuals because they share particular characteristics (in that case gender and migration), how can we then overcome these specificities and make heterogeneity emerge from this superficial and unifying first approach? To be honest, one of our most simplifying/essentializating expectations was that, through their varied cultural perspectives, the women could read Antigone's opposition to an absurd law as an echo of their personal situations and articulate a critical position regarding Swiss migration policy.

The numerous meetings with the group of women over ten months deconstructed this preconceived idea. If, during the first meetings, we concentrated on Antigone and its possible readings, we then sought to develop themes from the specific interest shared in the group, following the principle of what Paulo Freire called "generative themes." According to Freire (2005),[8] through the collective identification of these themes— linked to the daily life of the members of a group—a critical consciousness can be developed. Indeed, it is from the confrontation of an "objective" situation and from the perception, by the people involved, of this situation that the generative themes emerge. Freire (2005, 101) defines those themes as "The complex of ideas, concepts, hopes, doubts, values and challenges that characterize an epoch interact dialectically with their opponents who struggle for their accomplishment."

In this way, our discussions did, in a concerted manner, lean on themes like family, the difficulty of raising children in a "double culture," isolation, paid and unpaid work or justice. Those themes echoed our own concerns, leading us to take full part in the discussions. Many divergences have emerged discussing these questions. On education, for example, the interest and morality of punishment towards children was debated. The question of the hospitality of a host country, of what seemed too "flexible" or too "closed" in terms of asylum laws, was also the subject of intense discussions. To our surprise, some of these positions were at odds with the speeches of associations—such as Camarada—whose mission is to support and welcome migrants. This project was for us an opportunity to further develop our reflection on the concept of "empowerment." We carefully avoided flattening out these differences, because they showed that there was

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[8] See in particular chapter 3.

no common voice, no indistinct community, but multiple “voices” and — as post-structuralist feminist discourses show—that a “voice” only exists in its articulation with other voices[9] and that it is necessarily changing and contextual. It is around these contradictions – which appeared on several levels in the project—that we proposed to work on sentences that would mix the subjects discussed and the agonistic character of the discussions that took place around these themes during our sessions. The results were, for example: “Nobody can ignore *the law* is unreadable” or “Migrants have rights *to dream* which are pricey for them.” These sentences were then embroidered on objects presented in the lobby and the theatre. In this project and the following ones, we did not search to build a consensus regarding art or within the group of participants, opposing the etymological definition “mediation.” The way we conceive our role within cultural institutions resonates with Chantal Mouffe’s call for the emergence of a “vibrant agonistic public sphere”: “*Instead of trying to design the institutions which, through supposedly ’impartial’ procedures, would reconcile all conflicting interests and values, the task for democratic theorists and politicians should be to envisage the creation of a vibrant ’agonistic’ public sphere of contestation where different hegemonic political projects can be confronted*” (Mouffe 2005, 3).

In developing a kind of “agonistic gallery education,” meaning a gallery education that is truly democratic in the sense that conflicts and divergences are not erased but rather constitutive of the work, we tried to approach “empowerment” differently, staying closer to the “radical empowerment” described by Bacqué and Biewener (2013). Working throughand with dissensus is a way to keep questioning the institutional and social structures rather than to simply fit into them, to underline the non-monolithic and sometimes non-rational[10] dimension of the groups involved, avoiding essentialization, and to speak collectively, going beyond the liberal idea of personal empowerment.

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[9] About this idea, see in particular Alicia Youngblood Jackson (2003) and the concept of “Rhizovocality.”

[10] Ellsworth (1989, 301) underlines the necessity of not considering the students in a class as “fully rational subjects.”

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BIOGRAPHIES

Doris Arztmann/ Eva Egermann (Austria)

Doris Arztmann is a political scientist and lives in Vienna. She conducted participatory research on boundaries/limitations (Grenzen) in the classroom together with schoolchildren. Doris is an every-now-and-then performer and engages in dis/continuities within the German-speaking women's* movement (for instance, in the collaborative, cross-generation performance project "Die Schwarzen Botinnen"). She is currently working on her PhD with the working title "Inclusion as a porous boundary and movement space" at the Institute of Political Science at the University of Vienna, where she is a lecturer. For years, Arztmann taught in teams at the art academies in Vienna, Linz and Zurich as well as at the University of Innsbruck.

