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Performance of Resistance in Croatia: A Chronotopic Review from the 1990s Onwards¹

“The arts cannot change the world, but they may
change human beings who might change the world”

(Maxine Greene).

The text is conceived as a review of the performative practices in Croatia from the 1990s onwards, with emphasis on performance art and actions, whereby I follow the situation of correlation of art and social engagement chronotopically – with regard to performance centres.² In a way, the paper can

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be seen as a discussion of the statement made by political theoretician Chantal Mouffe about the performance of resistance: “It would be a serious mistake to believe that artistic activism could, on its own, bring about the end of neo-liberal hegemony” (Mouffe, 2007). In brief, emphasis is put on activist practices (art + activism), the performances of resistance which, according to the definitions of Aldo Milohnić (Milohnić, 2013, pp. 131–148) and Nato Thompson (Thompson, 2014), are reminiscent of guerrilla performance, guerrilla actions that produce an effect of moral panic in the context of the global paranoia of large- and small-scale conspiracy theories, a context which was set out in the performances by the anarcho-father of ex-Yugoslav performance, the Great Tom (Tomislav Gotovac, a.k.a. Antonio G. Lauer).

The 1990s, or “the Stain on the Soul of Every Individual”

The story of the activist 1990s can begin chronotopically from Split and the autonomous and individual guerrilla action *Black Peristyle*, performed by Igor Grubić on the night of January 10/11, 1998, “in honour of the Red Peristyle Group, 30 years later. As a magic mirror, the Peristyle reflects the state of the social conscience” (Igor Grubić, cf. Marjanić, 2014, p. 891). Hence, thirty years after the collective guerrilla action *Red Peristyle* (the night between January 10 and 11, 1968), in which the rectangular peristyle of the Ancient Roman Diocletian’s Palace was painted red, Igor Grubić “recycled” this urban intervention with his *Black Peristyle*, a huge circular stain executed at the same place in black and easily removable Polycolor paint. As Željko Jerman aphoristically put it – the *red darkness* of the Communist League of Yugoslavia was followed by reactionary *black darkness* of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) (Jerman, 2002, p. 36). The author appeared for questioning at the police station (Department of Crime and Terrorism) with his lawyers and refused to give a statement. Luckily for the author, this act – due to common sense prevailing – was given 2nd Award at the 33rd Zagreb Salon the same year; more specifically, it was not only the stain that was awarded, but also its media reception.

It is important to note the chronotopic parallelism of the *zeitgeist*: while *Red Peristyle* (January 10/11, 1968), which was the first public intervention in Yugoslavia, applied Malevich’s (red) Suprematist square (cf. Malevich’s

Red Square from 1915), *Black Peristyle* (January 10/11, 1998) applied Malevich's (black) circle (*Black Circle*, 1924) as "The black circle on the Peristyle symbolised the stain on the soul of every individual who could actively contribute to changing our society's reality, yet doesn't do so, remaining passive instead" (Grubić, 2011, p. 382; cf. Marjanić, 2014, p. 890). This ethical statement, formulated by Igor Grubić years later, referencing also the then recent experience of the war, a war that was defined by Tom Gotovac as the war between Europe and the US in the Balkans (see below).³

The *Red Peristyle* action is the topic of the Split chapter in my book *Chronotope of Croatian Performance Art* (Marjanić, 2014). It was the first intervention in the public space in former Yugoslavia and a nearly isolated phenomenon from the late 1960s, whose protagonists were attributed as initiators of conceptual art in the region. The power of this phenomenon nearly voided the effects of similar actions in this city of potent performative energy, "the spontaneous theatre of morsels and buffoons in the literal sense of the word" (Marjanić, 2014, p. 875), as it is frequently called by Vladimir Dodig Trokut, a member of the Red Peristyle group, and a spiritual, though probably not actual, participant in the aforementioned collective anonymous guerrilla action.

It is beyond any doubt that among interventions in the public space in our region, only the two aforementioned actions have remained in such lively memory and with such potent aura – the collective action *Red Peristyle* from the revolutionary year of 1968⁴ and the individual guerrilla action *Black*

³ For a more detailed account on the collective guerrilla action *Red Peristyle* and the individual guerrilla action *Black Peristyle*, cf. Marjanić, 2014, pp. 875–916 (the chapter about Split), as well as all monographs of Igor Grubić's oeuvre. Here, I present a fragmentary examination of the scene, whereby I place the *Red* and *Black Peristyle* sequence in the wider context of the history of protest performances in Croatia from the 1990s onwards. Thus interpreted, the guerrilla action *Black Peristyle* (1998) is the first action and provocation that was a manifestation of civic self-initiative in post-Yugoslav Croatia.

