

ABSOLUTELY NOW
APSOLUTNO SADA

DEATH **SMRT**
CONFUSION **KONFUZIJA**
SALE **RASPRODAJA**



Novi Sad, 2015.

Apsolutno sada: smrt, konfuzija, rasprodaja
(asocijacija Apsolutno 1993–2005)

Absolutely Now: Death, Confusion, Sale
(association Apsolutno 1993–2005)

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APSOLUTNO SADA: SMRT, KONFUZIJA, RASPRODAJA

Umetnička asocijacija Apsolutno kao hroničari preobražaja
koji Zapad nikada nije potpuno shvatio

Inke Arns

Dobro veče. Najnovije vesti. Činjenice. Na prvi pogled, video rad *Dobro veče* (1996) doima se kao smešan ili unekoliko ironičan komentar na račun preobilja globalno dostupnih televizijskih stanica, kao i razlika i sličnosti kada se radi o njihovoj formi i jeziku. Međutim, ako se ovaj rad pomnije razmotri, i ako se ima u vidu njegov podnaslov (1996 APSOLUTNO 0004), pojam „Dobro veče“ poprima jedno tamnije značenje, koje se odnosi na vreme i mesto kada je rad stvoren. U njemu se koristi vazda ista fraza dobrodošlice iz mnoštva globalnih satelitskih kanala (sa vestima) koji su 1996. bili dostupni u Srbiji. Međutim, uprkos svekolikom humoru koji sadrži, rad *Dobro veče* je izuzetno ambivalentan: ne samo da se odnosi na uticaj koji mediji imaju na doživljavanje stvarnosti – preispitujući način na koji mediji prezentiraju informacije kao činjenice – već takođe predstavlja čin opraštanja sa dvadesetim vekom i tamnu dobrodošlicu osvitu novog milenijuma. Šta će 21. vek doneti građanima bivše Jugoslavije? Hoće li biti išta bolji od stoleća koje mu je prethodilo?

Asocijacija Apsolutno osnovana je 1993. u Novom Sadu, u Jugoslaviji. Četvoro članova sarađivalo je na stvaranju radova asocijacije: Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić (†), Bojana Petrić i Dragan Miletić (1995-2001). Počev od 1995. godine, svi radovi asocijacije potpisani su APSOLUTNO, bez ikakvog pominjanja ličnih imena članova. Stvaralaštvo asocijacije Apsolutno započelo je u domenu lepih umetnosti, odakle se postepeno širilo da bi obuhvatilo ne samo estetske već i kulturne, društvene i političke aspekte. Delovanje asocijacije zasniva se na interdisciplinarnom stvaralaštvu i medijskom pluralizmu, sa ciljem da se ono otvori za nova čitanja.

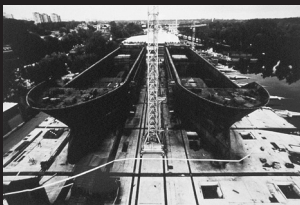


Počev od 1995. godine, asocijacija Apsolutno pravi subjektivni inventar događaja, ideja i uticaja koji su obeležili poslednjih pet godina prethodnog milenijuma. Istražujući „apsolutno sada i apsolutno ovde“, asocijacija Apsolutno imala je za cilj da postavlja pitanja, stvara metafore i ukazuje na apsurdne situacije i paradokse koje donosi vreme u kome živimo.

Mi? Ko smo to mi? I koje je to tačno vreme? Pa, može se reći da je umetnička asocijacija Apsolutno delovala u ulozi hroničara jedne radikalne transformacije koju Zapad nikada nije u potpunosti shvatio: prelazak jedne socijalističke zemlje (dobro, de, sa samoupravljanjem) na parlamentarnu demokratiju i kapitalističku privredu. Zapadnjacima se može činiti da to nije bog zna šta, ali ova tranzicija se zapravo sastojala od velike i korenite promene privrede, ideologije (politike) i društva, ukratko: svega što su ljudi poznavali do tada. Zapravo, celokupna Istočna Evropa iskusila je ovu radikalnu tranziciju posle 1989. – premda uz određene razlike. Suočena sa ratovima¹ vođenim između 1991. i 1999. godine, i sa sankcijama Ujedinjenih nacija, Jugoslavija je doživela najnasilniju fazu tranzicije posle političkog raspada Socijalističke Federativne Republike u odnosu na sve druge zemlje Istočne Evrope.

Radovi asocijacije Apsolutno odabrani za ovu izložbu promišljaju tadašnju sadašnjost države u tranziciji i omogućavaju nam da je posmatramo kao da je pod uveličavajućim staklom. Izložba se sastoji od tri sukcesivne izložbene postavke (ili „poglavlja“ ako hoćete) u periodu od mesec dana. Usredsređujući se na teme smrti, konfuzije i rasprodaje, ova izložba naglašava analizu sadašnjosti Savezne Republike Jugoslavije/Srbije koju sprovodi asocijacija Apsolutno, kao i radikalne promene u političkom, društvenom i ekonomskom kontekstu formulisane u njihovim umetničkim radovima tokom protekle dve decenije. Smrt, konfuzija i rasprodaja odvijaju se hronološkim redom u razvoju Jugoslavije/Srbije tokom devedesetih godina prošlog i početkom 21. veka. Očito, ova izložba nije zamišljena kao *retrospektiva* koja predstavlja sveobuhvatni pregled stvaralaštva asocijacije Apsolutno; umesto toga, njena je namera da *istakne* najvažnija dela ovog kolektiva koja se bave temama još uvek značajnim za sadašnju situaciju u Srbiji.

¹ Ti ratovi generalno se smatraju nizom uglavnom zasebnih ali povezanih vojnih sukoba koji su se događali na teritoriji bivše Jugoslavije i uticali su na većinu bivših jugoslovenskih republika: rat u Sloveniji (1991), rat Hrvatske za nezavisnost (1991-1995), rat u Bosni (1992-1995) i rat na Kosovu (1998-1999), uključujući tu i bombardovanje Jugoslavije od strane NATO pakta (videti na stranama 14–15)



Smrt

Sve je zapravo počelo smrću. Jugoslavija kao pacijent zapravo je bila u agoniji od Titove smrti 1980. godine. Međutim, potrajalo je još deset godina dok i država nije umrla. Kraj socijalizma značio je ne samo smrt političkog već i ekonomskog sistema. U Jugoslaviji je ova šok terapija intenzivirana efektima sankcija Ujedinjenih nacija koje su uvedene tokom ratova na području bivše Jugoslavije. Sankcije su naglo zaustavile razvoj privrede zemlje i iz relativnog prosperiteta gurnule je u ekonomsku krizu sa hiperinflacijom od 3,6 miliona procenata, kakva nikada ranije nije zabeležena.²

Video rad *Apsolutno mrtvo* (1995) dokumentuje forenzičko istraživanje „smrti dva preokooeanska broda pod sumnjivim okolnostima“. Ta dva broda pronađena su u brodogradilištu u Novom Sadu, Vojvodina, Jugoslavija, između 1.258. i 1.259. kilometra toka Dunava. Ti brodovi – oba duga 105 metara, široka 16,2 metra i 9 metara visoka, oba nosivosti 5.700 tona – ležala su paralelno jedan drugome, a krme su im bile okrenute ka jugozapadu. Tu se nije radilo samo o njihovoj zbunjujućoj geografskoj lokaciji – daleko od bilo kakvog okeana – već i o činjenici da su oba broda, iako su bili novi i nezavršeni u vreme istraživanja na dan 21. septembra 1995. godine, bila sasvim zardala, što je već bio dovoljan razlog za detaljno istraživanje. Zaključak do koga se došlo posle višesatne kvaziarheološke ekspedicije po zardaloj i delimično poplavljenosti unutrašnjosti brodova, bio je da „kako položaj brodova, tako i njihova lokacija i vreme kada su pronađeni ukazuju na apsolutnu smrt“. Po završetku istraživanja, grupa je ogradila mesto zločina žutom trakom na kojoj je pisalo „Ne prilaziti! – Apsolutno mrtvo“. Završetak gradnje ova dva broda sprečile su ekonomske sankcije koje su Ujedinjene nacije uvele Jugoslaviji 1992.³ U okviru ovog forenzičkog istraživanja, asocijacija Apsolutno bavila se ne samo katastrofalnom ekonomskom situacijom do koje su dovele sankcije i koja je simbolički predstavljena pomoću ta dva broda. Njihovo istraživanje, kao arheologa

² Ova inflacija prevazišla je onu iz perioda velike ekonomske krize iz 1929.

³ Rezolucija 757 Saveta bezbednosti Ujedinjenih nacija, 30 maj. 1992. godine; videti hronologiju događaja u: *Serbia Sanctions (SERBSANC)*, Case no.: 391, <http://www1.american.edu/ted/serbsanc.htm> (pristupljeno 23. novembra 2014).

sadašnjice, predstavljalo je i čin brižljivog očuvanja neobičnosti perspektive koja se ogleda u distanciranoj proceni postojanja ovih paradoksalnih predmeta.

Trofej predstavlja nagradu za neko konkretno dostignuće i služi kao priznanje ili dokaz zasluga. *Atrofija*, međutim, predstavlja delimično ili potpuno odumiranje nekog dela tela. Među uzroke atrofije spadaju slaba ishrana, loša cirkulacija i neaktivnost ili nedostatak fizičke aktivnosti.

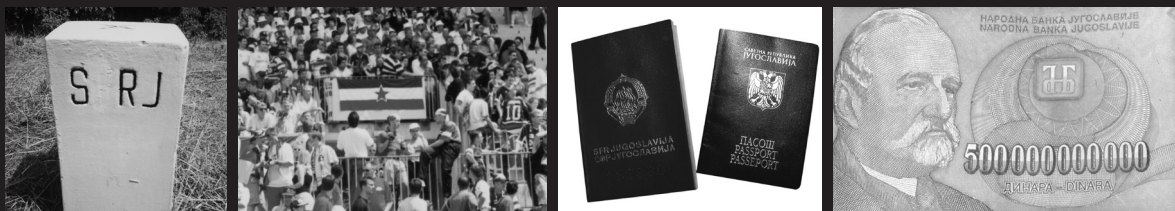
Ideja za rad *a.trophy* [spoj reči trofej i atrofija] nastala je tokom 78 dana operacije NATO pakta „Združene snage“ u Jugoslaviji 1999. godine. Rad sadrži jednu sekvencu iz dokumentarnog filma Petra Lalovića *Poslednja oaza* (1984), koji je snimljen početkom osamdesetih godina u Kopačkom ritu, jednom od najvećih rezervata divljači na Balkanu, smeštenom u Baranjskom okrugu (danas u Hrvatskoj). Tu, u istočnoj Slavoniji, koja je bila deo samoproglašene Republike Srpske Krajine, u prvoj polovini devedesetih godina odigrali su se najkrvaviji sukobi u okviru ratova u bivšoj Jugoslaviji. Scena iz filma koja je iskorišćena u radu *a.trophy* prikazuje jelena kako odbacuje rogove. Za lovce kakav je bio Tito (koji je voleo da lovi u regionu gde je snimljena *Poslednja oaza*), kada jelen odbaci rogove, to je značilo da više ne može biti trofej. Rogovi imaju vrednost samo kada su na glavi jelena. Za jelena koji odbacuje rogove, taj čin predstavlja prekretnicu: s jedne strane, to znači da je star i da gubi svoj simbol moći. Istovremeno, time život te životinje postaje mnogo bezbedniji. Kada vidi jelen kako odbacuje rogove, lovac se možda oseća frustrirano. Ali za kamermana i reditelja *Poslednje oaze*, ovaj trenutak morao je biti „istinski trofej, budući da je kamerom zabeležio događaj koji se izuzetno retko viđa u prirodi, trenutak kada se sve pretvara u svoju suprotnost“. Asocijacija Apsolutno dodaje još jedan sloj značenja radu *a.trophy*, ovoga puta geopolitičkog karaktera, povezujući ga sa ulogom Jugoslavije u stvaranju pokreta nesvrstanih: na samitu održanom u Beogradu 1961. godine, Burma, Indija, Indonezija, Egipat, Gana i Jugoslavija pokrenule su stvaranje pokreta nesvrstanih zemalja. Taj pokret je formiran u nastojanju da se osujeti Hladni rat. Trideset i jednu godinu kasnije, 1992. godine, posle nasilnog raspada Jugoslavije, članstvo Savezne Republike Jugoslavije u ovom pokretu je suspendovano u okviru redovnog sastanka ministara nesvrstanih zemalja održanog u Njujorku. Jugoslavija, jedan od osnivača pokreta nesvrstanih, „na kraju je izbačena iz pokreta koji je osnovala. Radikalne političke promene poput ove ciklično potresaju Balkan. U ovom delu sveta, društveno-politički trofej često se pretvara u atrofiju“. Međutim, asocijacija Apsolutno, koristeći sekvencu iz Lalovićevog filma, pretvara je u trofej atrofije.



Konfuzija

Konfuzija nastaje kada se jedan sistem okonča dok je drugi sistem u fazi formiranja. U radovima *Le Quattro Stagioni* (Četiri godišnja doba, 1996) i *Semiotika konfuzije* (1995-1998), asocijacija Apsolutno usredsređuje se na Balkan kao na semiotički bogatu teritoriju, semiotički palimpsest ako hoćete, oblast koja je, a oduvek je i bila, puna suprotstavljenih simbola koji se ispisuju jedni preko drugih.⁴ Rad *Le Quattro Stagioni* sastoji se od četiri fotografije snimljene tokom proleća, leta, jeseni i zime 1996. Svaka slika prikazuje jednog člana asocijacije Apsolutno obučenog u kostim iz 19. veka. Fotografije su snimljene na lokaciji gde se simboli sudaraju: na spomen-groblju u Somboru, gde su sahranjeni partizani koji su poginuli boreći se protiv nacističke okupacije Jugoslavije, smeštenom na zemljištu koje pripada Pravoslavnoj crkvi, pored kapele sagrađene u stilu koji predstavlja imitaciju srpsko-moravskog stila. Ova lokacija predstavlja mesto simboličkog susreta crvene zvezde i pravoslavnog krsta, kao i njihovih narativa. Članovi asocijacije Apsolutno gledaju u budućnost, a njihovo nestrpljenje simbolizuju njihovi bicikli. Sa sjajem u očima, grupa nam saopštava dodatne informacije u koje možemo poverovati ili ne: „Da bi brže putovali, oni koriste jedno sredstvo dobro poznato u lokalnim okvirima: klip kukuruza stavljen u točak bicikla“. Partizani, optimizam 19. veka u pogledu toga šta će nam doneti budućnost, lokalno narodno znanje, pravoslavni krstovi ili brzi bicikli, sve se to spaja u ovim fotografijama snimljenim u vreme kada je budućnost bila sve drugo samo ne jasna.

4 Slovenački umetnički kolektiv Irwin, kao i Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK), takođe se bave ovim pitanjem u svom radu. Videti Inke Arns: *Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) – eine Analyse ihrer künstlerischen Strategien im Kontext der 1980er Jahre in Jugoslawien*, Regensburg: Museum Ostdeutsche Galerie, 2002; Irwin: *Retroprincip 1983-2003*, ed. Inke Arns, Frankfurt/Main: Revolver, 2003; Inke Arns: *Objects in the mirror may be closer than they appear! Die Avantgarde im Rückspiegel. Zum Paradigmenwechsel der künstlerischen Avantgarderezeption in (Ex-)Jugoslawien und Russland von den 1980er Jahren bis in die Gegenwart*, Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2004, <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/docviews/abstract.php?id=20894>; Inke Arns: *Avantgarda v vzratnem ogledalu*, Ljubljana: Maska (Transformacije 21), 2006.



S druge strane, rad *Semiotika konfuzije* usredsređen je na apsolutno sada i na sudaranje simbola primećeno u periodu između 1995. i 1998. u Novom Sadu i Beogradu. Posle nasilnog raspada Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije 1991. godine i formiranja pet novih država (Slovenija, Hrvatska, Bosna i Hercegovina, Makedonija i Savezna Republika Jugoslavija),⁵ pitanja nacionalnog identiteta izbila su u prvi plan. Asocijacija Apsolutno razmatrala je niz različitih semiotičkih aktivnosti toga vremena, kako zvaničnih tako i individualnih, koje na zanimljiv način odražavaju događaje u društvenoj i političkoj sferi. Grupa je prikazala zastave, markere graničnih linija, grbove i druge nacionalne i državne simbole, novčanice, pasoše, registarske tablice na vozilima i druge zvanične dokumente koje izdaju državne vlasti, kao i razna pojedinačna javna reagovanja na njih. Prema rečima asocijacije Apsolutno: „Na semiotičkom nivou, ovaj proces dezintegracije i formiranja prati, a u nekim slučajevima mu je prethodilo, grozničavo stvaranje simbola: stari nacionalni i državni simboli su odbačeni, prastari simboli su oživljeni ili reciklirani, a stvoreni su i potpuno novi. Nove vlasti pridavale su izuzetan značaj uvođenju novih simbola, pošto je pomoću njih bilo moguće stvoriti novi osećaj nacionalnog identiteta, nacionalnog ponosa i novi politički i ideološki okvir za buduću orijentaciju. Drugim rečima, promena na simboličkom nivou viđena je kao važno sredstvo političke promene, budući da je komunikacija putem simbola predstavljala jezik koji su ljudi razumeli i na koji su reagovali“.

Na prvi pogled, video rad *Na Balkanu* (1998) bavi se nekompatibilnošću raznih tehničkih standarda koji se koriste u raznim regionima sveta. Materijal za ovaj video rad snimljen je na Crnom moru, u Bugarskoj, uz korišćenje SECAM sistema. Zatim je montiran u Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama na AVID sistemu baziranom na NTSC, a da zapravo nije bio prebačen na NTSC. Rezultat toga je crno-bela izdužena slika sa mnoštvom

⁵ Savezna Republika Jugoslavija zvanično je promenila ime u Srbija i Crna Gora 2003. Godine 2006. Crna Gora je glasala za nezavisnost. Godine 2008. pokrajina Kosovo jednostrano je proglasila nezavisnost od Srbije.