Eva Egermann is an artist and lives in Vienna. She has worked in diverse media and collaborations (such as the Manoa Free University). Aside from her artistic projects, she conceived publication projects ("Regime. Wie Dominanz organisiert und Ausruck formalisiert wird" or "Class Works") and curated exhibitions ("On Uncanny States and Bodies"). She has been teaching at art academies in Vienna, Linz, Zurich and Lucerne and was a member of the research group *Model House. Mapping Transcultural Modernism*. She was a research fellow at U.C. Berkeley (2014), awarded with the Theodor Körner Prize for Art & Science (2015) (for her PhD project "Crip Modes of Artistic Research"), and a fellow of the Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen (2017). She is currently lecturer at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Art and at the University of Innsbruck. Egermann is publisher of the *Crip Magazine*, a crip art/culture zine, which first appeared in a newspaper format in 2012. The second edition of Crip Magazine has been published in 2017.

Ayman Eckford (Russian Federation)

Ayman Eckford is an activist working on questions of feminism, disability rights, LGBTQI people's rights, and fighting against ageism. Eckford is an Autistic, and a supporter of the paradigm of neurodiversity, which upholds that the autistic spectrum condition and some other neuro-differences are not diseases that need to be treated and eradicated, but are part of individual's personality. Eckford is the creator of the first Russian language project, which represents autism from the point of view of the paradigm of neurodiversity https://neurodiversityinrussia.com/. She is also the author and administrator of a number of other Internet projects, among which is the website "Intersections": https://lgbtautistic.blogspot.ru/, and the anti-ageist website devoted to the problems of discrimination of children and teenagers https://youthrightsen.wordpress.com/.

Marina Gržinić (Slovenia)

Marina Gržinić is a university professor, philosopher and artist who lives and works in Ljubljana, Slovenia and Vienna, Austria. She is a Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She is Research Advisor at the Institute of Philosophy at the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana. In 2014, in collaboration with Šefik Tatlić, she co-authored the book *Necropolitics, Racialization and Global Capitalism: Historicization of Biopolitics and Forensics of Politics, Art, and Life* (Lexington Books, USA, 2014). Gržinić's theoretical work is directed towards a theory of ideology, the theory of technology, biopolitics/necropolitics, video technology and transfeminism in connection with decoloniality.

Alexander Ivanov / Joana Monbaron (Russian Federation / Switzerland)

Alexander Ivanov and Joana Monbaron are independent researchers, educators and curators based in St. Petersburg, Russia, who have initiated community, pedagogical, artistic and research projects for the last three years. Their sphere of professional interest touches on critical pedagogy, the educational turn in art, and institutional criticism. They collaborated with a number of Russian and international institutions (the 10th and 11th editions of Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art, the International Public Art Festival "Art Prospect," the CYFEST annual media art festival, etc.). They are the organizers of the project "Tracings Out of Thin Air," a long-term interdisciplinary program that investigates issues of ableism and normalization in contemporary art.

Alevtina Kakhidze (Ukraine)

Alevtina Kakhidze was born in eastern Ukraine. Having lived in Kiev and in Muzychi (Central Ukraine) since 1995, with the exception of two years research term at the Jan Van Eyck Academy in Maastricht (2004-2006), she embodies clearly her cultural multi- identity space. Kakhidze's art practice is based on personal experiences and imagination, talking about consumer culture, gender, love, culture of protest, experience of war, plants and dogs. She participated in numerous project in Ukraine and internationally as at the 6th Moscow Biennale, Manifesta 10 in St. Petersburg, Russia, at the 7th Berlin Biennial (within Drawing Class for Collectors), Endless Sphere (Kyiv, Center for Contemporary Art at NaUKMA), etc. Kakhidze is the co-founder of a private residency for international artists in the village Muzychi—The Muzychi Expanded History Project.

Mira Kallio-Tavin (Finland)

Mira Kallio-Tavin works as a senior university lecturer of international art education at Aalto University. Her research area focuses on questions of diversity, social justice, embodiment and disability studies, and on the relationship of education and gaming. She has developed an arts-based research methodology within social contexts and in relation to questions of dialogue, community, ethics and the philosophy of education. She is the chair of the Finnish InSEA (International Society for Education through Art), and chair and program head of the international Master's degree program Nordic Visual Studies and Art Education, NoVA.