⁴ When addressing performative spaces, Romanian visual arts theoretician Cristian Nae emphasises that, while in the West the street could be perceived as a free communal domain, it was rarely used in this manner in socialist Romania "due to the harsh political constraints and intense political surveillance" (Nae, 2018, p. 84). One could conclude that, due to war circumstances, the situation regarding the use of public spaces in public performances remained similar in Croatia even after the fall of socialism. Specifically, the *Week of Performance: Javno tijelo / Public Body* (concept author: Jadranka Vinterhalter), held in Zagreb in 1997, is considered the first public performance event in Croatia (after the disintegration of Yugoslavia).

Peristyle, supported by the civic initiative, thirty years later. Unfortunately, following the latter intervention, we did not produce any new interventions in the public space with such aura and utopic gesture.⁵ This lack of equally meaningful continuation is regrettable but at the same time it underscores the importance of the *Peristyle* actions. Just like Želimir Košćević, I find the artistic actions in public space extremely important as they are situated in “the physical nucleus of the ‘establishment’” (Košćević, 1978, p. 59) and take place “*in situ*, as a direct psychophysical obstacle to the well-established rhythm of the estranged technical civilisation” (Košćević, 1978, p. 59). Furthermore, as Košćević observed – while they do not endanger the system, they do cause an immediate disturbance in rhythm (Košćević, 1978, p. 59).

Photo 1. A colourist intervention by Igor Grubić in the newspaper photograph which merged the actions *Red Peristyle* (1968) and *Black Peristyle* (1998). The inscription reads, “After the red square, a black circle followed: Peristyle strikes back.” Photograph courtesy of Ivan Grubić.

⁵ In the context of the emphasis placed in this paper on public interventions, another such performance from post-Yugoslav Croatia that is worth mentioning is *Lady Godiva* (2001) by Vlasta Delimar, as part of which she rode naked on a white horse named Petko (Friday) through the centre of Zagreb. The aim of her action was, as she herself stated, to indicate, with the symbolic act of *public* and *naked* performance, the individual responsibility of every individual, as well as the choice of courage in facing conventions and imposed heteronomies, as was the case with Lady Godiva, who spared the citizens of Coventry from the imposed taxes by riding naked through the streets.

Labin, or Performance of the Underground

Another activist initiative I would like to present is the Labin Art Express collective (L.A.E.) and TransArt – the international transdisciplinary art festival and laboratory that the group has organised. In 1991, at the former coalmine in Labin, Dean Zahtila – together with the now late sculptor and sailor Krešimir Farkaš, and Graziano Kršić – established the cultural and artistic association Labin Art Express, over which he has presided since its foundation until today. Furthermore, on September 12, 1998, as part of the former industrial complex of the Labin coalmine, L.A.E. also opened Lamparna Cultural Centre (KuC Lamparna) as the first independent and international cultural centre in Croatia. This was the first step towards the implementation of their main project *Underground City XXI* – the foundation of an underground cultural city in Labin as the first futuristic underground city in the world, 150–160 metres under the Earth's surface (Zahtila, 2013). From 1993 to 1996, Dean Zahtila was also Director of L.A.E. Radio – the first completely independent radio station in Croatia. In 1994, together with Massimo Savić and Krešimir Farkaš, he established the multimedia group Metal Guru, one of the factions of Labin Art Express.

The fundamental programme of the group Labin Art Express is the conversion of the former coalmines near Labin (Pozzo Littorio) and in Raša (Arsia), “one of the greatest technological achievements on the field of mining, into a futuristic underground city, an urban social sculpture in perpetual making,” as characterised by Zahtila himself, who elsewhere added that the project can be considered a living sculpture-in-progress of sorts, a *modus* of process art (Dean Zahtila, cf. Marjanić, 2014, p. 1254). The physical implementation of the project, as frequently stated by Dean Zahtila, was not deliberated until the Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering at the University of Zagreb had completed, upon commission by the Istria County, the study on the project's feasibility in 2000, which confirmed that the artistic utopia can become reality. The basic idea of the project is to preserve the 400-year mining tradition by transforming the industrial and historical heritage into an avantgarde art project, a cultural and tourist attraction of global significance: a genuine city 150 metre below ground, with halls and tunnels carved in a living rock; connecting the towns of Labin, Raša, Plomin and Rabac, it will feature bars, galleries, pools, children's playgrounds, shops, restaurants, and the Museum of Mining and Industry of Istria.

Photo 2. On September 12, 1998, in the former industrial complex of the coalmine in Labin, L.A.E. opened Lamparna Cultural Centre as the first independent and international cultural centre in Croatia. Photograph courtesy of Dean Zahtila.