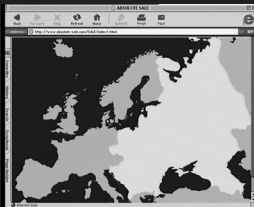
smetnji i šumova prouzrokovanih time što je obrada snimka vršena na izvorniku koji nije kompatibilan sa sistemom. Na kraju, master primerak u NTSC prebačen je na PAL sistem i vraćen na Balkan. Ovaj video rad predstavlja nemi odraz nekompatibilnosti različitih jezika – a u metaforičkom smislu, takođe se može čitati kao sumorni iskaz o nemogućnosti većine komunikacija. Istovremeno, rad *Na Balkanu* predstavlja odraz u ogledalu predstave globalnih medija o Balkanu „kao nečemu U MASI, dalekoj crno-beloj gromadi bez strukture ili organizacije. Slika je teško vidljiva i nedostaje joj oštine. Jedini zvuk koji se čuje je tišina u spoju sa zaglušujućom bukom koja dopire iz ovog regiona, koja se ne može ni dokumentovati niti razumeti“. Izazivajući kratak spoj tehničkih standarda, asocijacija Apsolutno kritikuje globalne medije i njihovu negativnu sliku „regresivnog“ i „nemog“ Balkana.

Rasprodaja

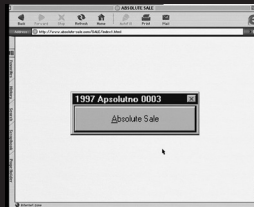
Posle smrti i konfuzije, preostaje nam rasprodaja. Kraj socijalizma doveo je do pojave kapitalizma u njegovoj najbrutalnijoj formi. Oni kojima nije ostalo ništa moraju da prodaju sebe ili delove sebe. U Jekaterinburgu sam 2012. videla plakat na kome je pisalo: „Kupujemo kosu“ i „Što duža, to bolje“. Trebalo mi je neko vreme da shvatim šta to zapravo znači. Ako nemate ništa, prodate svoju kosu, a mi od nje napravimo perike koje će se izvoziti na Zapad. To čak nije ni najgora solucija, jer kosa će ponovo porasti pošto je odsećete. Ali pomislite na druge delove tela. Organe. Pomislite na ljude. Žene. Radnu snagu. Vreme je za završnu rasprodaju: golog života. Danas je on jeftin.

Granice određuju ko je unutra a ko napolju, ko može da kupuje a ko mora da prodaje. Projekat *Human:Čovek* (1996-1999) upravo usredsređuje pažnju na postojanje linije razdvajanja između Istoka i Zapada koja nije nestala sa padom Berlinskog zida 1989. godine. Naprotiv, dok su granice između država u Zapadnoj Evropi nestale uspostavljanjem „ujedinjene“ Evrope, u Istočnoj Evropi formirano je mnoštvo novih nacionalnih (nacionalističkih) država sa strogo kontrolisanim graničnim režimima. U tom procesu,





It's now safe to invest into the
values of the future.



spoljašnja granica EU osnažena je, i danas je pomno čuva Frontex (Evropska agencija za upravljanje operativnom saradnjom na spoljašnjim granicama država članica Evropske unije).⁶ U okviru projekta *Human*, asocijacija Apsolutno obeležila je granicu između Istoka i Zapada u periodu između 1996. i 1999. tako što je na teritoriju ničije zemlje između državnih granica postavljala duž granice saobraćajne znake sa natpisom „HUMAN“ (na jezicima zemalja koje se graniče). Na taj način je nevidljivu granicu učinila vidljivom, i ukazala na faktičku (ne)jednakost ljudi i njihovih sudbina sa obe strane granice na teritoriji Evrope. Onlajn aukcijska igra *Apsolutna rasprodaja* (1997-2002) predstavljala je nastavak projekta *Human*: to je internet projekat koji se zasniva na ironičnom viđenju položaja umetnika iz Istočne Evrope u odnosu na umetničko tržište Zapada. Ovaj rad simulira aukciju u kojoj gledaoci igraju ulogu potencijalnih kupaca. Međutim, rasprodaja se stalno odlaže, baš kao i integracija zemalja Istočne Evrope u EU. Ovaj rad bavi se definicijom Evrope kao geografskog, političkog i mentalnog prostora koji je, u zavisnosti od toga iz koje se perspektive posmatra, istovremeno ujedinjen i podeljen.

Čije sada

Šta mislim kada kažem da su članovi umetničke asocijacije Apsolutno hroničari jednog preobražaja koji Zapad nikada nije potpuno shvatio? Objasniću to pomoću primera iz Nemačke. Pre dvadeset i pet godina pao je Berlinski zid. Ljudi u Istočnoj Nemačkoj morali su da se adaptiraju na radikalno drugačije uslove života: novu političku kulturu, novi ekonomski sistem, novi društveni ugovor. Za mnoge od njih to je značilo da moraju sebe radikalno da stvore iznova. Britanski umetnik Fil Kolins jedan je od malobrojnih umetnika

⁶ Kada su Poljska, Mađarska, Rumunija, Bugarska, Slovenija i Hrvatska postale punopravne članice EU, granica između Istoka i Zapada još jednom se pomerila ka Istoku u odnosu na početak projekta *Human:Čovek* 1996.



koji su stvorili neko relevantno delo o tim ljudima koji su morali da prođu kroz proces stvaranja potpuno nove ličnosti.⁷ U međuvremenu, šta se dešavalo sa ljudima u Zapadnoj Nemačkoj? Ništa. Život je naprosto nastavio da teče dalje. Kako su oni doživeli tu promenu? Pa, s vremena na vreme na ulici bi se pojavio poneki trabant ili vartburg (istočnonemačke marke automobila). Uz to, uveden je solidarni porez koji je korišćen za finansiranje obnove Istočne Nemačke. To je otprilike sve što se promenilo za stanovnike Zapadne Nemačke. Smrt, konfuziju i rasprodaju uvek su doživljavali – i još uvek ih doživljavaju – drugi. Posredstvom svog forenzičkog pristupa, asocijacija Apsolutno bavi se ovim temama – a vidimo da su one još uvek od velike važnosti za aktuelnu situaciju u Srbiji. I počinjemo da se pitamo da li je Zapad ili Istok spremniji za suočavanje sa budućim izazovima globalnog karaktera?

Svi citati asocijacije Apsolutno preuzeti su iz *The Absolute Report*, Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2006.

7 Phil Collins: *Marxism today (prologue)*, 2010, rad prikazan na Šestom berlinskom bijenalu, Berlin, 2010.

Izvor: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav_Wars, poslednji put pristupljeno 22. novembra 2014.

1990.

Balvan revolucija. Proglašena SAO Krajina, čija je teritorija u okviru Hrvatske nedefinisana.

1991.

Slovenija i Hrvatska proglašavaju nezavisnost u junu, Makedonija u septembru. Rat u Sloveniji traje deset dana.

Jugoslovenska armija napušta Sloveniju, ali pruža podršku pobunjeničkim snagama Srba u Hrvatskoj. U Hrvatskoj započinje rat Hrvatske za nezavisnost. Srpske oblasti u Hrvatskoj proglašavaju nezavisnost, ali priznaje ih samo Beograd.

Gradovi Vukovar, Dubrovnik, Karlovac i Osijek razoreni su bombardovanjem i granatiranjem. Veliki broj izbeglica iz ratnih zona i etničko čišćenje šire se na celu Hrvatsku. Evropske zemlje sporo prihvataju izbeglice.

U Hrvatskoj, oko 250.000 Hrvata i drugog nesrpskog stanovništva oterano je iz njihovih domova od strane srpskih snaga ili je pobešlo od nasilja.

1992.

Potpisan Vensov mirovni plan, kojim su za Srbe stvorene zone pod zaštitom Ujedinjenih nacija, čime su okončane borbe većih razmera u Hrvatskoj.

Bosna proglašava nezavisnost. Počinje rat u Bosni, a Srbi pokušavaju da oforme novu, zasebnu srpsku državu, Republiku Srpsku, sa ciljem da zauzmu što veći deo teritorije Bosne.

Proglašena Savezna Republika Jugoslavija, koja se sastoji od Srbije i Crne Gore, jedine dve preostale republike.

Ujedinjene nacije uvode sankcije protiv SR Jugoslavije i primaju u članstvo Sloveniju, Hrvatsku i Bosnu. SR Jugoslavija tvrdi da je isključivi naslednik SFRJ, što ostale republike osporavaju. Izaslanici Ujedinjenih nacija saglasni su da se Jugoslavija „raspala na republike od kojih je bila sastavljena“.

Jugoslovenska armija povlači se iz Bosne, ali ostavlja svoje oružje viojsci Republike Srpske, koja napada slabo naoružane bosanske gradove Zvornik, Kotor Varoš, Prijedor, Foču, Višegrad i Doboj. Započinje opsada Sarajeva.

Oko 600.000 izbeglica je nesrpsko stanovništvo.

Bošnjačko-hrvatski sukob počinje u Bosni.

1993.

U regionu Bihaća počinju borbe između snaga bosanske vlade lojalnih Aliji Izetbegoviću i Bošnjaka lojalnih Fikretu Abdiću, koga podržavaju Srbi.

Sankcije u SR Jugoslaviji, sada izolovanoj, dovode do hiperinflacije jugoslovenskog dinara od 3,6 miliona procenata na godišnjem nivou, kakva nikada ranije nije zabeležena. Ova inflacija nadmašuje onu iz vremena velike ekonomske krize 1929.

Stari most u Mostaru, sagrađen 1566. godine, uništile su hrvatske snage. Ponovo je sagrađen 2003.

1994.

Sklopljen mirovni sporazum između Bošnjaka i Hrvata uz arbitražu Sjedinjenih Američkih Država, formirana Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine.

SR Jugoslavija počinje polako da obustavlja finansijsku i vojnu podršku Republici Srpskoj i stabilizuje svoju ekonomsku strukturu posredstvom Okvira za ekonomski razvoj.

(cur | prev) 20:33, 10 December 2014
199.188.236.129 (talk) . . (51,248 bytes) (-12)
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Yamaguchi, (talk | contribs) m . . (51,260 bytes)
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(talk | contribs) . . (51,261 bytes) (+1) . . (Undid
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Day War (1991): Task 6k: add |script-title=;
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citations; clean up language icons) (undo)
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86.160.4.104 (talk) . . (51,259 bytes) (+3) . .
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14 December 1995 on 14 December 1995,
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142.1.130.143 (talk) . . (51,372 bytes) (+5) . .
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contribs) m . . (51,546 bytes) (0) . . (undo)
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193.198.212.111 (talk) . . (51,546 bytes) (-138)
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Yugoslav wars. See the dedicated article -
says the same.) (undo)

1995.

Objavljena vest o masakru u Srebrenici, srpske snage ubile 8.372 Bošnjaka.

Hrvatska pokreće operaciju Oluja, kojom preuzima sve zone pod zaštitom Ujedinjenih nacija izuzev istočne Slavonije, što rezultira egzodusom između 150 i 200 hiljada Srba iz tih zona. Završava se rat u Hrvatskoj.

NATO započinje seriju vazdušnih udara na položaje srpske artiljerije i druge vojne ciljeve. Hrvatska i bošnjačka armija započinju zajedničku ofanzivu protiv Republike Srpske.

Dejtonski mirovni sporazum potpisan u Parizu. Završava se rat u Bosni i Hercegovini. Posledice rata uključuju preko 100.000 poginulih i nestalih lica, kao i dva miliona interno raseljenih lica ili izbeglica. Poraz Srba u Hrvatskoj i zapadnoj Bosni omogućava hrvatskim i bošnjačkim izbeglicama da se vrate svojim kućama, ali mnoge izbeglice sva tri naroda i dalje su raseljene.

Posle potpisivanja Dejtonskog mirovnog sporazuma, Jugoslaviji su ublažene sankcije, koje i dalje pogađaju veliki deo njene privrede (trgovina, turizam, industrijska proizvodnja i izvoz finalnih proizvoda), ali se građanima Jugoslavije dozvoljava da izlaze iz zemlje na ograničen period vremena.

1996.

SR Jugoslavija priznaje Hrvatsku i Bosnu i Hercegovinu.

Izbijaju sukobi između srpskih snaga i Albanaca na Kosovu.

Posle prevare na lokalnim izborima, stotine hiljada Srba demonstrira u Beogradu protiv Miloševićevog režima tokom tri meseca.

1998.

Istočna Slavonija mirnim putem reintegrirana u Hrvatsku, posle postepenog prenosa vlasti tokom perioda od tri godine.

Sukobi na Kosovu između Albanaca koji zahtevaju nezavisnost Kosova i srpskih snaga postepeno eskaliraju.

1999.

Masakr u selu Račak, neuspeh pregovora u Rambujeu. NATO započinje vojnu akciju na Kosovu i bombarduje SR Jugoslaviju u okviru operacije Zdržene snage.

Pošto je Milošević potpisao sporazum, Ujedinjene nacije preuzimaju kontrolu nad Kosovom, ali ono još uvek ostaje deo jugoslovenske federacije. Posle poraza u ratovima u Hrvatskoj, Bosni i na Kosovu, brojni Srbi odlaze sa tih teritorija da bi našli utočište u Srbiji. Godine 1999. u Srbiji je živelo oko 700.000 izbeglih Srba.

Novi sukobi izbijaju između Albanaca i jugoslovenskih snaga bezbednosti u regionima izvan Kosova naseljenim Albancima, koji nameravaju da tri opštine pridruže Kosovu.

Franjo Tuđman umire. Ubrzo posle toga, njegova stranka gubi na izborima.

2000.

Slobodan Milošević gubi na izborima, a Vojislav Koštunica postaje novi predsednik Jugoslavije.

Pošto je Milošević smenjen sa vlasti i uspostavljena nova demokratska vlada, SR Jugoslavija izlazi iz izolacije. Političke i ekonomske sankcije se ukidaju u potpunosti, a SRJ biva ponovo primljena u mnoge političke i ekonomske organizacije, i postaje kandidat za druge vidove međunarodne saradnje.

(cur | prev) 20:54, 22 September 2014 Malomomce (talk | contribs) . . (51,684 bytes) (+138) . . (Undid revision 626442939 by 78.0.239.196 (talk) Insurgency in Macedonia important part war) (undo) (cur | prev) 07:01, 21 September 2014 78.0.239.196 (talk) . . (51,546 bytes) (-138) . . (If the admin being Croatian is a conflict of interest, then surely you being Serbian makes you unsuitable to mark this as {{POV}}) (undo) (cur | prev) 17:57, 20 September 2014 213.198.221.171 (talk) . . (51,684 bytes) (+138) . . (restoring POV warning removed by Croatian abusive admin with blatant conflict of interest) (undo) (cur | prev) 09:27, 20 September 2014 Joy (talk | contribs) . . (51,546 bytes) (-109) . . (revert unexplained and unreferenced 86.61.100.243 edits) (undo) (cur | prev) 09:19, 20 September 2014 Joy (talk | contribs) . . (51,655 bytes) (-29) . . (revert drive-by POV tagging - anonymous, unexplained in edit summary or on Talk) (undo) (cur | prev) 17:56, 19 September 2014 AnomieBOT (talk | contribs) m . . (51,684 bytes) (+20) . . (Dating maintenance tags: {{Pov}}) (undo) (cur | prev) 15:55, 19 September 2014 213.198.221.171 (talk) . . (51,664 bytes) (+9) . . (undo) (cur | prev) 21:55, 15 September 2014 86.61.100.243 (talk) . . (51,655 bytes) (+2) . . (undo) (cur | prev) 21:51, 15 September 2014 86.61.100.243 (talk) . . (51,653 bytes) (-107) . . (undo) (cur | prev) 22:21, 12 September 2014 Vanamonde93 (talk | contribs) m . . (51,546 bytes) (-3) . . (Reverted 2 edits by 2601:E:CD00:AC7:D877:5E43:9C5B:269E identified as test/vandalism using STiki) (undo) (cur | prev) 22:00, 12 September 2014 2601:e:cd00:ac7:d877:5e43:9c5b:269e (talk) . . (51,549 bytes) (+7) . . (undo) (cur | prev) 21:59, 12 September 2014 2601:e:cd00:ac7:d877:5e43:9c5b:269e (talk) . . (51,542 bytes) (-4) . . (undo) (cur | prev) 11:07, 30 August 2014 IJA (talk | contribs) . . (51,546 bytes) (-32) . . (Undid revision 623422078 by Sadietzsche (talk)) (undo) (cur | prev) 08:54, 30 August 2014 Sadietzsche (talk | contribs) . . (51,578 bytes) (+32) . . (See also) (undo) (cur | prev) 14:50, 28 August 2014 Bender235 (talk | contribs) m . . (51,546 bytes) (-48) . . (clean up; http->https or pr-URL, per VPP using AWB) (undo) (cur | prev) 02:08, 27 August 2014 Jonesey95 (talk | contribs) . . (51,594 bytes) (-1,127) . . (Undid revision 622944458 by 95.95.32.111 (talk). Broke article formatting.) (undo) (cur | prev) 22:21, 26 August 2014 154.95.95.32.111 (talk) . . (52,721 bytes) (+1,127) . . (Adding of The Weight of chains) (undo) (cur | prev) 03:26, 2 August 2014 Harizotoh9 (talk | contribs) m . . (51,594 bytes) (-7) . . (Notes) (undo) (cur | prev) 11:17, 25 July 2014 Monkbot (talk | contribs) m . . (51,601 bytes) (-1) . . (Arms embargo: Task 5: Fix CS1 deprecated coauthor parameter errors) (undo) (cur | prev) 03:04, 24 July 2014 JustDerek (talk | contribs) m . . (51,602 bytes) (-1) . . (Kosovo War (1998–99)) (undo) (cur | prev) 20:14, 14 July 2014 72.195.152.99 (talk) . . (51,603 bytes) (+51,404) . . (Undid revision 616956416 by 39.47.137.186 (talk)) (undo) (cur | prev) 20:07, 14 July 2014 39.47.137.186 (talk) . . (199 bytes) (-51,404) . . (¶Replaced content with ,The Yugoslav wars were a bunch of conflicts caught off the shore off Honduras. Since Honduras can never win a World Cup, they were given to the legends Germa...)