***microsillons* (Switzerland)**

microsillons is a collective of artists, art mediators and educators, which was founded in 2005 as an experimental and creative research platform. Its founding members Marianne Guarino-Huet and Olivier Desvoignes are currently directors of the Master program TRANS—Art Education Engagement at the Geneva University of Art and Design. From 2007 to 2012, they were responsible for the development of the art-mediation programme of the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève. From 2009 to 2014, Marianne Guarino-Huet and Olivier Desvoignes led the programme "Bilden-Künste-Gesellschaft" at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). They received the Swiss Art Award in 2008.

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Aneta Stojnić is a Belgrade-born theoretician, curator and artist working in the field of performing arts. Currently, she is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade, Serbia. In 2015 she was a postdoctoral researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, IBK, Post Conceptual Art Practices, and in 2013—14 she was a postdoctoral research fellow at Ghent University, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy Research centre, S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media). She published a book *Theory of performance in digital art: towards a new political performance* (Orion Art, Belgrade, 2015) and authored a number of international publications.

Andreja Rihter (Slovenia)

Andreja Rihter, PhD in History. In the course of the last twenty and more she has strongly supported cultural heritage projects and activities at the National, regional and international level—as the Minister of Culture in the Government of Slovenia during her term of office (2000—04), former director of the Museum of Recent History Celje (1986—2000) and through other assignments, functions and positions in different National and European cultural organizations such as: the European Museum Forum (national correspondent from 1987—2009); the Association of the Museums of Slovenia (president, 1998—2001); the Museology School of Celje, Slovenia (Initiator and Head, 2006—2010); ICOM—ICTOP (board member (2007—2016, vice-chair 2010—2016); the Forum of Slavic Cultures (Founding member and initiator, 2002—, President of the Board of FSC 2004—05, 2009—2012). More recently the Council of Europe—Parliamentary Assembly (chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Cultural Heritage, 2010–2011); the European Museum Academy (president, 2009—); Hands On! International association for Children's Museum (vice-president, 2009—2011, 2011—2014 member of the Board of HOI); Director Forum of Slavic Cultures (2012—). She published more than 230 articles, has lectured in Slovenia and abroad. During her work in the museums she was author of exhibitions with history content.

Darja Zaviršek (Slovenia)

Professor Darja Zaviršek is a sociologist at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Work and the chair of the Department for Research on Social Justice and Inclusion—Disability Studies, Gender and Ethnicity. She is Visiting Professor at the international master studies program Social Work as a Human Rights Profession at the University of Applied Sciences Alice Salomon, Berlin. She is a member of the board of directors of the International Association of the Schools of Social Work and the president of the East European Subregional Association of the Schools of Social Work. Her areas of research include gender and disability studies, diversity studies, and the history of social work.

KOLOFON / IMPRINT

Sledi v zraku/ Tracings Out of Thin Air

Založil in izdal
Mednarodna ustanova
Forum slovanskih kultur/
Published by
International Foundation
Forum of Slavic Cultures/
Za ustanovo/Represtented by
dr. Andreja Rihter

Uredniki/Editors:
Marina Gržinić, Alexander Ivanov,
Joana Monbaron, Aneta Stojnić, Andreja Rihter

Avtorji tekstov/Texts by:
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Prevod v slovenski jezik/ translated into Slovenian:
Marina Gržinić, Jovita Pristovšek
Prevod v ruski jezik / translated into Russian:
Alexander Ivanov, Joana Monbaron
Prevod v srbski jezik / translated into Serbian:
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Prevod v angleški jezik iz ruskega jezika/
translated into English from Russian (text by
Ayman Eckford): **Joana Monbaron**

Redakcija angleškega jezika/
English Language Editing/Proofreading:
Greg de Cuir Jr
Redakcija slovenskega jezika /
Slovenian Language Editing/Proofreading:
Maja Sužnik, Nadina Štefančič

Urednica nadaljnjih izdaj/ Copy Editor:
Marina Gržinić

Risbe / Drawings by
Alevtina Kakhidze ©

Organizatorja izvedbe programa
v St. Petersburgu/ Project's organizers
in St. Petersburg:
Alexander Ivanov, Joana Monbaron

Oblikovanje / Designed by
Matija Kovač, zgradbazamisli

Tisk / Printed by..........
Naklada/ Copies 500

Ljubljana,
Januar 2018/ January 2018

Knjiga je bila izdana s pomočjo / This book was published with the support of the

ЭРМИТАЖ
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