Parallelism: Varaždin – Osijek

It is notable that in the same year (2001), two performance festivals were initiated in Croatia – Performance Day (later Days; Dan/Dani Performansa) in Varaždin (cf. Mesek, 2013), and Performance Art Festival in Osijek, which remains a trademark of Osijek primarily thanks to the enthusiastic engagement of Ivan Faktor, and his collaborator in later years, Ana-Marija Koljanin.⁶ As regards Varaždin, the project was initiated when the local branch of the Croatian Association of Artists (HDLU) took over and reactivated a group of younger-generation artists: Ivan Mesek, Darwin Butković and Alen Novoselec. As Mesek put it,

⁶ More specifically, several other festivals (including UrbanFestival in Zagreb and StreetArt Festival in Poreč) were initiated in the same year, which proved to be quite fruitful for Croatia's performance art scene; on this occasion, however, I chose to document only the story of the scenes in Varaždin and Osijek, considering the fact that both have been systematically dedicated to performance art since 2001.

“I find it symptomatic that this role was assumed by artists instead of museums or cultural institutions” (Marjanić, 2014, pp. 1679–1680).

Particularly noteworthy from the perspective of activism was the extremely powerful topic of the 14th Performance Days (organised by the Varaždin Gallery Centre, Varaždin, June 11–14, 2015) – *Tearing Down the Wall*, conceived by art historian and curator Branko Franceschi. The festival poised the question of the physical and mental obstacles that we, as powerless individuals, are faced when encountering individuals who hold any kind of dangerous power, and did so in the context of the erection of barbed wires along the eastern border. (Marjanić, 2017, pp. 364–380).

Ivan Mesek also reacted to the recent humanitarian/refugee crisis, and together with his colleague Zefrey Throwell recorded the short film *Woodland Concertina* (2016). The artists procured a duck, a rabbit and a pheasant, and took them to the Police Department in order to issue them passports. When this failed, they created fake documents for these animals, trying to have them cross the Croatian-Slovenian border. Finally, the artists set the animals free outside of the strict border zone and away from the razor-wire fence. The short film *Woodland Concertina* addresses the issue of animals forcibly being given a nationality in the refugee crisis, that of the refugee crisis itself, and that of the totalitarian praxis of border closing (Mesek & Franceschi, 2018, pp. 117–118).

Photo 3. Ivan Mesek: Short film *Woodland Concertina* (2016) with Zefrey Throwell. Film still. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

The Scene of Slavonski Brod: The Saturnian Melancholy of the Slavonian Plain

As Head of Barutana Art Workshop at the Fine Arts Gallery of Slavonski Brod, Ivan Šeremet stressed on one occasion that a performance art scene did not exist in that area, and that only he could be characterised as a conceptual artist and *an artist of the cultural period* (Ivan Šeremet, quoted in Marjanić, 2014, pp. 1554–1555). From this position, in his art strategies under the aegis of melancholic meditateness – as summarised by Antun Maračić (Maračić, 1996) – Ivan Šeremet criticises the institutions of power as well as the institutions of culture that advocate for fail-safe projects.

It is in this context of the Saturnian melancholy of the Slavonian plain that I would like to mention the artist's performance *Slavonian Fugue* (2002), presented in front of the main administrative building of Brod-Posavina County and the City of Slavonski Brod (courthouse, county seat, and city municipality). In a benign gesture of thorough nose-picking, the artist expressed his personal opinion stemming from overall humiliation. Describing his entire ten-year multimedia project *Sketches for Melancholia*, which featured *Slavonian Fugue*, among other works, the author noted that it ensued “as a consequence of war, and my own desire to analyse from my own point of view this specific experience in which melancholia is imposed on us as the *modus vivendi*. In this case, melancholia is neither a disease nor denial of life, but an organism's integral reaction to the nature of existence” (Šeremet, 2009).

Photo 4. Ivan Šeremet, *Slavonian Fugue* (2002). The performance of resistance by nose-picking was presented by the artist in front of the main administrative building of Brod-Posavina County and the City of Slavonski Brod (courthouse, county seat, and city municipality). Photograph courtesy of the artist.

ARL (Dubrovnik) + MMC Palach (Rijeka)

We must begin the story of the action and performance art scene of Dubrovnik with Lazareti Art Workshop (ARL), founded in 1988. In addition, ARL initiated in 2007 the Quarantine Scene as a programme of contemporary performing arts, independent production and contemporary dance, which came after the Quarantine Festival of independent and contemporary performative production that they had produced and organised during a ten-year period (1996–2006).⁷ From the founding of the ARL until 2012, its Head was visual artist Slaven Tolj, who then went to Rijeka to become Director of the local Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art and Art Director of the project “Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture,” which at the time of writing these words is the largest cultural project in Croatia. It is worth noting that another reasons for which Tolj left Dubrovnik was to express protest against the municipal authorities, who are transforming the city into a port for tourist cruisers. Slaven Tolj frequently refers to the epithet that was ascribed to his works by Janka Vukmir, who used the excellent syntagma “perceptual art.” Or, to quote Tolj himself on the subject of his own works, “This tissue is fragile, I cannot rely on artefacts. Recently I have had a few humorous situations with curators who have asked me to show them my works” (Tolj, 2001/2002, p. 48).