1995:2015

APSOLUTNO ESHATOLOGIJA

Gordana Nikolić

Novi milenijum je odavno počeo. Najavljena Apokalipsa se ipak nije dogodila. To je *apsolutno realna činjenica* sada, koja diskvalifikuje još jedan datum u nizu predikcija ili proročkih scenarija o kraju sveta (Apokalipse), sa učešćem Boga ili bez njega. Jedan od značajnijih datuma na listi apokaliptičkih događaja – *milenijumska buba* ili *Y2K problem* – markirao je prelaz između drugog u treći milenijum kao trenutak kada će se usled problema u digitalnoj (kompjuterskoj) i nedigitalnoj dokumentaciji i bazi podataka, zbog prakse skraćivanja četiri cifre godine veka na (poslednje) dve cifre, dogoditi kolaps računarskog sistema, a društvo će prestati da funkcioniše. *Milenijumska buba* je tako, prema najgorim scenarijima, zbog kompjuterskog kvara počevši od 1. januara 2000. godine trebalo da izazove masovne avionske nesreće, kolaps berze, eksplozije nuklearnih elektrana i slično. To je, ujedno, i jedna od najpopularnijih predikcija kraja sveta 2000, za kojom zaostaju druge „apokrifne“ verzije nastajale u kružocima određenih religijskih kongregacija, u individualnim proročkim zanosima ili SF beletristici. Na ovu viziju kraja sveta nadovezuju se i teorije zavere koje insistiraju na tome da je *Y2K problem* nastao kao deo namernog dizajna određenih super-moćnih struktura ili uskog društvenog kruga radi masovne kontrole ljudi.

Umetnička asocijacija Apsolutno (Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić [†], Bojana Petrić, Dragan Miletić), osnovana 1993. godine u Novom Sadu, SR Jugoslavija (Srbija), aktivna do 2005. godine, najdužu i ključnu fazu u svom umetničkom opusu kontekstualizovala je kroz projekat *1995:2000*, koji je trebalo da traje do kraja veka ili milenijuma, eksploatišući upravo ovaj apokaliptični repozitorijum pseudonauke, imaginacije i histerije u deceniji koja iščekuje *milenijumsku bubu*. Ironija se sastojala od potpisivanja njihovih projekata brojevima kalendarskih godina (po gregorijanskom kalendaru) i odbrojavanjem unazad – označavanjem broja godina koliko je ostalo do kraja starog i dolaska novog milenijuma. Tako su radovi nastali u 1995. godini potpisani 1995 Apsolutno 0005, oni nastali u narednoj godini potpisani su 1996 Apsolutno 0004 i tako dalje, intonirajući na taj način dramatičnost kraja ili mračnog dočeka novog početka.

Međutim, u deceniji koja je nagoveštavala novu Apokalipsu, kraj sveta je u (bivšoj) Jugoslaviji verovatno bio „bliži“, kao mogući konačan ishod ili epilog najdramatičnijeg i ekstremnog niza:

jugoslovenskih ratova (1991-1999), nasilja i međunarodnih sankcija Srbiji i političke, ideološke i ekonomske transformacije socijalističkog (samoupravnog) sistema i jednopartijske države SFRJ¹ u državu *parlamentarne demokratije* i (divlje) kapitalističke ekonomije. Jugoslovenska tranzicija je i jedna od postsocijalističkih tranzicija nakon 1989. godine (simbolično – od pada Berlinskog zida) u zemljama koje su pripadale Istočnom bloku. Asocijacija Apsolutno forenzički registruje lokacije i situacije sa simboličkim i metaforičkim potencijalom u odnosu na svoj društveni kontekst u (post)jugoslovenskom sistemu u tranziciji. Zatečene situacije proglašava *apsolutno realnim činjenicama* i interveniše pretvarajući „poznato, uobičajeno, ili čak marginalno (...) u nešto neuobičajeno, van svakodnevnog, i što je vredno za istraživanje“.

Da bi se konceptualno razumela pojava i aktivnosti asocijacije Apsolutno na lokalnoj i evropskoj / internacionalnoj sceni, neophodne su nam perspektive iz različitih kulturnih i političkih konteksta u kojima Apsolutno razvija svoje strategije i na koje referiše. Web tehnologija i informatizacija ekonomskog sistema, neoliberalna mobilizacija industrije i tržišta kapitala, privatizacija najvećeg dela nacionalnih ekonomija, uspon finansijskog sektora (bankarstvo, investicije, osiguranja itd.) čiji servisi preuzimaju dominantnu ekonomsku, kulturnu i političku ulogu u nacionalnim ekonomijama, invencija kreativnih industrija kao novog motora za ekonomski rast – globalni je kontekst 90-ih u kom interveniše Apsolutno. Međutim, taj kontekst se ne može aplicirati istovetno i za analizu lokalnih okolnosti u Srbiji 90-ih koja je izolovana od međunarodnih finansijskih tokova i globalnih postindustrijskih, društvenih i političkih kretanja. Iz te perspektive, fantastični imaginarijum oko neizvesnog ulaska Srbije u Novi milenijum, osim što nosi opšte ironijske i mračne kvalitete, priziva i jednu morbidnu situaciju u kojoj će se svet „spasiti“ samo konačnim uništenjem. Tako i odbrojavanje preostalog vremena u petogodišnjem projektu asocijacije 1995:2000 proširuje amplitudu značenja jedne Apokalipse među mnogima. Apokalipsa u Srbiji je bila prosto bliža i izvesnija nego na nekom drugom mestu. Zbog toga i video rad *Dobro veče / Good Evening* (1996) i danas ostavlja mračan, ako ne i morbidan, utisak i pored izraženog humora. Autori za ovaj video rad uzimaju istu rečenicu pozdrava na različitim jezicima kao *found footage* momente uhvaćene preko satelita u Srbiji u kom se televizijski spikeri obraćaju gledaocima na početku vesti. Brzo smenjivanje slika i pozdrava tako obznanjuje izvesnost „večeri“ veka i milenijuma i najavljuje mračni završetak za građane Srbije.

1 SFRJ – Socijalistička Federativna Republika bila je jugoslovenska država koja je postojala od kraja Drugog svetskog rata (1945) do raspada 1992. godine. Bila je socijalistička država koja se prostirala na teritoriji današnjih nezavisnih država Bosne i Hercegovine, Crne Gore, Hrvatske, Makedonije, Slovenije, Srbije. Proglašena je godine 1943. na teritoriji Kraljevine Jugoslavije pod nazivom Demokratska Federativna Jugoslavija, te je međunarodno priznata kao pravni naslednik Kraljevine. Godine 1946. je dobila službeni naziv Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavija, a Ustavom 1963. dobila svoj poslednji naziv Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija.

U ratnom okruženju i pod sankcijama, u sistemskoj krizi i transformaciji, predvođenim nacionalističkom i militantnom državnim politikom, javlja se i antiratna i građanska scena *Druge Srbije* kao politička i kulturna opozicija 90-ih godina. Međutim, politička scena i društvo u Srbiji, uglavnom polarizovani kao pro et contra Miloševićevom režimu, nisu bili preslikani na kulturnu i umetničku scenu čiji se značajan deo produkcije eskapistički i apolitično samoizolovao u mehuru samoreferentnosti i estetizacije pod krinkom *autonomije umetnosti*. U toj situaciji su umetničke, i kulturne, prakse u Srbiji sa politički osvešćenom agendom bile izuzetne i od velikog značaja za kreiranje jezika otpora. Društvena, politička i nezavisna medijska scena *Druge Srbije*, uključujući i deo kulturne i umetničke produkcije, uz pomoć inostranih fondova, pre svega Šoroš fondacije i njenih centara, organizovala je paralelan život dela građana u Srbiji. Bez zvanične institucionalne rekognicije i podrške, savremena „nezavisna“ umetnička scena Srbije je skoro u potpunosti zavisila od fondacijske pomoći za kreiranje osnovne infrastrukture za rad i za produkciju. Tada su se pojavile umetničko-aktivističke inicijative koje su odredile kurs savremene umetničke scene na ulici. Asocijacija Apsolutno deluje lokalno u kritici dominantne nacionalističke ideologije i ratne propagande zajedno sa drugim protagonistima te scene: Škart, Magnet, Led Art, Saša Marković Mikrob i drugi. Produkcija Apsolutno ideološki pripada toku politički angažovane umetnosti u Srbiji devedesetih godina, uličnog protesta, agilne i direktne u kritici tadašnjeg režima. Međutim, ova pučka forma u praksi nije sasvim tipična za asocijaciju. Tipična praksa asocijacije, iako sa izraženom političkom agendom i referencom na akutne društvene probleme, uglavnom je kodirana, analitična, estetski rafinirana i duhovita igra razotkrivanja ideoloških simptoma iz okruženja. Produkcija Apsolutno je konceptualne strukture, uglavnom je kriptična i minimalističkog dizajna. Tako proces istraživanja, metodologija i sama realizacija asocijacije Apsolutno čine konceptualnu umetnost koja se dešava u specifičnom ambijentu 90-ih.²

U zapadnoj Evropi u posthladnoratnom ambijentu značajnije recepcije savremene umetničke scene iz Srbije, uglavnom su se dešavale sa izložbama i manifestacijama savremene umetnosti postkomunističke Istočne Evrope³. Ubrzo, u fokus su došle *balkanske izložbe*⁴ u interpretacijama poznatih kustosa sa Zapada. Takve izložbe, pored kontroverznog fabrikovanja egzotične i kolonijalne slike o savremenoj umetnosti s „druge strane zida“, ujedno su predstavljale i ulazak

2 Konceptualna umetnost u Novom Sadu ili Vojvodini je nasleđe koje je tada egzistiralo više u formi urbanih legendi, nego oficijalnog znanja. Članovi asocijacije su najviše kroz neformalne kontakte izgradili određeni odnos prema stilu života i umetničkom istraživanju lokalne konceptuale, koji je kao korpus ideja i jezika integrisan u praksu Apsolutno. Kasnije se ovo interesovanje članova asocijacije nastavilo kroz institucionalniju formu istraživanja i prezentacija ex-jugoslovenskih avangardi u drugoj polovini XX veka u okviru dugoročnog projekta *Trajni čas umetnosti* (od 2005), koji je inicirao tim urednika i istraživača iz Centra kuda.org, a čiji je osnivač jedan od članova Apsolutno – Zoran Pantelić.

3 Npr: *After the Wall. Art and Culture in post-Communist Europe*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1999. (Berlin, 2001).

4 *In Search of Balkania*, Grac, Austria, 2002; *Blood&Honey, The Future is in the Balkans*, Klosterneuburg/Beč, Austrija, 2003; *In the Gorgeous of the Balkans*, Kasel, Nemačka, 2003.

savremenih umetničkih radova iz Istočne Evrope i balkanskih zemalja na internacionalno tržište i internacionalni umetnički sistem. Radovi asocijacije Apsolutno su redak primer prisustva umetnika iz Srbije koji ne dolaze iz Beograda na takvim manifestacijama. Fokus je na Beogradu kao umetničkoj antirežimskoj sceni, dok su druge „scene“ na periferiji skoro neprepoznate. Drugaćiju vezu van galerijskog / muzejskog sistema, direktnu i egalitarniju liniju umrežavanja i intenziviranja komunikacije između Zapadne i Istočne Evrope omogućila je tehnologija. Razvoj informacijske i komunikacijske tehnologije, popularizacija Interneta i personalnih kompjutera, to jest njihova demokratizacija, omogućila je kreiranje specifične međunarodne umetničke scene od druge polovine 90-ih godina, kojoj je pripadala i asocijacija Apsolutno. Osnivanje mejling lista Syndicate i Nettime za razmenu informacija i diskusije, označilo je i novo doba za tadašnje umetničke i aktivističke inicijative u kontekstu kulture mrežnog društva. Promišljanje umetnosti i tehnologije na evropskoj sceni posebno su negovali festivali medijske i digitalne kulture – Ars Electronica (Linc), Transmediale (Berlin) itd. – kao i institucije poput V2_ Rotterdam. *Mainstream* digitalna kultura 90-ih godina je, između ostalog, donela renesansu za novi tehnoutopizam i snove o oslobođenju individue kroz tehnologiju. Ovoj perspektivi svakako pripada i futuristička fascinacija nadolazećim Novim milenijumom. Ta romantičarsko-progresivistička instanca, prisutna i u umetnosti, pripadala je korpusu (mikro)ideologija i stila života rođenih u euforiji tadašnje dot.com kulture. Tada dominantan trend nekritički uvodi tehnologiju u umetničku i medijsku praksu, skoro u potpunosti zanemarujući političke i ekonomske implikacije upotrebe i uticaja tehnologije. Kao reakcija, pojavljuje se medijski aktivizam i net.art koji predstavljaju kritičke odgovore na dominantnu entuzijastičnu kulturu Interneta, njegovu komercijalizaciju i trend tehnofetišizma u umetnosti i kulturi. Određene intervencije u medijskoj sferi kroz prakse taktičkih medija i net.art-a, koje primenjuje i Apsolutno, donose drugu perspektivu i politički osvešćenu interpretaciju tadašnjeg sveta i scenarija za budućnost. To su, između ostalih, kolektivi i umetnici: mikro.de, Public Netbase t0, Vuk Ćosić, Heath Bunting, Irational.org, Critical Art Ensemble, Jodi.org, Alexei Schulgin, The Yes Men, RTMark, 0100101110101101.ORG, Bureau of Inverse Technology, Übermorgen i drugi. Apsolutno operiše iz tadašnjeg medijskog pluralizma i tehnologije, a njihov izbor medija za rad mekluanovski je određen pretpostavkom o njegovom komunikativnom kapitalu. Tako je njihova produkcija realizovana u mediju videa, site-specific instalacije, audio, web projekta, publikacije, fotografije, teksta, konceptualnih izjava, performans-predavanja itd. Danas kad se diskutuje o pojavi i opravdanosti pojma tzv. *postinternet umetnosti*⁵, postaje jasnije koliko diverzitet konceptualnih rešenja, alata i tehnika produkcije Apsolutno

5 Inke Arns objašnjava pojavu postinternet umetnosti kao konformističku “hardkor normalnost” (*normcore*) u vremenu hiperkapitalizma. Kao i pop art, postinternet umetnost je zainteresovana za površinu konzumerske kulture, samo je u ovom slučaju to zastrašujuća površina *hyped* digitalne konzumerske kulture. Inke Arns (2014). Post-Internet Art: Normcore in Zeiten des Hyperkapitalismus <http://irights-media.de/webbooks/jahresueckblick1415/chapter/post-internet-art-normcore-in-zeiten-des-hyperkapitalismus/>

evocira idiosinkratičnu medijsku arheologiju jedne šire umetničke mreže iz bliske prošlosti. Vremenska distanca je omogućila i da se ova arheologija, sa nostalgijom ili bez nje, artikuliše kao mogući narativ o karakterističnim avangardnim umetničkim aktivnostima iz *tehno 90-ih*, posebno kad se uzme u obzir i izuzetnost ovakve pojave na umetničkoj sceni Srbije. Između ostalih, umetnički projekti: *The Absolute Sale* (1997) – jedan od pionirskih web radova u Srbiji izveden kao kompjuterska igra (game art), CD-ROM projekat *The Greatest Hits* (1998) – osmišljen kao top ten lista kompjuterskih i ljudskih virusa koji u interakciji sa korisnikom prave greške i redukuju ili blokiraju njegovo kretanje, zatim kompjuterska montaža i korišćenje televizijskih satelitskih uzoraka u video radu *Dobro večer / Good Evening* (1996) – karakteristični su primeri te medijske arheologije, jer je realizacija ideja direktno uslovljena tadašnjom tehnologijom i njenim ograničenjima.

Kraj iz III čina: smrt, konfuzija, rasprodaja

Izložba *APSOLUTNO SADA: smrt, konfuzija, rasprodaja* u Muzeju savremene umetnosti Vojvodine u Novom Sadu (januar / februar 2015), predstavlja izbor radova i dokumentacije asocijacije Apsolutno kroz tri „scenografije“ koje se kao tri čina smenjuju tokom mesec dana trajanja izložbe. Ova izložba reaktuelizuje tri filozofske teme kao dramske činove oko kojih se koncentriše većina radova Apsolutno: *smrt, konfuziju i rasprodaju*, a koje mogu da budu „okidač“ za čitanje onoga što je *sada*. Tri „eshatološka“ čina sadrže reinstalacije „starih“ radova asocijacije u muzejskom prostoru, koji mogu da se čitaju i kao jedna moguća interpretacija novije istorije Socijalističke (Federativne) Republike Jugoslavije (S[F]RJ) / Republike Srbije. Svaki čin predstave otvara pozdravna mantra u video radu *Dobro večer*, koja nas kao *déjà vu* postavlja u situaciju preklapanja iskustva od pre dve decenije i aktuelnog trenutka. Samo kratak osvrt na društveni i politički *mainstream* u Srbiji 90-ih godina i ovog danas, zapravo, ukazuje da su glavni akteri desno orijentisane političke scene 90-ih, danas, nakon predaha tokom prve decenije u novom milenijumu, opet prisutni, na istim pozicijama, a mistično pomračenje se čini podjednako blizu kao i 1996. godine. Međutim, ovako postavljena drama (tragedija) u tri čina ne mora da ima linearni tok čitanja, jer sami koncepti, zapravo, nisu dijahronijski fiksirani, već osciliraju i iskrsavaju u vremenu kao nestalne kategorije, pa tako ove teme, u drugačijoj postavci, mogu odgovarati i jednoj globalnoj eshatološkoj kompoziciji.