We can safely say that from 1997 until 2008, Rijeka’s central point of actions and performances was Palach Club (Multimedia Centre, or MMC, Palach), operating in that period under the management of Damir Čargonja Čarli and his Multimedia Centre Ltd., which is often associated with the concept of cultural entrepreneurship (Čargonja, 2012). The Club then closed, and for a few years, the “maladjusted” artistic current gathered in KUNS (the Sušak Artists’ Club); when KUNS was also closed in 2013, the current was completely delocalised, to put it mildly. This changed in 2014, with the inauguration of the periodical MMC Days of Performance, a festival initiated spontaneously in OK Gallery, which operated the former location of MMC Palach.⁸

⁷ For a more detailed account on Lazareti Art Workshop and Slaven Tolj, cf. Art radionica Lazareti (n.d.) and Marjanić, 2014, pp. 1047–1142 (the chapter about Dubrovnik).

⁸ For a more detailed account on the MMC Days of Performance in 2014, cf. Dani performansa MMC-a (2014). Apart from the MMC festival, actionist scene of Rijeka was certainly supplemented by the events organised by Marija Štrajh – *Kultur šok* in 2014 and 2016, and *On the Edge – Subversive Art Performance Festival* (October 27, 2016, RI HUB, former department store Bernardi, Rijeka).

Alongside performances in alchemical format that detected the *nigredo* state of consciousness, the first edition of MMC festival also featured a political performance by Damir Stojnić, entitled *DIESELL*, which he presented on a cloudy afternoon in Korzo, Rijeka's main promenade, whereby he "attacked" every ATM machine installed along the street. As the artist himself explained, "It is in the title itself: DIESEL as a type of fuel with an added L, which reads as *die – sell*, a demand or suggestion. The neologism 'gastro-economics' includes the following: 1) gastronomy as a form of cultivated gourmet consumption, 2) economics as a cultivated grabbing of resources, and 3) necronomics, which has long become a scientific branch in its own right due to the complexity of the exploitation of the deceased, from copulation to organ-selling. 'Die and sell' imposes itself continuously as an oxymoron [...]" (Damir Stojnić, cf. Marjanić, 2014, p. 1386). Damir Stojnić's "attack" on the ATMs consisted in putting on each of them ATM a sticker aimed against bankocracy, with the inscription "DIESELL or the gastro-economics of blackness. At least two things connect capitalism, oil, and death: 1) they are all black, 2) they all thrive on corpses."

Photo 5. Damir Stojnić performing the action *DIESELL*, MMC Days of Performance, Rijeka, 2014. Photo: Suzana Marjanić

Zagreb, ATTACK! The Final Story of the Chronotope

And finally, as regards Zagreb in the 1990s, I use this opportunity to point out the performative energy of ATTACK! (Autonomous Culture Factory) that was established in October 1997 as a community and culture centre. Embodying Hakim Bey's idea of temporary autonomous zones (Bey, 1991; Bey, 2003), the centre carried out an array of actions and events performed in the city's public spaces. According to information from the 9th issue of the *Newsletter of the Autonomous Culture Factory* (*Newsletter Autonomne tvornice kulture*) from 1999, already at the point ATTACK! had organised as many as 82 performances since October 1997 – of which 51 had been performed during FAKI (Festival of Alternative Theatrical Expression) – and an unknown number of street performances/initiatives.⁹ Furthermore, there were many activist practices, particularly in the first years of ATTACK! One such action that warrants mentioning is the street event *Books and Community* – 22%, organised by Igor Grubić in collaboration with ATTACK!,¹⁰ and implemented as a joint action-reaction of around thirty artists to the imposition of VAT on books. It was also the first collective artistic action in post-Yugoslav Croatia. As part of the that event, anonymous masked performers on Cvjetni (Flower) Square – among whom Grubić himself was the central figure – handed out to the citizens large black dots (targets, marks) on paper, the *micro*-fatal dimensions of which corresponded to the *macro*-stain on the Peristyle, the black stain on the soul of all of us who could have reacted in the 1990s, but failed to do so.

⁹ In this sense, we can talk of the *performing city*, the city itself as performance (Whybrow, 2014, p. 2), to which ATTACK! strongly contributed in the 1990s. For a more detailed account on ATTACK!, cf. the monograph *Our Story: 15 Years of ATTACK!: Autonomous Culture Factory* (Cvek et al., 2013).

¹⁰ It is important to note that the same year saw the performance of Grubić's action *Black Peristyle*, and the organisation of the event *Books and Community* – 22%.

Photo 6a, 6b. Anonymous [Igor Grubić], *Untitled* (photo by Boris Cvjetanović); *Books and Community – 22%* (July 10, 1998, Cvjetni Square, Zagreb) – the first collective artistic action in Croatia. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

Paranoia View Art from the year 1984/1986

Art of Great Tom, Tomislav Gotovac a.k.a. Antonio G. Lauer,¹¹ the anarcho-father of performance art¹² in former Yugoslavia, rests on the matrix of conspiracy theories. Specifically, on the narrative structure of the conspiracy theories related to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. I shall base of discussion on some of Gotovac's performances informed by his concept of *Paranoia View Art*, which were presented at the retrospective exhibition *Crisis Anticipator – Don't Ask Where We're Going* (2017) at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka (MMSU), whose title itself thematises the artist's permanent preoccupation with conspiracy theories as alternative historical truths. This was his second retrospective exhibition. The first one, which took place in 1986, recapitulated the then 30-year period from 1956 onwards, and at the same time marked the beginning of the 10-year *Employment Action*

¹¹ Tomislav Gotovac presented himself at the *Birthday Performance* on February 9, 2006 (Nova Gallery, Zagreb) with a new name of Antonio G. Lauer ("G." being the trace of his father's surname, which needed to remain as was required by the state administration). Tomislav Gotovac a.k.a. Antonio G. Lauer (Sombor, February 9, 1937 – Zagreb, June 24, 2010), film director, actor, performance artist, multimedia and conceptual artist, a doyen of structuralist film, guerrilla performer, and actionist who followed the principle of one-man art, famous for his street shippings – minimalist actions in which he used his own body (the body as a ready-made) (Denegri, 2003, pp. 4–11) as the sole medium in the concept of behavioural art, ex-Yugoslav and Croatian veteran of body art, the first streaker in the EU (Susovski, 1982, p. 29), cinephile, a protagonist and witness to numerous cultural events who was justifiably given the title of a "walking archive" (Greiner, 2011, p. 126), a culturological blasphemer whose projects indicate culturological polylogues between film tradition (testified to by numerous homages to film directors) and art history, between jazz and popular culture; briefly put, a close ally of art that had originated from the Fluxus anti-movement, the Gorgona Group, and American Pop Art (Milovac, 2002).

¹² As regards the conceptual scene of Yugoslavia, among the first who shared with Tomislav Gotovac the performative line of resistance was Katalin Ladik (b. Novi Sad, October 25, 1942), multimedia artist, author, film and theatre actress, whose range of activity includes literature, acting, creation and interpretation of experimental sound compositions and radio plays, the phonic and visual – or, briefly put experimental – poetry, happening, performance art, actions, and mail art. The artist's monograph *The Power of a Woman: Katalin Ladik, Retrospective 1962–2010* (Šuvaković, Ugren, & Šuler, 2010) points out that she was the first female performance artist in former Yugoslavia. As regards the local scene, Sanja Iveković and Vlasta Delimar are considered the founders of feminist performance in Croatia, on which I have written in more detail in my book on performance art (Marjanić, 2014, pp 539–722: chapter on feminist performance).

as well as the proclamation of the *Paranoia View Art* concept as the beginning of the artist's fourth decade of activity).

This first retrospective exhibition, entitled *Tomislav Gotovac: Retrospective of Documents 1956–1986, Paranoia View Art*, opened at the Gallery of the Community Centre in Trešnjevka, Zagreb, on June 13, 1986, with the date stamp “June 11, 1986,” although originally, the opening of the exhibition was supposed to take place on June 6.¹³ In the invitation leaflet, Tom Gotovac placed the logo of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), founded in 1908 by J. Edgar Hoover, Theodore Roosevelt and Charles Joseph Bonaparte, the latter being better known as Napoleon's grand-nephew. At the exhibition opening, Gotovac performed his “cursing action” (the first of its format), whereby he used curse words as an apotropaic talisman against the overall social and cultural cynicism. *Final Haircutting and Shaving – Calling the Artistic and Public Cultural Employees of Zagreb Mother-Fuckers* was his last action of public shaving, as he himself stated e.g. in the interview for *Polet* magazine (Gotovac, 1989, pp. 2–4). Thereby he also marked – in terms of gesture and costume – the beginning of a new, paranoid phase in his art. Specifically, with the haircutting and shaving he seemingly renounced the iconography of the flower-power anarchy of the 1960s and 1970s. Following the costumed role as the *unfettered* man with long hair and beard, Gotovac assumed the equally unsettling image of a large, clean-shaven man. This was a literal translation of his own figure into another performative mode of everyday life. In the monograph accompanying the second retrospective, the exhibition curators brilliantly emphasised the following: “Although he put himself in the position of prey, Gotovac directed his own movement and appearance meticulously so as to regain control and make it difficult for the ‘hunters’ to make out the target” (Orelj & Šuković, 2017, p. 323).