I

Prva tema izložbene postavke je *SMRT*. U eshatologiji (filozofskoj ili teološkoj), zagledanoj u budućnost, smrt ima poseban status i zadobija vibrantnije značenje od prostog biološkog kraja. Smrt postaje uslov za niz transcendentnih događaja i procesa ili reinkarnacija kojim se dostiže

apsolut (idealistički: bog, duh; materijalistički: materija) i novi krajnji poredak postojanja. Islamska filozofija čak poredi smrt sa snom i naziva je „počinkom između dva buđenja“ (Al-Gazali). Iz te perspektive tumačenja, na izložbi se radovima *Absolutely Dead* i *a.trophy* markira trenutak produžene smrti socijalističke Jugoslavije i utopije radničkog samoupravljanja, kao i celokupnog sistema socijalističkih vrednosti i njene tranzicije / reinkarnacije u drukčiju sistemsku formaciju kapitalizma. U radu *Absolutely Dead / Apsolutno mrtvo* (serija fotografija i video), 21. septembra 1995. godine sprovedeno je pseudoforenzičko istraživanje i identifikacija „dva tela“ na licu mesta – žutom trakom na kojoj je stajalo obaveštenje „Ne prilaziti! Apsolutno mrtvo!“ označena su dva prekookeanska broda koja su više godina stajala na brodogradilištu na Dunavu u Novom Sadu (Vojvodina), delimično potopljena i zahvaćena procesom korozije. Identifikacija zatečenih brodova je obuhvatala precizno beleženje njihovih dimenzija i pozicije, kao i konstataciju njihove apsolutne smrti. Tragovi ili znakovi sa lica mesta koji bi ukazali na uzroke „smrti“ brodova nisu bili vidljivi. Stanje ta dva broda je samo simbolični simptom jedne šire političko-ekonomske slike Srbije devedesetih godina. Zapravo, gradnja ova dva broda se zaustavila tokom ratova usled uvođenja međunarodnih sankcija Jugoslaviji, zatvaranja državnih granica, ekonomske katastrofe i pojave *hiperinflacije* (1992-1994). Naručilac brodova iz Zapadne Evrope je tako ostao bez svog naručenog proizvoda. Apsurdnost ove situacije, pored prisustva ogromna dva broda za prekookeanske plovidbe na reci Dunav, čini prerana smrt ove „dve žrtve“ kraja Jugoslavije, pre nego što su imale priliku i da žive. Interesantno je da je ovo istraživanje sprovedeno par meseci pre konferencije i konačnog potpisivanja *Dejtonskog mirovnog sporazuma*⁶ (novembar/decembar 1995), istorijski značajnog pravnog akta koji je doprineo zvaničnom prekidu ratova u Bosni i Hercegovini i definisanju ratnih granica i etničkih podela. Faktički, tim aktom su se sva tri zvanična predstavnika etničkih entiteta iz krvavih sukoba složila oko, u najmanju ruku, jedne stvari – da Jugoslavija više ne postoji. Međutim, naša priča o brodovima se ne zaustavlja ovde. Sudeći prema nezvaničnim glasinama, brodovi su se probudili iz sna, to jest stanja *kliničke smrti*, i otplovili sa novosadskog brodogradilišta u vode okeana deceniju kasnije. Samo površno ispitivanje okolnosti oko isporuke brodova uvodi nas u zamršenu i mračnu priču o svojinskim odnosima, privatizaciji socijalističkog preduzeća, stečaju firme, arhivama kojima se gubi trag, i na kraju smo zalutali u

6 Dejtonski sporazum (ili Dejtonski mirovni sporazum ili Dejton), pravni je akt sporazumnog karaktera parafiran u vojnoj zračnoj luci Wright-Paterson kod Daytona, u američkoj državi Ohio, da bi se zvanično prekinuo rat u Bosni i Hercegovini, koji je trajao od 1992. do 1995. Sporazum se naročito bavio budućim upravnim i ustavnim uređenjem Bosne i Hercegovine. Konferencija je trajala od 1. novembra do 21. novembra 1995. godine. Glavni učesnici su bili bosanski predsednik Alija Izetbegović, srpski predsednik Slobodan Milošević, hrvatski predsednik Franjo Tuđman, te glavni američki posrednik Richard Holbrooke i general Wesley Clark. Sporazum je zvanično potpisan u Parizu 14. decembra. Sadašnja upravna struktura Bosne i Hercegovine i sastav vlade bili su neki od rezultata dogovora.

teoriju zavere locirajući u novinskom članku okultnu vezu direktora firme i „masonskog odseka“ *vinških vitezoa*. Opšta mesta tranzicije u Srbiji.

Ratni jugoslovenski niz od Dejtona se nastavio sukobima na Kosovu 1998-1999. godine. Usvajanjem *Rezolucije 1244*⁷ 10. juna 1999. godine, vlast Savezne Republike Jugoslavije⁸ se zvanično složila sa uvođenjem privremene administrativne uprave Ujedinjenih nacija (UNMIK) na Kosovu. Ideja za video rad *a.trophy* (1999) je nastala baš u vreme NATO intervencije na Kosovu i bombardovanja vojnih i civilnih ciljeva u SRJ, koji su prethodili usvajanju Rezolucije. Već duhovita igra reči u naslovu rada *a.trophy* (atrofija [atrophy]; trofej [trophy]) proširuje amplitudu nestalnosti značenja pojmova destrukcije i smrti, koji se pretvaraju u svoju suprotnost. Scena iz izuzetnog dokumentarno-umetničkog filma reditelja Petra Lalovića *Poslednja oaza* (1983) u kom jelen odbacuje rogove, preuzeta je i obrađena kao *slow motion* video. Simbolički rezervoar ovog video rada kao da se vremenom samo dopunjuje i raste, a sa njim i nova tumačenja. Samo jedna kratka scena iz Lalovićevog filma umetničkim postupkom prevedena je u večnost, u monumentalnu metaforu smrti Jugoslavije i prolegomenu jugoslovenske tranzicije u periferni kapitalizam. Remek-delo jedne ere.

II

Druga postavka markira *KONFUZIJU* kao važnu temu za ovaj eshatološki niz. Bivše jugoslovenske zemlje prolaze kroz proces strukturnog prilagođavanja kapitalističkom sistemu, a u međuprostoru između starog i novog levitira apsolutna konfuzija u kojoj se sudaraju ideologije, stari društveni odnosi i oni u formiranju, materijalna kultura i istorijski narativi, epistemologija i identiteti. Ako bi tražili analogiju u, na primer, hrišćanskoj teologiji, ova faza bi verovatno bila podudarna sa fazom od 40 dana Hristovog lutanja nakon smrti koja je prethodila njegovom Vaznesenju. Slobodnija tumačenja tvrde da je tada Mesija, zapravo, postao *vampir* ili *zombi* – mrtvo telo ili duh koji luta svetom u potrazi za „energijom“ kako bi preživeo. Tako je i (bivša) Jugoslavija u mrtvom telu i novim odelima lutala kroz lavirint znakova, simbola i vrednosnih sistema. Ovu situaciju paradigmatički ilustruje rad asocijacije Apsolutno *Semiotics of Confusion / Semiotika konfuzije*, koji fotografski dokumentuje istraživanje sprovedeno u periodu od 1995. do 1998. godine u SRJ. Autori registruju identitetsku (nacionalnu) konfuziju koju zatiču

7 Rezolucija Saveta bezbednosti Organizacije ujedinjenih nacija 1244 usvojena je 10. juna 1999. godine. Savet bezbednosti UN usvojio je Rezoluciju 1244, kojom je Kosovo stavljeno pod mandat UN. Rezolucija je doneta dan nakon potpisivanja Vojno-tehničkog sporazuma u Kumanovu, kojim je okončano bombardovanje SRJ koje je trajalo 79 dana.

8 Savezna Republika Jugoslavija (SRJ) – državna formacija koja je nasledila Socijalističku Federativnu Republiku Jugoslaviju (SFRJ). Stvorena je odlukom Saveznog izvršnog veća SFRJ (27. aprila 1992) kao zajednička država Republike Srbije i Republike Crne Gore.

u slobodnim individualnim intervencijama na državnim oznakama i tablicama automobila, ili međusobno različitim i opozitnim nacionalnim simbolima i zastavama koje koriste grupe navijača istog tima na fudbalskim utakmicama. Konfuziji u ikonosferi doprinose i oficijelne „umetničke“ intervencije izvršne vlasti na kamenu koji obeležava granični prelaz, kada su od prethodnog akronima države SFRJ premazom četke uklonili slovo F, ostavljajući tako „pauzu“ u akronimskom nizu.

U radu *Le Quattro Stagioni* (1996), umetničkom akcijom iz više faza autori simbolično rekreiraju konfuziju vremena u kom žive. Rad u formi pseudokalendara je nastao kao foto-akcija tokom četiri godišnja doba jedne godine na memorijalnom groblju u Somboru, Vojvodina. Ikonosferu same lokacije groblja koja pulsira od kontrastnih ideoloških simbola i situacija (komunistički memorijal sovjetskim vojnicima na placu koji pripada pravoslavnoj crkvi, petokraka vs. krst), autori zasićuju uvođenjem svojih kostimiranih pojava iz 19. veka s biciklom koji na žbicama točka ima klip kukuruza za ubrzanje obrtaja. Ova foto predstava je ironičan komentar na opstanak zastarelih devetnaestovekovnih matrica mišljenja, iako pod pritiskom progresivizma, u vremenu apsolutne ideološke konfuzije. U sledećoj fazi produkcije, rad LQS je proračunato podignut na novi stupanj artificijelizacije postupkom provlačenja fotografija kroz digitalni pikselizovani raster koji je služio kao mustra za monumentalne goblene sa zlatnim baroknim ramom. Angažovanjem profesionalnih vezilja goblena u produkcijski proces, Apsolutno vremenska mašina obrće digitalno u manualni rad kao anahroni proces suprotan tadašnjoj progresivističkoj viziji uloge tehnologije.

Video rad *In the Balkans / Na Balkanu* (1998), vrlo složenim tehničkim procesom obrađivanja video snimka sa Crnog mora u Bugarskoj i njegovog produkcijskog filterisanja kroz nekompatibilne video standarde u Istočnoj Evropi i SAD-u, stvara naizgled besmisleni i neartikulisani audio-vizuelnu strukturu, proizvod „šuma“ u prevodu između dva sistema. Ovaj video rad na simboličan način predstavlja konfuziju u medijaciji između dva sistema i sliku kako jedan sistem percipira drugi. *In the Balkans* je egzotičan pogled sa Zapada usmeren prema balkanskim „gudurama“.

III

RASPRODAJA je savremeni *mainstream* režim koji uređuje društvene odnose i ima status epistemološke kategorije. Svet danas spoznajemo kroz „komoditet“. Možda bi eshatološki to značilo skretanje s puta izbavljenja, ali apsolutna rasprodaja dogme je imperativ pod pritiskom kompeticije tržišta ideja, znanja, identiteta, stilova života i manje apstraktnije – samog biološkog života. Komodifikacija u kapitalističkoj ekonomiji znači, između ostalog, i

odsustvo novih sadržaja i koncepata i eksploataciju i „prepakivanje“ starih. Prilagođavanje postsocijalističkih zemalja po uzoru na zapadne neoliberalne kapitalističke ekonomije, podrazumevalo je i ideološki proces kreiranja odnosa prema socijalističkom / komunističkom nasleđu: od njihove demonizacije i brisanja do današnjeg hipsterskog otkrivanja i džentrifikacije, kao u primeru moskovskog *hipster-staljinizma*⁹. To je i opšte mesto savremene depolitizacije revolucije i socijalističke prošlosti. Nekadašnja kruta geopolitička, ekonomska i kulturna razgraničenost Evrope tokom Hladnog rata kao Prvog i Drugog sveta kapitala i danas opstaje u fleksibilnijem modusu. Kao potvrda ove demarkacije su, između ostalog, ekonomske migracije ljudi sa evropskog Istoka na Zapad, stroga imigracijska politika Evropske Unije, *nearsourcing* eksploatacija jeftinih usluga iz susednih zemalja koje ne pripadaju EU (naročito u oblasti informacijske i komunikacijske tehnologije i tzv. *kreativnih industrija*). Asocijacija Apsolutno analizira i komentariše ovu situaciju u posthladnoratnoj integraciji Evrope kroz projekte: *HUMAN* (1996-1999) i *Apsolutna rasprodaja* (1997-2002). Oba projekta, bilo kroz intervenciju u fizičkom prostoru između „teritorije“ Istočne i Zapadne Evrope ili kroz onlajn aukcijsku igru namenjenu „kupcima“ sa Zapada, registruju biopolitički aspekt ove ekonomije nejednakosti. Projekat *HUMAN*, ujedno, referiše i na lokalnu situaciju u Srbiji devedesetih godina i nemogućnost slobodnog kretanja izvan zemlje kao posledice sankcija, vizne politike i centralizovane kontrole spoljnih granica EU¹⁰. Onlajn pseudo-aukcija *Apsolutna rasprodaja* ironizuje položaje i odnos između umetničkih sistema Istočne i Zapadne Evrope. „Kupac“ sa Zapada na osnovu niza predikcija, zasnovanih na kultur-rasističkim stereotipima i budućeg interesovanja zapadnog tržišta, „na slepo“ kupuje istočno-evropskog umetnika koji tek treba da se rodi. U međuvremenu, mnogi će i da umru.

Kraj

Konačno, asocijacija Apsolutno nam opisuje iskustvo produženog kraja jedne utopije, jednog sistema i jednog društva. Iz današnje perspektive, njihova pojava na lokalnoj i međunarodnoj sceni devedesetih godina 20. i početkom 21. veka ostavila je jedinstveni konceptualni inventar kao neku vrstu „vodiča za početnike“ kroz ekstremne situacije koje proizvodi (hiper) kapitalizam. Disbalans u rekogniciji rada (i pionirske uloge) ovog kolektiva u internacionalnom kontekstu i na lokalnoj sceni, je opravdan razlog da se interveniše u *master narrative* istorije umetnosti i politike vidljivosti i prezentacije.

9 <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/dec/12/moscow-hipster-stalinism-gentrification-artkvartal-zaryadye-park>

10 Šengenski sporazum o slobodnom kretanju potpisuje većina evropskih zemalja članica EU. Članice Šengenskog sporazuma čine takozvanu *Šengensku zonu* (Šengenski prostor). Srbija nije u Šengenskom sporazumu, ali se danas nalazi na Beloj šengenskoj listi – listi zemalja čiji državljani mogu da putuju u Šengensku zonu bez viza.





Dobro veče / Good Evening, video (8 min) i poster, 1996.
 U saradnji sa / In collaboration with Aleksandar Davić.
 Produkcija / Production: SKC Novi Sad & KulturKontakt, Austria.

SMRT **DEATH**





1995 APSOLUTNO 0005

APSOLUTNO MRTVO

Akcijom izvedenom 21. septembra 1995. godine asocijacija APSOLUTNO je sprovela istragu kako bi utvrdila uzrok smrti dva transportna prekookeanska broda koja su se u to vreme nalazila u novosadskom brodogradilištu. Projekat je realizovan u brodogradilištu kao važnom privrednom resursu u jednoj ekonomskoj infrastrukturi, koje je upotrebljeno kao metafora društvenih okolnosti sredinom devedesetih u Jugoslaviji. Zbog međunarodnih ekonomskih sankcija, brodogradilište je u tom trenutku bilo zatvoreno i stoga je na najbolji način ilustrovalo *apsolutno realno* stanje društva koje je prolazilo kroz rat i hiper-inflaciju praćenu opštim osiromašenjem. Zaključak istrage - apsolutno mrtvo - nametnuo se i kao logičan naziv za celokupnu akciju.

Projekat je performativno izveden, a potom realizovan u formi izveštaja-kataloga, koji zajedno sa fotografskim materijalom i videom (7 min) čini sastavni deo celokupnog dokumentarno-dokaznog materijala sprovedene istrage.

1995 APSOLUTNO 0005

ABSOLUTELY DEAD

Through an action performed on 21 September 1995, the association APSOLUTNO conducted an investigation in order to establish the cause of the death of two ocean cargo ships located in the Novi Sad shipyard at the time. The project was realised in the shipyard, an important resource in an economic infrastructure, which was used as a metaphor for the social circumstances in Yugoslavia in the mid-1990's. Due to the international economic sanctions, the shipyard was closed at the time, thus making an appropriate illustration of the *absolutely real* state of a society going through a war and hyperinflation characterised by a general pauperisation. The conclusion of the investigation – absolutely dead – was used as a logical title for the entire action.

The project was realised performatively, which was followed by the production of a report/catalogue, which together with photographic material and a video (7 minutes), forms an integral part of the overall documentary-evidentiary material resulting from the investigation.





1999 APSOLUTNO 0001

a.trophy

video, 55 min, 2002.

Ideja za ovaj rad nastala je tokom 78-dnevne NATO operacije „Združene snage“ u Jugoslaviji 1999. godine. Rad se zasniva na sekvenci iz dokumentarnog filma Petra Lalovića *Poslednja oaza*¹, snimljenog početkom 80-ih u Baranji.

Film otkriva lepotu i raznolikost jednog od najvećih utočišta divlje prirode na Balkanskom poluostrvu, koje je ugroženo razvojem industrije i poljoprivrede i ljudskom nepažnjom prema prirodi uopšte. Smeštena između Dunava i Drave, močvara Oaze privlači brojne životinjske vrste, od kojih su neke istrebljene sa ostalog dela evropskog kontinenta. Ova oblast, Kopački rit, sa površinom od 17.770 hektara, dobila je status prirodnog parka 1967, sa specijalnim zoološkim rezervatom od 6.234 hektara, koji je pod zaštitom od 1969. Sa velikim divljenjem prema ovom malom ali životnom ekosistemu, reditelj Petar Lalović istražuje Poslednju Oazu i podseća nas na vremena kada je ovaj svet cvetao u mnogo većoj oblasti ovog dela Evrope.

Pogledajmo šta se zbivalo u Oazi u vreme kada je film snimljen i nedavne tokove tih događaja. Početak 80-ih na jugoslovenskoj političkoj sceni bio je veoma dinamičan i povremeno veoma buran. Maršal Tito umro je 1980. Iz današnje perspektive, njegova smrt može se posmatrati kao prekretnica: nakon godina relativno udobnog socijalističkog perioda, Titova smrt ubrzala je razdvajanje šest jugoslovenskih republika u pet novih država. Mnogi u Maršalu Titu vide jedini autoritet koji je posleratnu Jugoslaviju držao na okupu. Sticajem okolnosti, Tito je bio strastven lovac koji je ovu aktivnost upražnjavao upravo u oblasti u kojoj je snimljena *Poslednja oaza*.