The final shaving action – with ritualised curse words as apotropaia against necropolitics and the culture of fear – was specified by Gotovac as the pin-

¹³ The reason for this had to do with the artist's action *Shaving – Non-Shaving* that defined the third decade (1976–1986) and consisted of a five-year period of non-shaving (the five-year action *Growing the Hairs on the Head*) the and the subsequent pivotal action *Haircutting and Shaving in Public Space III* (8th action-project; a homage to Carl Theodor Dreyer and his film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, and to its lead actress Maria Falconetti; performed on the former Brotherhood and Unity Square, Zagreb, June 6, 1981 at noon), followed by five years of shaving (of hair and beard). With his unconventional appearance, Tomislav Gotovac drew attention to his own figure. The timing of the action was the exact reason as to why the retrospective exhibition was supposed to open on June 6, 1986.

nacle of his artistic activity, that is, as an instance of art of the paranoid worldview that constitutes, by his own definition, “an attempt at disclosure of the structural legitimacy of the global order,” a phrase which is also an apt description of his overall artistic activity. Or, to use Gotovac’s diagnosis of paranoia and the resulting conspiracy theories, as a more accurate understanding of the world order: “Everything happens according to a set order, like in film directing; everything is, in fact, some kind of conspiracy” (Marjanić, 1998, p. 14).

The war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was thus interpreted by Tomislav Gotovac as a large scale conspiracy; as he understood it, it was not a war for territory, but rather the war between Europe and the US. Even though there was talk about the US and its involvement in the Balkan war, this “word of mouth” was dismissed as precisely a conspiracy theory. Specifically – according to this alternative interpretation of the sequence of events – as the Cold War was allegedly ending, the US planned out the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The plan was put forward on October 31, 1988, in a memorandum of the National Intelligence Council, entitled *Sense of Community – Report on Yugoslavia*. As stated by journalist Wayne Madsen (Madsen, 2016), the author of the memorandum was Marten van Heuven, who was then National Intelligence Officer for Europe.

A similar version of this paranoid worldview had been announced by Tomislav Gotovac two years prior by the series of marketing actions entitled *Selling Polet Magazine (Mask of Death + Cyrillic Script; The Mummy; Hammer, Sickle and Red Star; Chimney Sweeper; Street Sweeper; Sandwich Man with a Dinamo Ad; Superman; Santa Clause)*, in which he used the performative strategy of appropriation, i.e. masking of identity under the sponsorship of *Polet* on Republic Square (now Ban Jelačić Square) in Zagreb. He assumed a different identity each week – from a death mask, worker with a hammer and sickle, to Santa Claus – and sold *Polet* in those disguises. In his book *Kino Tom* (Šijan, 2012; English translation: Šijan, 2018), Slobodan Šijan marks the performance *Superman* (1984) as the announcement of Gotovac’s concept *Paranoia View Art*, and defines as the first performance in the cycle the action *Sickle, Hammer and Red Star*, presented on November 9, 1984 on Republic Square in Zagreb. Gotovac proceeded to distort the aforementioned figures of Superman and worker over the years; finally, in the performance *Paranoia View Art / Hommage to Glenn Miller* (Das gläserne U-Boot, Krems-Stein, Austria, September 24, 1988) – with which the author suggested that

the entire former Yugoslavia was an art project in which Tito, as the Great Tom frequently stressed, “was generously funded by the Americans throughout his entire reign” (Marjanić, 1998, p. 15) – Tomislav Gotovac activated in parallel the iconography of all necropolitics. Gotovac aimed to demonstrate that, in accordance with his anarcho-individualist comprehension of governmental hegemony, the governments do not exist to serve people, but are above them. Thus, instead of Superman and worker from 1984, to whom the artist evidently assigned the role of the saviour (the first one of the American, the second one of socialist provenance), in 1988 – when certain power structures and circles were already quite familiar with the strategies of preparation for the Balkan war – Gotovac’s hero becomes an antihero who merged all antiheroes of political systems into a single iconogram. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the costume segment of the introductory part of the Sarajevo performance from 1990 (*Paranoia View Art. Hommage to Glenn Miller*, Zvono Café and Gallery, Sarajevo, February 15, 1990), which was accompanied by the song *I’m Old Fashioned* performed by the Glenn Miller Orchestra. The artist stood on a pedestal, half-naked, in red underpants and under-knee socks as remnants of the costume of Superman; instead of the red five-pointed star on his forehead, he now has a Grosz-like mask of death – a grinning, sneering black and white skull that is reminiscent of the concentration camp terror or a nuclear catastrophe (he had used the mask in the 1984 living sculpture *Mask of Death + Cyrillic Script* from the series of actions *Selling Polet Magazine*) – and, alongside the aforementioned song, he now performed the ideological salutations of all types of necropolitics. Alongside the conspiracy theories related to Miller’s disappearance, the jazz-swing music of Glenn Miller indicated in many of Gotovac’s performances the sound backdrop of American military operations against Germany, but also the fact that Josip Broz Tito had risen to power to the sounds of Miller’s big band music.¹⁴

In short, Tomislav Gotovac – the anarcho-father of performance art in former Yugoslavia – produced with his artistic actions the effect of moral panic in the context of the global paranoia of large and small scale conspiracy theories, of which he systematically spoke within the framework of his individualistic performative narrative art.

¹⁴ For an exceptional interpretation of Gotovac’s *Paranoia View Art* series, which is dominated by Glenn Miller – as the inductive symbolical figure – and by his mysterious disappearance, see Gotovac, 2015; Šijan, 2012, pp. 177–193; Rife, 2002.

Photo 7. Tomislav Gotovac. As part of the series of marketing actions *Selling Polet Magazine*, the action *Superman* (1984) denotes the announcement of Gotovac's cycle *Paranoia View Art*; the performance/action *Hammer, Sickie and Red Star* is recognised as the first performance of the cycle (Šijan, 2012, pp. 177–178, 179; Šijan, 2018).

The Downfall: Beginning of the End: *Black Nylon Peristyle* and Ponerology

Allow me to return to the peristyle in Split, where in 2013 another civic initiative/action took place, this time called *Black Nylon Peristyle*. The official celebration of the accession of Croatia to the EU was marked, *inter alia*, with the event *Europe's Greatest Feast* (Zagreb, Ban Jelačić Square, June 27, 2013), as part of which citizens could enjoy various specialties from European countries, according to the maxim “panem et circenses” (G. Ut., 2013). Alongside these festivities, the common attribute of all, Croatian and otherwise, EU accession-related public events (or, to use Sally Falk Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff's [Moore & Myerhoff, 1977] term, “secular

rituals”) are what Don Handelman calls *representations* (Handelman, 1998, p. 49). Handelman classifies public events dyadically into *models* and *mirrors*, whereby a *model* denotes events that are formed so as to transform society, i.e. to directly influence social reality, whereas *mirrors* are public events that are structured as *presentations*, or *re-presentations*, i.e. events that represent the social conscious anew, by offering suggestions and countersuggestions on the very nature of the observed reality (Handelman, 1998, p. 49).

As regards the anti-EU performative demonstrations that were organised on the occasion of accession of Croatia to the EU, a civic action occurred in the early morning of July 1, 2013 (the first day of Croatia’s membership in the EU), in which a group of dissatisfied citizens of Split laid black nylon covering on the Peristyle, thus expressing their disapproval of the assessment of politicians that the accession to the EU was the best thing that had happened to Croatia since gaining independence. The gesture of covering the Peristyle in black nylon was accompanied with a statement, proclaiming that the colour black represented “the depth of the abyss, and the rushing of Croatian political scene in the brainless selling of our homeland, its heritage and sovereignty” (Hina, 2013).¹⁵ On the leaflets handed out by the participants of this civic action on this occasion, the word *ponerology* was highlighted, which is a term proposed by Polish psychiatrist Andrzej Łobaczewski, according to whom the ultimate source of evil is the consequence of two human factors

natural human ignorance and weakness, and the existence and activity of a statistically small (4–8% of the overall population), but extremely active group of psychologically deviant individuals (psychopaths). Failing to recognise (ignoring) the existence of such psychological differences is the first criterion of ponerogenesis, which opens up space for the unnoticed operation of psychopaths (Hina, 2013).¹⁶

¹⁵ Note also the exhibition *Re: Referendum* by the curatorial platform of the New Media Gallery in 2012 in Split, at which the Organisation for the Promotion of Experimental Art DADAnti performed the *Ursonate* by Kurt Schwitters as an alternative anthem of Europe. Dressed in differently-coloured shirts with the same logo, the artists read the different parts of the *Ursonate* at the same time. They stated the following: “The work does not reflect YES or NO to the EU. They want to say: WE ARE ALL THE SAME, BUT WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT. This is not necessarily related to the EU, but also to the smallest communities like marriage, as well as to the biggest ones, like general globalization and unification of all countries in the world” (Kadin & Kadin, 2012, p. 20).

¹⁶ Let us observe how the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia assessed the political progress of the country: “In the twenty-two years of independence, Croatia has become an internationally-recognised state, a member of NATO, and now a full 28th member of the European Union. We have every right to be proud of what we have achieved” (Ministarstvo vanjskih i europskih poslova Republike Hrvatske, 2013).

Such is the situation from *Red Peristyle*, *Black Peristyle*, to *Black Nylon Peristyle* and in all other variations that pay homage to the action *Red Peristyle* (Marjanić, 2014, pp. 875–914). Performances of amusement and pleasure, as well as manifestations contesting the mode of the accession to the EU,¹⁷ are part of what Guy Debord termed society of the spectacle – in all of them, the citizen is transformed into an observer, consumer of visual spectacles, a *Homo Spectator* (Debord, 1995, p. 9) – *the observing man*. In this sense, the macro-policies of the political spectacle, as represented by the events of the aforementioned type, should certainly be interpreted subversively. This is mainly what is brought to us by the contemporary form of poneroocracy – we become mere observers, but not actors, as has been the case so far.¹⁸ Alexander Bard and Jan Söderqvist have perfectly identified this era as the era of netocracy with the ruling system of totalist thought, the essential feature of which is the anthropocentric worldview (Bard & Söderqvist, 2002, p. 99). An absolute dominance of speciesism. On the other hand, Jeffrey Grupp terms it corporatism, and identifies the year 2008 as the starting point of its third, roughest and darkest phase (Grupp, 2007, p. 65). Pierre Clastres defines it as voluntary captivity of long duration, implicit in the very paradigm of the State from the beginning of the national concept (Clastres, 2010, pp. 105–119). There are, however, spiritual and historical perspectives that take a somewhat more mild approach towards today's world.