Smeštena usred Balkanskog poluostrva, na ivici gvozdene zavese, između komunističkog istoka i kapitalističkog zapada, Titova Jugoslavija imala je jedinstven položaj u globalnoj zajednici, kao virtuelna Oaza sa sopstvenim principom samoupravljanja. Jugoslavija nije pripadala ni Varšavskom ni Atlantskom paktu, već je, zajedno sa Indijom i Egiptom, inicirala stvaranje Pokreta nesvrstanosti na samitu

u Beogradu 1-6. septembra 1961. Nakon 31 godine, na skupu ministara nesvrstanih zemalja u Njujorku 30. septembra 1992, odlučeno je da Jugoslavija više ne može da učestvuje u aktivnostima Pokreta nesvrstanosti. Jugoslavija, jedan od osnivača pokreta, izbačena je iz organizacije koju je sama osnovala. Radikalna politička promena pretvorila je društveno-politički trofej u atrofiju.

Sekvenca iz filma izabrana za ovaj rad prikazuje scenu sa jelenom kome otpadaju rogovi. Ovaj proces se događa kada životinja ostari i predstavlja prekretnicu u njenom životu. Ponos i simbol snage jelena nestaje, ali sa njim i izvor opasnosti. Istovremeno, ovaj proces daje novo značenje i vrednost rogovima. Nakon što otpadnu, ni lovci ni kolekcionari ih ne vrednuju onako visoko kao kada su spojeni sa glavom životinje. Samo ubijena životinja može postati trofej.

Lov na jelena može trajati danima, i možemo zamisliti frustraciju lovca koji prisustvuje trenutku kada jelenu otpadaju rogovi. Ali za kameru i režisera taj momenat je pravi trofej, jer je uhvaćen trenutak koji se retko vidi u prirodi, trenutak u kojem se sve pretvara u svoju suprotnost.

Očigledno je da sam događaj nosi u sebi suprotnosti i da njegova interpretacija zavisi od tačke gledišta i konteksta u kojem se posmatra. U tom smislu, naslov instalacije, a-trophy, nagoveštava određena čitanja slike naglašavajući ambivalentnu prirodu događaja prikazanog na slici (trofej nasuprot atrofiji). U specifičnom političkom i vojnom kontekstu, kao što je situacija u kojoj smo počeli sa radom na ovom projektu, nameću se određena pitanja: šta je trofej a šta atrofija u širem društveno-političkom smislu? Različita tumačenja slike imaju svoju paralelu u različitim odgovorima na ova pitanja. Međutim, jasno je da autor *Poslednje oaze* nije mogao predvideti da će ovaj kadar dobiti tako bogato metaforičko značenje i postati trofej jedne atrofije.

1 Proizvodnja: Dunav Film Beograd, 1984.

1999 APSOLUTNO 0001

a.trophy

video, 55 min, 2002.

The idea for this piece originated during the 78 days of the NATO operation “Allied Forces” in Yugoslavia in 1999. It features a sequence from Petar Lalović’s documentary *The Last Oasis*¹, which was shot in the early 80s, in the Baranja County of the former Yugoslavia, now the Republic of Croatia.

The film reveals the beauty and diversity in one of the largest wildlife refuges on the Balkan Peninsula, which is endangered by industrial and agricultural development, as well as human disrespect for nature in general. Situated between the rivers Danube and Drava, the Oasis’ marshes attract a variety of species, some extinct in the rest of the European continent. The area, known as Kopački rit, covering 17,770 hectares, was declared a Nature Park in 1967, with an area of 6,234 hectares declared a Special Zoological Reserve in 1969. With great admiration for this small but vibrant ecosystem, director Petar Lalović explores the Oasis and reminds us of the times when wildlife was thriving in a much larger area of this part of Europe.

Let us consider the events in the Oasis when the film was made and the more recent developments. The early 1980s in the Yugoslav political arena were very dynamic and occasionally very eruptive. In May 1980, Marshal Tito died. From today’s perspective his death can be seen as a turning point: after years of a relatively comfortable socialist era, Tito’s death accelerated the separation of the six Yugoslav republics into five new states. Many see Marshal Tito as the single authority figure that kept post-WWII Yugoslavia together. Coincidentally, Tito was an avid hunter, who enjoyed this activity in the region where *The Last Oasis* was filmed.

Positioned in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula, on the outskirts of the Iron Curtain, between the communist East and the capitalist West, Tito’s Yugoslavia had a unique position in the global community, a virtual oasis with its own guiding principle of self-management. Yugoslavia was part neither of the Warsaw Pact nor of NATO. Instead, together with India and Egypt, Yugoslavia initiated the Non-Aligned Movement at a summit in Belgrade,

September 1-6, 1961. Thirty-one years later, at the meeting of Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries held in New York on 30 September 1992, it was decided that Yugoslavia could not participate in the activities of the Movement any longer. Yugoslavia, one of the initiators of the Non Aligned Movement, ended up expelled from the organisation it had founded. In a radical political shift, a socio-political trophy turned into atrophy.

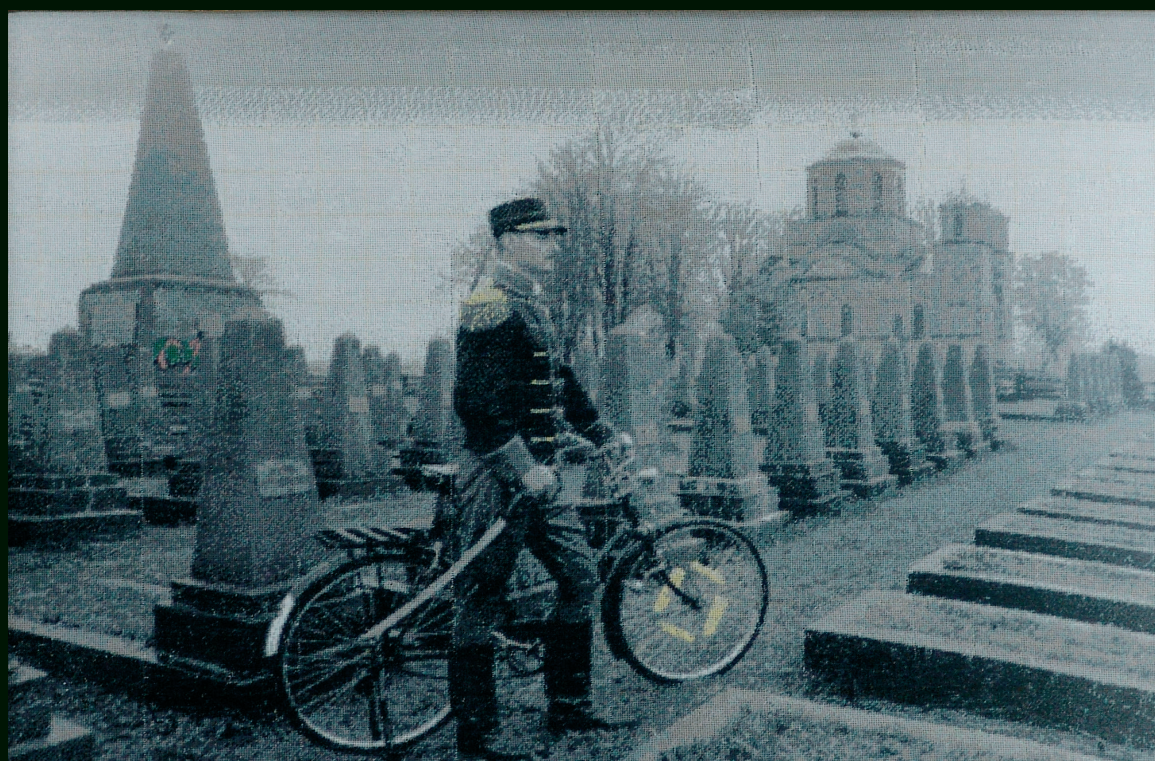
The film sequence chosen for this piece shows a scene with a deer shedding its antlers. This process occurs when the animal is aged and represents a turning point in the animal’s life. The animal’s pride and symbol of power is about to vanish. At the same time, the animal’s life becomes much safer. This event also redefines the value of the antlers. After they are shed, neither hunters nor collectors value them as highly as when taken with the animal’s skull. Only a killed animal is potentially a trophy.

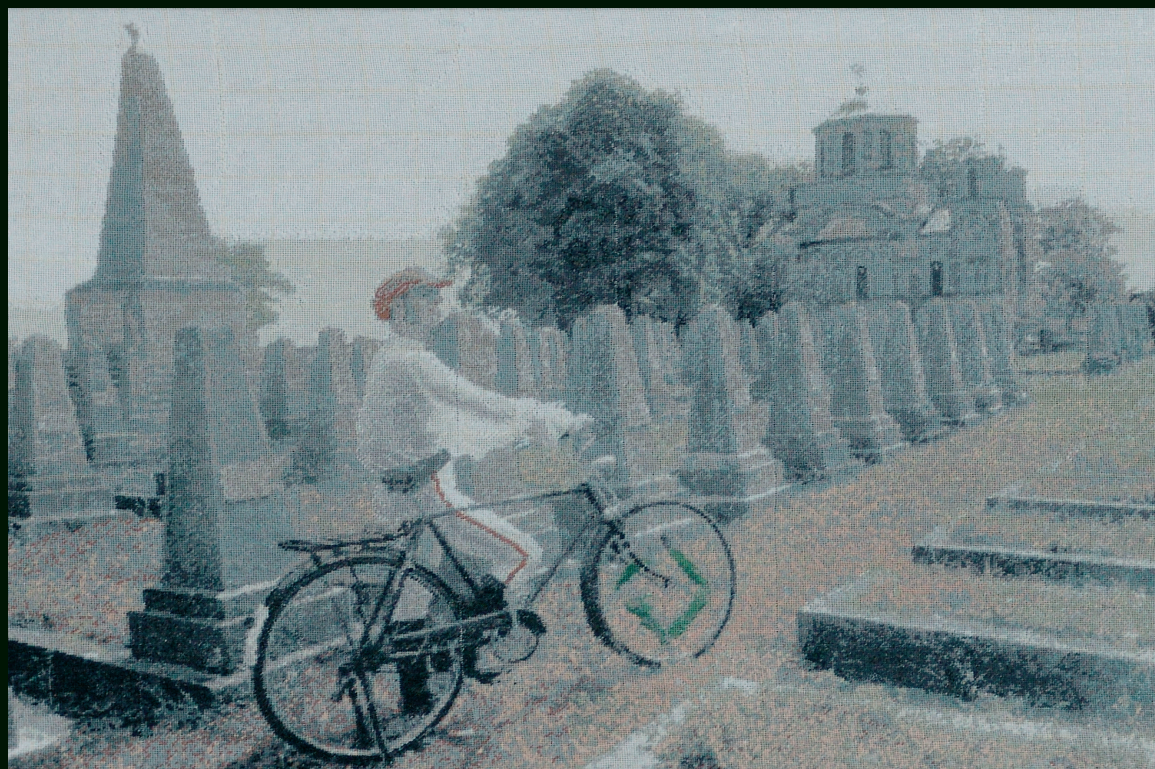
A deer hunt may last for days, and we can imagine the hunter’s frustration at the sight of a deer shedding its antlers. But for the camera and the director, this moment is a real trophy, since it captures an event extremely rarely seen in nature, a moment when everything turns into its opposite.

Obviously, the event itself carries antipodal meanings and the interpretation depends on one’s point of view and the given context. In this sense, the title of the installation, a-trophy, suggests certain readings of the image by emphasizing the ambivalent nature of the event (a trophy vs. atrophy). In a specific political and military context, such as the one we started working in on this project, certain questions arise: what is a trophy and what is atrophy in a wider socio-political sense? The variety of possible interpretations of the image are paralleled by a variety of possible answers to these questions. It is certain, however, that the author of *The Last Oasis* could not predict that this sequence would gain such a rich metaphorical significance and become a trophy of an atrophy.

1 Produced by Dunav Film, Belgrade in 1984.

KONFUZIJA **CONFUSION**





1997 APSOLUTNO 0003

LE QUATTRO STAGIONI

Foto-akcija, 4 goblena (57,5x40 cm)

U zbirci Muzeja savremene umetnosti, Beograd

Foto-akcija *Le Quattro Stagioni* izvedena je tokom 1996. godine na gradskom groblju u Somboru i sastoji se iz četiri celine koje nose naziv godišnjeg doba u kojem su realizovane. U svakoj od njih pojavljuje se po jedan član asocijacije Apsolutno u kostimu iz 19.veka. Lokacija izabrana za ovu foto-akciju je memorijalno groblje u Somboru posvećeno palim partizanskim borcima u Drugom svetskom ratu. Ovo groblje, čiji je centralni spomenik obeležen zvezdom petokrakom, nalazi se na zemljištu pravoslavne crkve, pored kapele izgrađene u neo-srpsko-moravskom stilu. Projekat je reizveden 2002. godine u tehnici neo goblen (petit point).

1997 APSOLUTNO 0003

LE QUATTRO STAGIONI

Photo-action, 4 gobelins (57.5x40 cm)

In the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade

The photo-action *Le Quattro Stagioni* was carried out during the four seasons of 1996. It consisted of four parts, each titled after the season in which it was realised. Each part features a member of the association Apsolutno wearing a 19th-century costume. The site chosen for this photo-action was a memorial cemetery in Sombor, dedicated to partisans who fought in the WWII. The cemetery, with its central monument bearing a red star, is located on an estate belonging to the Orthodox church, next to the chapel built in the neo-Serbian-Moravian style. The project was realised again in 2002 in the neo gobelin technique (petit point).

In

Bulk

1998 APSOLUTNO 0002

NA BALKANU

Video, 2,5 min

U zbirci Muzeja savremene umetnosti Vojvodine

Ovaj video rad predstavlja Balkan viđen iz perspektive izvan ovog regiona. Materijal za ovaj video snimljen je na Crnom moru u Bugarskoj, a korišćen je sistem SECAM. Potom je montiran u SAD, kojom prilikom je korišćen sistem AVID zasnovan na NTSC, a da snimljeni materijal nije bio prebačen na NTSC. Master kopija u sistemu NTSC potom je prebačena na PAL sistem i vraćena na Balkan. Rezultat ovog postupka je crno-bela izdužena slika koja obiluje smetnjama i šumom, nastalim zbog toga što izvorni materijal nije bio kompatibilan sistemima na kojima je obrađivan.

U ovom radu, asocijacija APSOLUTNO koristi tehničku nekompatibilnost različitih video standarda kako bi naglasila razlike u načinima percipiranja stvarnosti. Predstavljen kroz filtere tehnologije i medijskih slika zasnovanih na apriornim pretpostavkama, Balkan se percipira kao daleka crno-bela masa bez strukture ili organizacije.

1998 APSOLUTNO 0002

IN THE BALKANS

Video, 2.5 min

In the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina

This video presents a view of the Balkans from the outside of this region. The material for this video was shot at the Black Sea, in Bulgaria, using the SECAM system. It was then edited on the NTSC-based AVID system in the U.S., without being actually transferred into NTSC. The NTSC master copy was then transferred into PAL and brought back to the Balkans. The result is a black and white stretched image, rich in glitches and noise, caused by the manipulation of the incompatible source.

In this work, the association APSOLUTNO uses the technical incompatibility of different video standards to emphasise the differences in the ways reality is perceived. Presented through the filters of technology and media representations based on a priori assumptions, the Balkans is perceived as something IN BULK, a distant black and white mass, without structure or organisation.

1999 APSOLUTNO 0001

SEMIOTIKA KONFUZIJE*

Uvod

Ideja za ovaj rad proistekla je iz vizuelnog istraživanja koje je asocijacija APSOLUTNO sprovodila od 1995. do 1998. Istraživanje je bilo usredsređeno na nacionalne simbole u zvaničnoj upotrebi u Saveznoj Republici Jugoslaviji tokom tog perioda. Asocijacija APSOLUTNO dokumentovala je zastave, markere graničnih linija, grbove i druge nacionalne i državne simbole, novčanice, pasoše i druge zvanične dokumente izdate od strane organa vlasti, kao i razna javna reagovanja pojedinaca na sve to. Pored ovog vizuelnog materijala, dokumentovani su i drugi simboli i reakcije na njih (npr., reakcije publike na izvođenje državne himne na međunarodnim sportskim događajima). Ovaj tekst zasnovan je na jednom segmentu vizuelnog dela te dokumentacije.

Cilj ove akcije dokumentovanja bio je da se zabeleži fenomen iz našeg neposrednog okruženja tako što će se prikupiti *apsolutno realne činjenice* ovde i sada. Važno je zapaziti da su te apsolutno realne činjenice u izvesnoj meri arbitrarne, da su određene vremenom i mestom gde su prikupljene (u raznim neredovnim prilikama između 1995. i 1998. godine, u Novom Sadu i Beogradu, u Jugoslaviji). One ipak ilustruju razne semiotičke aktivnosti, kako zvaničnog tako i individualnog karaktera, koje na jedan interesantan način odražavaju (nekada sledeći, a nekada anticipirajući) događaje u društvenoj i političkoj sferi.

Razlog zašto ovaj tekst nema nikakav zaključak je sledeći: situacija u ovoj oblasti je još uvek promenljiva, a dok pišemo ovaj tekst, konfuzija se samo uvećava.

I

Od 1991. naovamo, na teritoriji bivše Jugoslavije nastalo je pet novih država, a veoma je verovatno da ovaj proces još uvek nije završen. Na semiotičkom nivou, posle ovog procesa dezintegracije i formiranja usledilo je, a u nekim slučajevima je prethodilo, grozničavo stvaranje simbola: stari nacionalni i državni simboli su odbačeni, prastari simboli su oživljeni ili reciklirani, a stvoreni su i potpuno novi. Nove vlasti pridavale su ogroman značaj uvođenju novih simbola, jer je pomoću njih bilo moguće stvoriti novi osećaj nacionalnog identiteta, nacionalni ponos i novi politički i ideološki okvir za buduću orijentaciju. Drugim rečima, promena na simboličkom nivou viđena je kao važno sredstvo političke promene, pošto je komunikacija putem simbola predstavljala jezik koji su ljudi razumeli i na koji su reagovali.