¹⁷ For example, theatre director Mario Kovač, who began his performative activity as a secondary school student on the platform of ATTACK!, rejected the offer to direct the ceremony of the accession of Croatia to the EU – he himself being a euro-sceptic – “even though it would present a challenge to [him] in the professional sense” (Kovač, 2015, p. 68).

¹⁸ One of the first domestic performances that critically questioned that unification was duo-performance by Pasko Burdelez and Rodion entitled *I Shall Embrace My New Friend* (2009), with the following three definitions of friendship as mottos: “to promote friendship is thought to be the special task of political science” (Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 1234b [Aristotle, 1935, p. 359]); “I do not survive the friend, I cannot and must not survive him, except to the extent to which he already bears my death and inherits it as the last survivor” (Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship* [Derrida, 2005, p. 13]), and finally – “a company of porcupines soon felt one another's quills, which induced them to separate again despite cold weather. And now, when the need for warmth brought them nearer together again, the second evil arose once more. So that they were driven backwards and forwards from one trouble to the other, until they had discovered a mean distance, between attraction and repulsion, friendship and animosity, at which they could most tolerably exist” (Schopenhauer, quoted in: Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, 1921 [Freud, 1949, p. 54, modified translation]) (cf. Marjanić, 2014, p. 1075).

Photo 8. *Black Nylon Peristyle*, civic initiative on the occasion of the accession of Croatia to the EU, July 1, 2013 (Hina, 2013).

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Performans oporu w Chorwacji. Przegląd chronotopiczny od lat 90.

W artykule prześledzono performans oporu w sztuce performansu w Chorwacji od lat dziewięćdziesiątych, tj. od rozpadu Jugosławii – w odniesieniu do kwestii widzialności performansu oporu w sferze publicznej. Akcent został położony na indywidualnej akcji partyzanckiej Igora Grubicia (1998), uważanej za pierwszą akcję i pierwszą prowokację jako przejaw inicjatywy obywatelskiej w Chorwacji w latach dziewięćdziesiątych.

W związku z panującą wojną i trwającym okresem postsocjalizmu dopiero w 1998 roku w Chorwacji miało miejsce działanie, które pod względem medialnym było porównywalne do rewolucyjnego roku 1968 w Jugosławii, kiedy to odbyła się interwencja *Czerwony Perystyl*, do której odnosiło się przedsięwzięcie Grubicia – *Czarny Perystyl*.

Przegląd performansów oporu w Chorwacji od lat dziewięćdziesiątych zamykam opowieścią o *Czarnym Nylonowym Perystylu* jako obywatelskiej reakcji performatywnej na przystąpienie Chorwacji do Unii Europejskiej. Tym samym śledzę w sposób chronotopiczny performans oporu w Chorwacji w latach 1998–2013 (i częściowo dalej, aż do roku 2017) z uwzględnieniem centrów performatywnych, umieszczając punkt początkowy i końcowy w Splicie, a dokładnie na Perystylu jako *artystycznym forum* performansu oporu w Chorwacji.

Słowa kluczowe: performans oporu, akcja, sztuka performansu, aktywizm, sfera publiczna, Chorwacja, chronotop

Performance of resistance in Croatia: A chronotopic review from the 1990s onwards

I follow the performance of resistance in performance art in Croatia from the 1990s – i.e. from the disintegration of Yugoslavia – in correlation with the visibility of the performance of resistance in public spaces, with an emphasis on the individual guerrilla action by Igor Grubić (1998), which is considered the first action and provocation in Croatia of the 1990s that was triggered by civic self-initiative. Due to socialist legacy and the war, it was only in 1998 that an action could occur in Croatia that would be as powerful action in terms of media influence as had been the case in the revolutionary year of 1968 in Yugoslavia with the action *Red Peristyle*, upon the aura of which Grubić's *Black Peristyle* was built.

I conclude this review of the performance of resistance in Croatia from the 1990s onwards with the story of *Black Nylon Peristyle* as the civic performative reaction on the occasion of the accession of Croatia to the EU. Thereby I follow chronotopically the performance of resistance in Croatia between 1998 and 2013 (and partly further, up to and including 2017) with

regard to the performative centres, placing the starting and endpoint in Split i.e. Peristyle as the art forum of the performance of resistance in Croatia.

Keywords: performance of resistance, action, performance art, activism, public space, Croatia, chronotope

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