*preštampano iz: association Apsolutno (1999). Die Semiotik der Verwirrung / The Semiotics of Confusion, *Ost-West Internet / Media Revolution*, edited by Stephen Kovats, Baurhaus Edition 6, (pp. 242-255).

Preka potreba za uvođenjem novih nacionalnih simbola i njihov značaj lako se daju ilustrovati ako se datumi donošenja zakona kojima se reguliše upotreba nacionalnih simbola uporede sa datumima kada su nove države zvanično uspostavljene. U Hrvatskoj je, primera radi, Ustav Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske izmenjen jula 1990. godine, kada je reč *Socijalistička* izbačena iz naziva zemlje, crvena zvezda uklonjena sa državne zastave, a socijalistički grb zamenjen hrvatskim istorijskim grbom. Zakon o grbu, zastavi i državnoj himni Republike Hrvatske usvojen je u Saboru 21. decembra 1990. Dan kasnije, 22. decembra, Hrvatska je donela novi Ustav, čije su odredbe omogućavale odvajanje od bivše jugoslovenske federacije.ⁱ

Ovaj proces odvijao se na sličan način u Sloveniji, koja se proglasila suverenom državom na dan 25. juna 1991. godine, a istovremeno je uvela novu državnu zastavu i grb. Tog dana nova zastava je zvanično podignuta ispred slovenačkog parlamenta po prvi put, a pored nje je stara zastava sa crvenom zvezdom spuštena sa jarbola u simboličnom gestu zamene.ⁱⁱ

Međutim, ovaj proces menjanja nacionalnih i državnih simbola nije uvek bio jasan i jednostavan. U nekim slučajevima je vrludao, baveći se raznim pitanjima i katkada nailazeći na neočekivane reakcije iznutra ili spolja. Problemi na semiotičkom planu samo su odražavali bilo pritiske spolja (kao u slučaju Makedonije) bilo nerešena pitanja unutar države (kao u slučaju Bosne), ili su pak ukazivali na suštinsko pomanjkanje jasne ideje o budućem smeru razvoja (SRJ). Daćemo kratak pregled nekih pitanja povezanih sa tim, usredsređujući sa na zastavu kao na jedan od središnjih nacionalnih i državnih simbola, ne uzimajući za sada u razmatranje Saveznu Republiku Jugoslaviju.

Kao što je već pomenuto, u Sloveniji i Hrvatskoj su nacionalne zastave koje su u tim zemljama korišćene dok su bile deo Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije (trobojke sa crvenom zvezdom) ostale u upotrebi posle uklanjanja crvene zvezde. Međutim, u Makedoniji i Bosni morale su biti stvorene potpuno nove zastave.

U Makedoniji, nova zastava usvojena je prilikom proglašenja nezavisnosti avgusta 1992. Izgled zastave odabran je između više od stotinu predloženih idejnih rešenja koja su ponudena u okviru otvorenog konkursa. Idejno rešenje zastave smesta je napala Grčka, koja je tvrdila da sunce Vergine, središnji simbol zastave, pripada grčkom kulturnom nasleđu. Grčka je takođe protestovala protiv korišćenja vlastite imenice *Makedonija* kao zvaničnog naziva nove države. Ovaj spor razrešen je 1995. sporazumom pod okriljem Ujedinjenih nacija,ⁱⁱⁱ prema kome je Makedonija priznata kao „Bivša Jugoslovenska Republika Makedonija“, od koje se zahtevalo da dâ novo idejno rešenje za zastavu u roku od 30 dana. Sadašnja zastava Makedonije, koju je predložila grupa članova makedonskog parlamenta, napokon je usvojena 1995. godine, tri godine posle proglašenja nezavisnosti. Ipak, ime ove države ostaje privremenog karaktera.

U Bosni i Hercegovini, odluku o sadašnjoj zastavi je februara 1998. doneo Visoki predstavnik Ujedinjenih nacija Karlos Vestendorp. Pre toga, odigravao se dug proces izrade idejnog rešenja i odabira odgovarajuće zastave. Prva zastava, usvojena 1992. godine, pre nego što je izbio rat u Bosni, imala je ljiljan kao središnji simbol, povezan sa muslimanskom tradicijom u Bosni, i zato je trebalo da bude zamenjena posle mirovnog sporazuma u Dejtonu i priznanja Bosne i Hercegovine kao tripartitne države (1995). Posle nekoliko godina i brojnih predloga,^{iv} bosanski parlament i dalje nije mogao da se usaglasí oko rešenja koje bi bilo prihvatljivo za sva tri nacionalna entiteta. Najzad, 1998. godine je Visoki predstavnik Ujedinjenih nacija Vestendorp naimenovao stručnu komisiju koja je uradila predlog tri idejna rešenja. Pošto bosanski parlament opet nije usvojio nijedno od ponuđenih rešenja, Visoki predstavnik je lično odabrao zastavu Bosne i Hercegovine. Na zastavi su boje Evropske unije, bez ikakvih nacionalnih simbola, kako je to objasnio Dankan Bulivant, službenik Kancelarije Visokog predstavnika (na konferenciji za štampu kada je predstavljena nova zastava): „Ova zastava je zastava budućnosti. Ona predstavlja zajedništvo, a ne podele; to je zastava koja spada u Evropu.“^v To što parlament nije bio u stanju da dođe do zajedničkog rešenja i što su spoljašnje vlasti nametnule rešenje samo je naglasilo krhkost dejtonske Bosne i dovodi u pitanje mogućnost njenog postojanja.

Kao što ovaj kratak pregled pokazuje, uspostavljanje novih nacionalnih simbola u zemljama formiranim na teritoriji bivše Jugoslavije odražavalo je političke procese u tim zemljama. Periodi konfuzije u politici ogledali su se u periodima semiotičke konfuzije; slično tome, politička rešenja koja su isprva smatrana konačnim zamenjena su konačnim odlukama o idejnom rešenju nacionalnih simbola.

II

Ako se osvrnemo na nacionalne simbole Savezne Republike Jugoslavije, ili Srbije i Crne Gore (pošto domaći zvanični naziv nije naišao na priznanje u širokim razmerama), prvo što treba zapaziti jeste da su vlasti izuzetno oklevale kada je trebalo zameniti nacionalne simbole Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije. Za razliku od drugih država na Balkanu, SRJ nije smatrala važnim da uloži mnogo truda ili sredstava u stvaranje nove semiotičke stvarnosti svojih građana.

Novi Ustav, koji je obeležio nastanak „treće“ Jugoslavije, usvojen je u aprilu 1992. Savezna Republika Jugoslavija jasno je ispoljila težnju da predstavlja kontinuitet kao jedina naslednica Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije. Istovremeno, trebalo je uvesti promene u političkoj, ideološkoj i nacionalnoj sferi, kojima bi se navodno reagovalo na nezadovoljstvo široke javnosti starim sistemom. Ova tenzija između namere da se sistem prikaže kao kontinuitet starog, a istovremeno i nosilac novog, vidljiva je i na semiotičkom nivou.

Premda je crvena zvezda uklonjena sa državne zastave, ostala je u upotrebi mnogo duže, čak do današnjeg dana, na većini zvaničnih dokumenata, kao i na javnim zgradama. Na primer, crvena zvezda koja je bila na zgradi Skupštine grada Beograda uklonjena je tek 1997. godine, kada su opozicione stranke došle na vlast posle lokalnih izbora. Slično ovome, pasoši bivše Jugoslavije još uvek su u upotrebi 1999. godine, paralelno sa novim pasošima, koji su uvedeni tek 1997. Na ličnim kartama je još uvek grb bivše Jugoslavije, sa crvenom zvezdom i šest baklji, koje predstavljaju šest republika bivše federacije, premda je novi grb uveden 1994. Državna himna bivše Jugoslavije još uvek se koristi kao državna himna današnje Jugoslavije, čemu se neki delovi društva snažno protive.^{vii} Što se tiče državnih praznika, premda su uvedeni novi, praznici bivše Jugoslavije još uvek se zvanično slave, uključujući tu i Dan Republike, kada je formirana Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija (29. novembra 1943. godine).



Da rezimiramo: na prvi pogled, čini se da su postojale dve suprotstavljene tendencije tokom proteklih deset godina kada se radi o nacionalnim simbolima: jedna ka promeni a druga ka održavanju postojeće simboličke strukture SFRJ. Međutim, ako detaljnije razmotrimo simbole koji su promenjeni, nije teško zapaziti da su se te promene uglavnom svodile na uklanjanje crvene zvezde. Ovaj čin bio je u skladu sa opštom atmosferom u čitavoj Istočnoj Evropi, nešto što nije moglo izazvati neslaganje javnosti. Bila je to očekivana promena, i stoga neutralna, beznačajna, promena na površini bez ikakvih stvarnih posledica – na isti način na koji je vladajuća Komunistička partija promenila ime u Socijalistička partija, dok su njeni protagonisti ostali isti. Međutim, kada se radi o promenama koje bi ukazivale na neki mogući pravac razvoja, ili koje bi mogle stvoriti novi nacionalni identitet, malo je toga učinjeno. Razlozi za to svakako leže u pomanjkanju jasne političke vizije, odnosno, preciznije rečeno, u pomanjkanju bilo kakve vizije. Ili se tu možda radi o smicalici koja ima za cilj da u glavama građana stvori konfuziju? Šta to politički establišment saopštava naciji posredstvom ovih simbola? Da li on to šalje poruku da je SRJ nova država ili nastavak SFRJ? I shodno tome, da li su ljudi koji sada žive u toj zemlji neka druga nacija?

Umesto da analiziramo dublja značenja skrivena iza ovih semiotičkih aktivnosti, sada ćemo razmotriti primere semiotičkih aktivnosti građana, ili politički osvešćenog vizuelnog aktivizma pojedinaca koji su osetili potrebu da izraze svoja mišljenja u specifičnoj formi – intervencijama na registarskim tablicama svojih automobila. Ovakvi gestovi, u rasponu od gneva do humora, neki od njih kreativni a neki stereotipni, ilustruju pragmatičnu snagu simbola, odnosno, moć simbola da pokrenu stvarne, konkretne, fizičke reakcije. Pomoću takvih reakcija, možda je moguće doći do odgovora na neka od ranije postavljenih pitanja, konkretno, kako građani reaguju na ono što im, po njihovom tumačenju, saopštava semiotička stvarnost koju im je nametnuo establišment.

III

Registarske tablice u bivšoj Jugoslaviji sadržale su tri elementa: kombinaciju slova koja je označavala grad u kome je vozilo registrovano, crvenu zvezdu i registarski broj. Nove registarske tablice razlikuju se od starih samo po tome što je crvena zvezda zamenjena jugoslovenskom zastavom (plavo-belo-crvenom trobojkom). Premda su nove tablice uvedene 1998. godine, stare su još u upotrebi, a pošto su nove tablice još uvek predstavljale novitet u vreme kada je ovaj materijal prikupljan, nisu zabeleženi nikakvi slučajevi intervencija na njima.

Da počnemo sa najčešćim tipom intervencije: negiranje crvene zvezde. Brojni primeri pokazuju da su registarske tablice sa crvenom zvezdom brisane, uništavane ili pokrivane lepljivom trakom (videti slike 1, 2 i 3).

1



2



3



Druga grupa primera sadrži registarske tablice na kojima je ostala crvena zvezda, ali nalepnice na kolima otkrivaju mišljenje vlasnika o tome kakva orijentacija zemlje treba da bude. Važno je zapaziti da je jedina zvanična nalepnica za Saveznu Republiku Jugoslaviju YU. U prvom primeru (slika 4), vlasnik automobila bi očigledno želeo da živi u zemlji koja se zove Srbija a ne Jugoslavija (nalepnica SER, a uz nju boje zastave Srbije: crvena-plava-bela). Drugi primer (slika 5) prikazuje slučaj lokalpatriote unutar starih granica – uz nalepnicu V, koja označava Vojvodinu, severnu pokrajinu Srbije, stoji nalepnica YU: za razliku od primera na slici 2, ovde je

pokrajina preferirana odrednica u svrhu identifikacije (nezavisna Vojvodina?). Treća registarska tablica u ovoj grupi (slika 6) primer je puste želje, ili pak humorno reagovanje na situaciju u zemlji – Jugoslavija kao članica Evropske unije.

4



5



6



Treća grupa reakcija nudi ideje za alternative crvenoj zvezdi. Ne postoji neka naročita raznovrsnost rešenja. Slika 7 prikazuje srpsku trobojku umesto crvene zvezde, dok je slika 8 čak eksplicitnija u tom pravcu, budući da sadrži i zastavu Srbije i istorijski grb Srbije. Ono što je posebno zanimljivo u ovom primeru je da taj automobil nije registrovan u Srbiji već u Crnoj Gori, čiji se glavni grad Podgorica ranije zvao Titograd, otuda oznaka TG. Najzad, predstavljamo reagovanje koje nije zasnovano ni nacionalno niti teritorijalno (slika 9), gde je crvena zvezda zamenjena crvenim srcem.

7



8



9



Bilo bi odveć pojednostavljeno reći da su te reakcije zasnovane na tumačenjima značenja crvene zvezde. Značenje nekog simbola nije precizno definisana kategorija; njegove su granice mutne i u stalnom kretanju, u zavisnosti od konteksta i paradigmatiskih i sintagmatiskih odnosa između tog i drugih simbola i samog tumača. Bilo bi preciznije reći da su te reakcije zasnovane na tumačenju značenja činjenice da je crvena zvezda još uvek bila zvanična oznaka na registarskim tablicama u SRJ u drugoj polovini devedesetih godina dvadesetog veka.

Crvena zvezda bila je dominantan simbol u Istočnoj Evropi tokom pedeset godina; ona ne samo da je predstavljala sredstvo za izražavanje dominantne ideologije, već je i označavala kako zvaničnu tako i disidentsku kulturu čitavog tog perioda. Taj period se u Istočnoj Evropi završio događajima koji su započeli padom Berlinskog zida, i SRJ nije bila izuzetak u odnosu na opšti osećaj da je došlo do promene: sama činjenica da su ti pojedinci osećali da *moгу* profanirati crvenu zvezdu, koja je nekada predstavljala simbol-svetinju, značila je da postoji opšti implicitni konsenzus u društvu da je era crvene zvezde (u značenju koje je ona imala u Istočnoj Evropi) završena. Zbog toga ovi semiotički činovi ne predstavljaju ozbiljno narušavanje poretka niti čin pobune, a iz istog tog razloga nisu tretirani kao kažnjivi prekršaji, premda bi, zapravo, pod „redovnim“ okolnostima to bio slučaj.

Umesto toga, ovi semiotički gestovi mogu se posmatrati kao specifičan vid komunikacije u kome simboli imaju središnje mesto, u društvu u kome su neke forme političkog dijaloga prestale da funkcionišu ili su se izvitoperile. Ti su činovi postali neka vrsta javnog delovanja, usmerenog ne na neku konkretnu adresu već na bilo koga ko je u situaciji da ih vidi. Oni izražavaju neslaganje sa društvenim identitetom koji pripada prethodnom periodu ali se još uvek održava, i nezadovoljstvo činjenicom što novi identitet još uvek ne postoji. Neki od tih gestova predstavljaju lične iskaze određenog nacionalnog ili teritorijalnog identiteta, i premda su naivni i politički neartikulisani, oni ukazuju na određenu potrebu i traganje za novim usmerenjem. Kriza identiteta i nedostatak usmerenja, koji traju već skoro deceniju u SRJ, doveli su do semiotičkih i raznih drugih konfuzija.

Dok ovaj tekst nastaje, izgleda da se prave nova idejna rešenja zastava na Balkanu. Ostaje da se vidi kakve će se *apsolutno realne činjenice* pojaviti zajedno sa njihovim izmenjenim značenjima.

Napomene:

i Za detaljnije informacije o ovome, videti zvanični internet sajt hrvatske vlade: <http://www.vlada.hr>.

ii Za detaljnije informacije o ovome, videti zvanični internet sajt slovenačke vlade: <http://www.sigov.si>.

iii Član 7, stav 2 tog sporazuma glasi: Po stupanju na snagu ovog privremenog sporazuma, druga strana (Makedonija) prestaće da na bilo koji način koristi taj simbol u svim njegovim oblicima prikazanim na njenoj državnoj zastavi pre stupanja ovog sporazuma na snagu.

iv Za detaljnije informacije i slike, videti *The Flags of the World*: <http://fotw.digibel.be/flags/>.

v Videti: <http://fotw.digibel.be/flags/>

vi Posle nekoliko neuspešnih pokušaja započinjanja rasprave o podeli imovine koja je pripadala bivšoj Jugoslaviji, ovo pitanje ostalo je nerešeno među njenim bivšim republikama do današnjeg dana.

vii U nekoliko situacija prilikom međunarodnih sportskih događaja, navijači iz Jugoslavije bojkotovali su jugoslovensku himnu, zviždeći i negodujući dok je izvođena.

1999 APSOLUTNO 0001

THE SEMIOTICS OF CONFUSION*

Introduction

The idea for this piece of writing arose from the visual research the association APSOLUTNO conducted from 1995 to 1998. The research was focused on the national symbols in official use in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during that time. APSOLUTNO documented flags, border-markers, coats-of-arms and other national and state symbols, banknotes, passports and other official documents issued by the authorities, as well as various public individual responses to these. In addition to this visual material, other symbols and reactions to them were documented as well (e.g., the reactions of the audience to the national anthem played at international sport events). This text will be based on a segment of the visual part of the documentation.

The aim of this action of documenting was to record a phenomenon in our immediate surroundings by collecting *absolutely real facts* here and now. It is important to note that the absolutely real facts are arbitrary to a certain extent, determined by the time and place where they were collected (on various irregular occasions from 1995 to 1998, in Novi Sad and Belgrade, Yugoslavia). They nevertheless illustrate the variety of semiotic activities, both official and individual, which in an interesting way reflect (sometimes follow, sometimes anticipate) events in the social and political sphere.

The reason why this text has no conclusion is very simple: the state of affairs in this area is still in flux, and as we are writing, the confusion is only being multiplied.

I

Since 1991, five new states have emerged on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia, and it is very likely that this process has still not been completed. On the semiotic level, this process of disintegration and formation has been followed, and in some cases preceded, by feverish symbol-engineering: old national and state symbols have been discarded, ancient ones revived or recycled, and completely new ones designed. The new authorities attached enormous significance to the introduction of new symbols, as through these it was possible to create a new sense of national identity, national pride and a new political and ideological framework

*reprinted from: association Apsolutno (1999). Die Semiotik der Verwirrung / The Semiotics of Confusion, *Ost-West Internet / Media Revolution*, edited by Stephen Kovats, Bauhaus Edition 6, (pp. 242-255).

for future orientation. In other words, the change on the symbolic level was seen as an important vehicle of political change, as communication via symbols was a language that people understood and to which they responded.

The urgency and importance of the introduction of new national symbols are easy to illustrate if the dates when the laws regulating the use of national symbols were passed are compared with the dates when the new states were officially established. In Croatia, for example, the constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia was amended in July 1990, when the word *Socialist* was dropped from the name of the country, the red star removed from the country's national flag and the socialist coat-of-arms replaced by Croatia's historical coat-of-arms. The Law on the Coat-of-Arms, the Flag, and the National Anthem of the Republic of Croatia was adopted in Parliament on 21 December 1990. A day later, on 22 December, Croatia passed a new constitution, which allowed for secession from the former Yugoslav Federation.ⁱ

The process was similar in Slovenia, which declared itself a sovereign state on 25 June 1991 and, at the same time, introduced a new flag and coat-of-arms. On that day the new flag was hoisted officially for the first time in front of the Slovenian Parliament, and beside it, the old flag with the red star was lowered, in a symbolic gesture of replacement.ⁱⁱ

However, this process of changing national and state symbols was not always clear and straightforward. In some cases it meandered, touching upon various issues and sometimes coming across unexpected reactions internally or externally. Problems in the semiotic area only reflected either external pressures (as in Macedonia), or the unresolved issues within the state itself (Bosnia), or they indicated a basic lack of a clear idea about a future direction (FRY). We shall briefly give an overview of some of the related issues, focusing on the flag as one of the central national and state symbols, and excluding for the moment the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

As already mentioned, in Slovenia and Croatia, the national flags used in those countries while they were a part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (tricolours with the red star) continued to be used after the removal of the red star. However, in Macedonia and Bosnia completely new flags had to be designed.

In Macedonia, a new flag was adopted at independence in August 1992. The design was selected from more than a hundred proposals which entered an open competition. The flag immediately came under attack from Greece, which maintained that the Vergina Sun, the central symbol on the flag, belonged to the Greek cultural heritage. Greece also protested against the use of the word *Macedonia* as the official name of the new state. The dispute was resolved in 1995 by a UN agreementⁱⁱⁱ, according to which Macedonia was recognised as "The Former Yugoslav Republic

of Macedonia”, and was required to design a new flag within 30 days. The present flag of Macedonia, proposed by a group of Members of Parliament, was finally adopted in 1995, three years after independence. Nevertheless, the name of the country remains temporary.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the current flag was adopted in February 1998 by the UN High Representative Carlos Westendorp. Prior to this, there had been a long process of designing and selecting an appropriate flag. The first flag, adopted in 1992, before the war in Bosnia broke out, bore a fleur-de-lis as the central symbol, a symbol associated with the Muslim tradition in Bosnia, and was therefore to be replaced following the Dayton Peace Accord and the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a tripartite state (1995). After several years and numerous proposals^{iv}, the Bosnian Parliament still could not reach an agreement on a solution that would be acceptable to all three national entities. Finally, in 1998, the UN High Representative Westendorp appointed an expert commission, which designed three proposals. After the Parliament failed once again to adopt any of these, the High Representative selected a flag for Bosnia and Herzegovina himself. The flag bears the colours of the European Union, without any national symbols, since, as explained by Duncan Bullivant, Office of the High Representative (at the press conference at which the new flag was presented): “This flag is a flag of the future. It represents unity not division; it is the flag that belongs in Europe”.^v The inability of the Parliament to find common ground and the imposition of the solution by external authorities only emphasised the fragility of Dayton Bosnia and brought the possibility of its existence into question.

As this brief overview shows, the establishment of new national symbols in the countries formed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia reflected the political processes in these countries. Periods of confusion in politics were mirrored by periods of semiotic confusion; likewise, political solutions that were initially considered final were succeeded by final decisions about the design of national symbols.

II

If we look at the national symbols of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, or Serbia-Montenegro, (since the domestic official title has not received widespread recognition), the first point to note is that the authorities have been extremely hesitant in replacing the national symbols of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Unlike the other states in the Balkans, FRY did not regard it as important to invest much effort or resources into creating a new semiotic reality for its citizens.

The new constitution, which marked the beginning of the “third” Yugoslavia, was adopted in April 1992. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia clearly demonstrated an aspiration to represent a continuation as the sole successor to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. At the

same time, changes were to be introduced in the political, ideological and national domain, supposedly responding to the general public's dissatisfaction with the old system. This tension between the intention to be regarded as a continuation of the old and, at the same time as the bearer of the new, is also visible on the semiotic level.



Although the red star was removed from the national flag, it remained in use much longer, even until today, on most official documents, as well as on public buildings. For example, the red star on the City Hall in Belgrade was removed only in 1997, when the opposition parties came to power after the local elections. Similarly, passports of the former Yugoslavia are still in official use in 1999, together with the new ones, which were introduced as late as in 1997. ID cards still bear the former Yugoslavia's coat-of-arms, with a red star and six torches representing the six republics of the former federation, although the new coat-of-arms was introduced in 1994. The national anthem of the former Yugoslavia is still used as the national anthem of today's Yugoslavia, to which certain parts of the society are strongly opposed.^{vii} As for national holidays, although new ones have been introduced, the holidays of the former Yugoslavia are still officially celebrated, including the Day of the Republic, the day when the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was formed (29 November 1943).

To sum up, at first glance it would appear that there have been two opposing directions during the last ten years in FRY as far as the national symbols are concerned: one towards change; the other towards maintaining the existing symbolic structure of the SFRY. However, if we look closer into the symbols that have been changed, it is not difficult to notice that the change referred mostly to the removal of the red star. This gesture was in accordance with the general atmosphere in the whole of Eastern Europe, a gesture which could not provoke public dissent. It was an expected change, and therefore neutral, insignificant, a change on the surface without any real consequences – in the same way as the ruling Communist Party changed its name to the Socialist Party, while its protagonists have remained the same. Nevertheless, in terms of changes which would indicate a possible future direction, or which would give a new identity to the nation, little has been done. The reasons certainly lie in the lack of a clear political vision, or more precisely, a lack of any vision whatsoever. Or is it a ploy to deliberately create a state of confusion in the minds of the people? What does the political establishment communicate

to the nation through these symbols? Does it convey the message that FRY is a new country or a continuation of the SFRY? And consequently, are people living in that country now a different nation?

Rather than analyzing the deeper meanings behind these semiotic activities, we shall now turn to examples of semiotic actions by citizens, or politically aware visual activism by individuals who have felt the need to express their views in a specific form – through interventions on the license plates on their cars. These gestures, which range from anger to humour, some creative and some stereotypical, illustrate the pragmatic force of symbols, i.e., the power of symbols to trigger actual, concrete, physical responses. Through these responses, it is perhaps possible to gain an insight into some answers to the questions above, namely, how these people respond to what they understand the semiotic reality imposed by the establishment to communicate to them.

III

License plates on vehicles in the former Yugoslavia contained three elements: a letter code for the town where the vehicle was registered, the red star, and the registration number. New license plates differ from the old ones only in that the red star is replaced by the Yugoslav flag (blue-white-red tricolour). Although the new plates were introduced in 1998, the old ones are still in use, and since the new plates were still a novelty at the time when this material was being collected, no cases of intervention on them were recorded.

Let us start with the most common type of intervention: denial of the red star. Numerous examples show license plates with the red star erased, destroyed or covered with adhesive tape (see pictures 1, 2 and 3).

1



2



3



Another group of examples shows license plates in which the red star remains, but the stickers on the car reveal the owner's view of what the orientation of the country should be. It is important to note that the only official sticker for FRY is YU. In the first example (picture 4), the person would obviously like to live in a country whose name is Serbia, rather than Yugoslavia (the sticker SER, plus the colours of the flag of Serbia: red-blue-white). The second example

(picture 5) shows a case of a local patriot within the old boundaries – the sticker V, which stands for Vojvodina, the northern province of Serbia, is accompanied by the sticker YU, unlike the example in picture 2, where the province is the preference for identification (an independent Vojvodina?). The third plate in this group (picture 6) is an example of wishful thinking, or a humorous response to the general situation in the country – Yugoslavia as a member of the European Union.

4



5



6



The third group of reactions offers ideas for alternatives to the red star. Not a great variety of solutions has been found. Picture 7 shows a Serbian tricolour in the place of the red star, while picture 8 is even more explicit in that direction, featuring both the flag of Serbia and the Serbian historical coat-of-arms. What is particularly interesting in this example is that the car was not registered in Serbia, but in Montenegro, whose capital, Podgorica, was previously called Titograd (Tito City), hence TG. Finally, we present a response which is neither nationally nor territorially based (picture 9), where the red star is replaced by a red heart.

7



8



9



It would be simplistic to say that these responses are based on interpretations of the meaning of the red star. The meaning of a symbol is not a precisely defined category; its boundaries are fuzzy and in constant flux, depending upon the context and the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations of the symbol with other symbols and the interpreter her/himself. It would be more precise to say that these reactions are based on the interpretation of the meaning of the fact that the red star was still the official mark on license plates in FRY in the late 1990s.

The red star was a dominant symbol in Eastern Europe for fifty years; it not only represented a vehicle of expression of the dominant ideology, but also marked both the official and the dissident culture of the whole period. That period ended in Eastern Europe with the events which commenced with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and FRY was no exception to the general feeling that a change had occurred: the mere fact that these individuals felt they *could* desecrate the red star, once a sacred symbol, meant that there was a general implicit consensus in the society that the era of the red star (in the sense of what it meant in Eastern Europe) was over. This is why these semiotic actions do not represent a serious violation of the order nor an act of rebellion, and for the same reason, they were not treated as instances of a punishable offence, though in fact, that is what they would have been under the “regular” circumstances.

Rather, these semiotic gestures can be regarded as a specific form of communication in which symbols have a central place, in a society where forms of political dialogue have ceased to function or have become distorted. They represent a sort of a public act, directed not to a specified address, but to anyone who happens to see them. They express disagreement with the social identity that belongs to the former period but is still maintained, and dissatisfaction with the fact that a new identity is still non-existent. Some of these gestures are personal statements of a particular national or territorial identity and, though naïve and politically inarticulate, they indicate a need and search for a new sense of direction. The crisis of identity and the lack of a sense of direction, which have persisted for nearly a decade in FRY, have caused semiotic and various other confusions.

As this text is being written, it seems that new flags are being designed in the Balkans. It remains to be seen what ***absolutely real facts*** will emerge with their changing meanings.

Notes:

i For more information, see the official site of the Croatian government: <http://www.vlada.hr>

ii For more information, see the official site of the Slovenian government: <http://www.sigov.si>

iii Article 7, Paragraph 2 of the agreement states: Upon entry into force of this Interim Accord, the Party of the Second Part (Macedonia) shall cease to use in any way the symbol in all its forms displayed on its national flag prior to such entry into force.

iv For more details and images, see *The Flags of the World*: <http://fotw.digibel.be/flags/>

v See: <http://fotw.digibel.be/flags/>

vi After several unsuccessful attempts to start a discussion about the division of assets belonging to the former Yugoslavia, the matter has remained unresolved between its former republics until today.

vii On several occasions at international sports events, supporters from Yugoslavia boycotted the Yugoslav anthem, whistling and booing while it was played.

RASPRODAJA **SALE**



HUMAN:ČOVEK

Foto-akcija markiranja granica u Evropi, 1996-1999.

Osnovu projekta HUMAN:ČOVEK čini markiranje granične linije koja deli Evropu na Istok i Zapad. U ovoj višegodišnjoj akciji, asocijacija APSOLUTNO je markirala liniju razdvajanja postavljanjem saobraćajnog znaka sa natpisom ČOVEK na ničijoj zemlji između graničnih prelaza zemalja koje se nalaze duž te linije, koristeći zvanične jezike tih zemalja za natpis na znaku. U okviru projekta HUMAN:ČOVEK takođe su se označavale nevidljive linije podele na specifičnim mestima na tlu Evrope, prouzrokovane ratom, ekonomskim i političkim sukobima.

Da bi realizovali ovaj projekat, članovi Asocijacije Apsolutno su morali praviti kratkoročne vize za sve zemlje duž granične linije, s obzirom da je tokom devedesetih godina Srbija bila pod međunarodnim sankcijama. Istovremeno, za svaki izlazak iz zemlje članovi su plaćali i takozvanu izlaznu taksu, koju je vlada SR Jugoslavije/Republike Srbije uvela tokom devedesetih kao svojevrsan vid ograničenja slobode kretanja svojih građana.

HUMAN

Photo-action, marking the borderlines in Europe, 1996-1999

Marking the borderline which divides Europe into East and West forms the basis of the project HUMAN. In this action, the association APSOLUTNO marked this dividing line by placing a traffic sign with the inscription "HUMAN" on the no-man's-land between the borders of the countries along the line, using their official languages for the sign. The project HUMAN also included marking the invisible dividing lines on specific sites within Europe, caused by war, economic and political conflicts.

To realise this project, members of Apsolutno had to obtain short-term visas for all countries along the borderline, as Serbia was under international sanctions during the 1990s. Each trip also incurred costs of the so-called exit tax, introduced by the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Republic of Serbia in the 1990s as a specific form of limiting its citizens' freedom to travel.



1997 APSOLUTNO 0003

APSOLUTNA RASPRODAJA

Web projekat

U zbirci Muzeja savremene umetnosti Vojvodine

APSOLUTNA RASPRODAJA je web projekat koji na ironičan način uvodi istočnoevropske umetnike u umetničko tržište time što simulira organizovanu online aukciju, u kojoj učesnici/korisnici imaju ulogu potencijalnih kupaca. Učesnicima se pružaju informacije o procesu kupovine na aukciji, kao i o lotovima tj. robi koja se prodaje.

Na ovoj aukciji istočnoevropske umetnosti lotovi su zapravo umetnici iz istočne Evrope koji će se tek roditi – 1. januara 2001. godine (prvog dana novog milenijuma). Eventualni kupci stoga mogu jedino da rezervišu umetnike za koje su zainteresovani. Iako je sudbina ovih istočnoevropskih umetnika već određena i navedena u bazi podataka, kupovina na ovoj aukciji ipak predstavlja rizičan potez i kupac se stalno upozorava na ovu činjenicu. Bilo koji od lotova može se povući iz prodaje u bilo kom trenutku bez ikakve najave, štaviše, kupac se obaveštava da informacije u bazi podataka nisu u potpunosti pouzdane. Organizatori ove rasprodaje insistiraju da ne preuzimaju dalju odgovornost.

www.apsolutno.net >> web >> the absolute sale

1997 APSOLUTNO 0003

THE ABSOLUTE SALE

Web project

In the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina

THE ABSOLUTE SALE is a web project based on an ironic view on the position of the East European artist in relation to the Western art market. The piece simulates an online auction in which the participants/users play the role of prospective buyers. They are presented with detailed information on the process of buying at this auction, as well as on the lots offered for sale.

At this auction of East European art, the lots on offer are artists from the East European region who will be born in the future, on 1 January 2001 (the first day of the new millennium). The prospective buyers can, therefore, only make reservations for the artist(s) they are interested in. Although the destiny of these East European artists is already determined and stated in the database, buying at this auction is nevertheless a risky business, and the prospective buyer is constantly reminded of this fact. Any of the lots can be withdrawn at any moment without prior notice; moreover, the buyer is informed that the information in the database is not to be relied upon. The organisers of the sale insist that they do not take any responsibility for the transactions.

www.apsolutno.net >> web >> the absolute sale

ABSOLUTELY NOW: DEATH, CONFUSION, SALE

The art association Apsolutno as chroniclers of a transformation that the West has never fully understood

Inke Arns

Good Evening. Breaking news. The facts. At first sight the video *Good Evening* (1996) appears to be a funny or somewhat ironic commentary on the abundance of globally available television stations and the differences and similarities of their respective form and language. However, if you look at it more closely, and if you take into account the subtitle that accompanies it (1996 APSOLUTNO 0004), the notion „Good Evening“ does have a darker meaning, one which refers to the time and the place in which it was created. It uses the ever same welcome phrase of the plethora of global satellite (news) feeds available in 1996 in Serbia. However, despite all its humor, *Good Evening* is extremely ambivalent: Not only does the video refer to the impact of the media on the experience of reality – questioning the way the media present information as fact – it also is a farewell to the 20th century and a dark welcoming of the dawning new millenium. What would the 21st century bring for the citizens of former Yugoslavia? Would it be any better than the previous one?

The association Apsolutno was founded in 1993 in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. Four members collaborated on the production of the association: Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić (†), Bojana Petrić and Dragan Miletić (1995-2001). Since 1995 all the works have been signed APSOLUTNO, without any reference to personal names. The production of Apsolutno started in the field of fine arts from where it gradually developed to include not only aesthetic, but also cultural, social and political aspects. The work of the association is based on interdisciplinary work and media pluralism with the aim to make it open to new readings.

Since 1995, Apsolutno made a subjective inventory of events, ideas and influences that marked the last five years of the millennium. By exploring the ‘absolute now and absolute here’ Apsolutno aimed to pose questions, create metaphors and point to absurd situations and paradoxes brought by the time we live in.

We? Who is this *we*? And which time exactly? Well, it can be said that the art association Apsolutno acted as chroniclers of a radical transformation that the West has never fully understood: the transition of a Socialist country (ok, with self-management) to a parliamentary democracy and a capitalist economy. To the Western ear this may not sound like much, but in

fact this transition consisted in a massive and total change of economy, ideology (politics), and society, in short: *everything* that people were familiar with, up to that point in time. Actually, the whole of Eastern Europe experienced this radical transition since 1989 – albeit with gradual differences. With the Yugoslav Wars¹ between 1991 and 1999 and UN sanctions imposed on the country, Yugoslavia experienced by far the most violent phase following the political break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic compared to all other states in Eastern Europe.

Apsolutno's work selected for this exhibition reflects on the respective present of a state in transition and allows us to look at it like through a magnifying glass. The exhibition consists of three consecutive exhibition setups (or 'chapters' if you will) within a month. By focusing on the topics of Death, Confusion and Sale, the exhibition puts an emphasis on Apsolutno's analysis of the present of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbia and the radical changes in the political, social and economic context formulated in their artistic work over the past two decades. Death, Confusion and Sale follow a chronological order in the development of Yugoslavia/Serbia in the 1990s/2000s. Very clearly, the exhibition is not conceived as a *retrospective* presenting a comprehensive overview of Apsolutno's work; rather, it intends to *highlight* the most important works of the collective dealing with topics that are still of importance for the present-day situation in Serbia.

Death

It all literally started with death. The Yugoslav patient had actually been in agony since Tito's death in 1980. However, it took another ten years for the state to follow suit. The end of Socialism meant not only the death of the political system but also of the economic system. In Yugoslavia this shock therapy was amplified by the effects of the UN sanctions imposed on the country during the Yugoslav Wars. The sanctions abruptly halted the country's economy and pushed it from a situation of relative prosperity into an economic crisis with hyperinflation of 3.6 million percent a year of the Yugoslav dinar; a rate never heard of previously.²

The video *Absolutely Dead* (1995) documents a forensic investigation into the „death of two transoceanic liners under suspicious circumstances.“ The two ships were found in the shipyard of Novi Sad, Vojvodina, Yugoslavia, between the 1,258 and 1,259th kilometer of the Danube.

1 The wars are generally considered to be a series of largely separate but related military conflicts occurring and affecting most of the former Yugoslav republics: War in Slovenia (1991), Croatian War of Independence (1991–1995), Bosnian War (1992–1995), and Kosovo War (1998–1999), including the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia (see pages 80–81)

2 The inflation exceeded that experienced in the Great Depression of 1929.



The ships – both 105 meters long, 16,2 meters wide and 9 meters high, and each with a cargo capacity of 5,700 tons – were lying parallel to each other with their bows turned towards the South-West. It was not only the confusing geographical location – far from any ocean – but also the fact that both ships, although new and not yet completed at the time of the investigation on 21 September 1995, were completely rusted that provided sufficient grounds for an in-depth examination. The conclusion reached after the hours-long quasi-archaeological expedition into the rusted and partially water-filled interiors of the ships was the assessment that “both the position of the ships as well as the location and time at which they were found indicated absolute death.” After completing the examination the group barricaded the scene of the crime with yellow barrier tape printed with the words “Keep off! - absolutely dead.” The completion of the two ships had been prevented by the economic sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia by the United Nations in 1992.³ In this forensic investigation, Apsolutno addressed not only the catastrophic economic situation that was provoked by the sanctions and symbolised by the two ships. Rather, their examination, as archaeologists of the present, was an act of enshrining a strangeness of perspective that is manifest in the distanced assessment of the existence of these paradoxical objects.

A *trophy* is a reward for a specific achievement, and serves as recognition or evidence of merit. *Atrophy*, however, is the partial or complete wasting away of a part of the body. Causes of atrophy include poor nourishment, poor circulation, and disuse or lack of exercise. The idea for *a.trophy* originated during the 78 days of the NATO operation „Allied Forces“ in Yugoslavia in 1999. It features a sequence from Petar Lalović’s documentary film *The Last Oasis* (1984) which was shot in the early 1980s in Kopački rit, one of the largest wildlife refuges on the Balkan Peninsula, located in the Baranja County (today Croatia). It was here, in Eastern Slavonia, which was then part of the self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina, where in the first half of the 1990s the deadliest conflicts of the Yugoslav Wars took place.

³ United Nations Security Council Resolution (U.N.S.C.R.) 757, May 30, 1992; see the timeline in: *Serbia Sanctions (SERBSANC)*, Case no.: 391, <http://www1.american.edu/ted/serbsanc.htm> (last accessed 23 Nov 2014)

The film scene used for *a.trophy* shows a deer shedding its antlers. For hunters like Tito (who enjoyed hunting in the region where *The Last Oasis* was filmed) a deer shedding its antlers means that it cannot be a trophy anymore. Only when taken with the skull do the antlers have a value. For the deer shedding its antlers this also represents a turning point: On the one hand it means that it is old and that it is losing its symbol of power. At the same time the animal's life becomes much safer. A hunter might be frustrated at the sight of a deer shedding its antlers. But for the cameraman and the director of *The Last Oasis*, this moment must have been the "real trophy since it captures an extremely rarely seen event in nature, a moment when everything turns into its opposite." Apsolutno proposes to add yet another layer of meaning to *a.trophy*, this time a geopolitical one, by linking it to Yugoslavia's role in the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement: At a summit in Belgrade in 1961, Burma, India, Indonesia, Egypt, Ghana and Yugoslavia initiated the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It was formed as an attempt to thwart the Cold War. Thirty-one years later, in 1992, after the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, the membership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was suspended at the regular Ministerial Meeting of the Movement, held in New York. Yugoslavia, one of the initiators of the NAM, „ended up expelled from the organisation it had founded. Radical political shifts like this one cyclically strike the Balkans. In this part of the world, a socio-political trophy frequently transforms into atrophy." Apsolutno themselves, however, by using Lalović's film sequence, precisely turn it into the trophy of an atrophy.

Confusion

Confusion happens when one system ends while another one is still in the state of formation. In *Le Quattro Stagioni* (1996) and *The Semiotics of Confusion* (1995-1998) Apsolutno focus on the Balkans as a semiotically rich territory, a semiotic palimpsest if you will, an area that is, and has always been, full of conflicting symbols overwriting each other.⁴ *Le Quattro Stagioni* consists of four photographs taken during the spring, summer, autumn and winter of 1996. Each picture shows one member of Apsolutno dressed in a 19th century costume. The pictures have been taken in a location where symbols clash: On a memorial cemetery in Sombor where partisans who died fighting the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia are buried, situated

4 The Slovenian artist collective Irwin as well as Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) are also addressing this issue in their work. See Inke Arns: *Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) – eine Analyse ihrer künstlerischen Strategien im Kontext der 1980er Jahre in Jugoslawien*, Regensburg: Museum Ostdeutsche Galerie, 2002; Irwin: *Retroprincip 1983-2003*, ed. Inke Arns, Frankfurt/Main: Revolver, 2003; Inke Arns: *Objects in the mirror may be closer than they appear! Die Avantgarde im Rückspiegel. Zum Paradigmenwechsel der künstlerischen Avantgarderezeption in (Ex-)Jugoslawien und Russland von den 1980er Jahren bis in die Gegenwart*, Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2004, <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/docviews/abstract.php?id=20894>; Inke Arns: *Avantgarda v vzvratnem ogledalu*, Ljubljana: Maska (Transformacije 21), 2006.



on the grounds belonging to the Orthodox church, next to a chapel built in a style imitating the Serbian-Moravian style. The site is a symbolic meeting ground of the red star and the Orthodox cross and their respective narratives. The Apsolutno members are looking forward to the future, their impatience being symbolised by their bicycles. With a twinkle in the eye, the group gives us additional information which we might believe or not: „In order to travel faster, they use a device which is well-known locally: a cornucob put into the bicycle wheel.“ Partisans, 19th century optimism about what the future would bring, local folk knowledge, Orthodox crosses or speedy bicycles, all this comes together in these pictures taken at a time when the future seemed all but clear.

Semiotics of Confusion, on the other hand, focused onto the absolute now, and the clash of symbols perceived in the years 1995-1998 in Novi Sad and Belgrade. Following the violent breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia since 1991, and the formation of five new states (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁵), questions of national identity became prominent. Apsolutno looked into the variety of semiotic activities of that time, both official and individual, which in an interesting way reflected events in the social and political sphere. The group documented flags, border-markers, coats-of-arms and other national and state symbols, banknotes, passports, license plates on vehicles and other official documents issued by the authorities, as well as various public individual responses to these. In Apsolutno's words: „On the semiotic level, this process of disintegration and formation has been followed and in some cases preceded by feverish symbol-engineering: old national and state symbols have been discarded, ancient ones revived or recycled and completely new ones designed. New authorities attached enormous significance to the introduction of new symbols, as through these it was possible to create a new sense of national identity, national pride and a new political and ideological framework for future orientation. In other words, the change on the symbolic level was seen as an important vehicle of political change, as communication via symbols was a language that people understood and to which they responded.“

5 The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was officially renamed Serbia and Montenegro in 2003. In 2006, Montenegro voted in favor of its independence. In 2008 the province of Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia.

At first sight the video *In the Balkans* (1998) deals with the incompatibility of various technical standards used in different regions of the world. The material for this video was shot at the Black Sea, in Bulgaria, using the SECAM system. It was then edited in the U.S. on an NTSC based AVID system without being actually transferred to NTSC. The result is a b/w stretched image, rich in glitches and noise caused by the manipulation of the incompatible source. Finally, the NTSC master copy was transferred to PAL and brought back to the Balkans. The video is a mute reflection on the incompatibility of languages – and, in a metaphorical sense, it can also be read as a somber statement about the impossibility of most communication. At the same time, *In the Balkans* holds up a mirror to global media's suggestion of the Balkans “as something IN BULK, a distant black and white mass, without structure or organisation. The image is hardly readable as it lacks clarity. The only sound is silence juxtaposed to an overwhelming noise arriving from this region that could be neither documented nor understood.” By short-circuiting technical standards, Apsolutno criticise global media and the negative image they are drawing of the ‘regressive’ and ‘mute’ Balkans.

Sale

After Death and Confusion, what we are left with is Sale. The end of Socialism brought about the advent of capitalism in its most brutal form. Those who are left with nothing have to sell themselves, or parts of themselves. In Ekatarinburg I saw a poster in 2012 saying „We buy hair“, and: “The longer, the better.” It took me a while to understand what this actually meant. If you have nothing, sell your hair, we will make hairpieces out of it that will be exported to the West. That’s not even the worst solution, as hair will grow again after you cut it. But think about other parts of the body. Organs. Think about people. Women. Workforce. It’s time for the ultimate sale: of bare life. It’s cheap nowadays.

Borders define who is in and who is out, who can buy and who has to sell. The project *Human* (1996-1999) is exactly about focusing one’s attention onto the existence of the dividing line between East and West which has not disappeared with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. On the contrary: While the borders between the states in Western Europe have disappeared with the establishment of a “united” Europe, in Eastern Europe a multitude of new national(istic)



states with strictly controlled border regimes were formed. In this process, the external border of the EU has been reinforced and is heavily guarded by Frontex nowadays.⁶ As part of the project *Human*, Apsolutno marked the border between East and West between 1996 and 1999 by placing traffic signs on the no-man's-land between the borders of the countries along the line carrying the inscription "HUMAN" (written in the languages of the neighboring countries). Thus the association made the invisible borderline visible and pointed to the factual (in)equality of people and their destinies on both sides of the border on European territory. The online game auction *The Absolute Sale* (1997-2002) was a continuation of the *Human* project: It is a web project based on an ironic view of the position of the Eastern European artist in relation to the Western art market. The piece simulates an auction in which viewers play the role of prospective buyers. However, the sale is constantly postponed, as is the integration of Eastern European countries into the EU. The piece deals with the definition of Europe, a geographical, political and mental space which, depending on the perspective one takes, is at the same time united and divided.

Whose Now

What do I mean by saying that the art association Apsolutno are chroniclers of a transformation that the West has never fully grasped? Let me explain by giving examples from Germany. Twenty-five years ago the Berlin Wall fell. People in East Germany had to adapt to radically new living conditions: a new political culture, a new economic system, a new social contract. For many this meant that they had to radically re-invent themselves. British artist Phil Collins is one of the few artists who made a relevant work about those people who had to go through this process of complete re-invention of the self.⁷ Meanwhile, what happened to the people in the West of Germany? Nothing. Life simply continued. How did they experience the change? Well, from time to time there was a Trabant or a Wartburg (East German car brand) on the street. In addition, the solidarity tax was introduced which was used to finance the rebuilding of East Germany. That's about all that changed for West Germans. Death, Confusion and Sale have always been – and still are – experienced by others. Through their forensic approach Apsolutno addresses these topics – and we see that they are still of great importance for the present-day situation in Serbia. And we are beginning to wonder about whether the West or the East is better fit for future challenges of a global kind.

All quotations by Apsolutno are taken from *The Absolute Report*, Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2006.

6 With Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Croatia becoming full members of the EU the border between East and West has yet again shifted towards the East compared to the beginning of the *Human* project in 1996.

7 Phil Collins: *marxism today (prologue)*, 2010, as shown at the *6th berlin biennial*, Berlin 2010.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav_Wars, last accessed 22 Nov 2014

1990

Log revolution. SAO Krajina is proclaimed over an indefinite area of Croatia.

1991

Slovenia and Croatia declare independence in June, Macedonia in September. War in Slovenia lasts ten days.

The Yugoslav army leaves Slovenia, but supports rebel Serb forces in Croatia. The Croatian War of Independence begins in Croatia. Serb areas in Croatia declare independence, but are recognized only by Belgrade.

Cities of Vukovar, Dubrovnik, Karlovac and Osijek are devastated by bombardments and shelling. A flood of refugees from the war zones and ethnic cleansing overwhelm entire Croatia. Countries of Europe are slow in accepting refugees.

In Croatia, about 250,000 Croats and other non-Serbs were either removed out of their homes by the Serb forces or fled the violence.

1992

Vance peace plan signed, creating four United Nations Protection Force zones for Serbs and ending large-scale fighting in Croatia.

Bosnia declares independence. Bosnian war begins with Serbs trying to create a new, separate Serb state, Republika Srpska, that would swallow as much of Bosnia as possible.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia proclaimed, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro, the only two remaining republics.

United Nations impose sanctions against FR Yugoslavia and accepts Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia as members. FR Yugoslavia claims being sole legal heir to SFRY, which is disputed by other republics. UN envoys agree that Yugoslavia had 'dissolved into constituent republics'.

The Yugoslav army retreats from Bosnia, but leaves its weapons to the army of Republika Srpska, which attacks poorly armed Bosnian cities of Zvornik, Kotor Varoš, Prijedor, Foča, Višegrad, Doboj. Siege of Sarajevo starts.

Approx. 600,000 non-Serbian refugees.

Bosniak-Croat conflict begins in Bosnia.

1993

Fighting begins in the Bihać region between Bosnian Government forces loyal to Alija Izetbegović, and Bosniaks loyal to Fikret Abdić who is supported by Serbs.

Sanctions in FR Yugoslavia, now isolated, create hyperinflation of 3.6 million percent a year of the Yugoslav dinar; this had never been known previously. The inflation exceeds that experienced in the Great Depression of 1929.

The Stari Most (The Old Bridge) in Mostar, built in 1566, was destroyed by Croats. It was rebuilt in 2003.

1994

Peace treaty between Bosniaks and Croats arbitrated by the United States, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina formed.

FR Yugoslavia starts slowly suspending its financial and military support for Republika Srpska and stabilizes the economy structure with Economic Implementation Framework.

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1995

Srebrenica massacre reported, 8,372 Bosniaks killed by Serb forces.

Croatia launches Operation Storm, reclaiming all UNPA zones except Eastern Slavonia, and resulting in exodus of 150,000–200,000 Serbs from the zones. War in Croatia ends.

NATO launches a series of air strikes on Bosnian Serb artillery and other military targets. Croatian and Bosnian army start a joint offensive against Republika Srpska.

Dayton Agreement signed in Paris. War in Bosnia and Herzegovina ends. Aftermath of war is over 100,000 killed and missing and two million people internally displaced or refugees. Serb defeat in Croatia and West Bosnia allows Croatian and Bosniak refugees to return to their homes, but many refugees of all nationalities are still displaced today.

After signing the Dayton Agreement, Yugoslavia is granted with looser sanctions, still affecting much of its economy (trade, tourism, industrial production and exports of final products), but allowing for its citizens to exit Yugoslavia, for a limited time.

1996

FR Yugoslavia recognizes Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Fighting breaks out between Serbian forces and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Following a fraud in local elections, hundreds of thousands of Serbs demonstrate in Belgrade against the Milošević regime for three months.

1998

Eastern Slavonia peacefully reintegrated into Croatia, following a gradual three-year handover of power.

Fighting in Kosovo gradually escalates between Albanians demanding an independent Kosovo and the Serb forces.

1999

Račak massacre, Rambouillet talks fail. NATO starts a military campaign in Kosovo and bombards FR Yugoslavia in Operation Allied Force.

Following Milošević signing of an agreement, control of Kosovo is handed to the United Nations, but still remains a part of Yugoslavia's federation. After losing wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, numerous Serbs leave those countries to find refuge in Serbia. In 1999, Serbia was the host of about 700,000 Serb refugees.

Fresh fighting erupts between Albanians and Yugoslav security forces in Albanian populated areas outside of Kosovo, with the intent of joining three municipalities to Kosovo.

Franjo Tuđman dies. Shortly after that, his party loses the elections.

2000

Slobodan Milošević is voted out of office, and Vojislav Koštunica becomes the new president of Yugoslavia.

With Milošević ousted and a new democratic government in place, FR Yugoslavia comes out of isolation. The political and economic sanctions are suspended in total, and FRY is reinstated in many political and economic organizations, as well as becoming a candidate for other collaborative efforts.

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1995:2015

APSOLUTNO ESCHATOLOGY

Gordana Nikolić

The new millennium started long ago. The Apocalypse that had been announced did not happen, after all. That is an *absolutely real fact* now, which disqualifies yet another date in a series of predictions or prophetic scenarios of the end of the world (Apocalypse), with or without the participation of God. One of the significant dates in the list of apocalyptic events – *the millennium bug* or *the Y2K problem* – marked the transition from the second to the third millennium as a moment when, on account of a problem in digital (computer) and non-digital documentation and databases, the practice of shortening the four digits of a year to (the last) two, a collapse of the computer system would occur, and society would stop functioning. *The millennium bug*, thus, according to the worst-case scenarios, was supposed to cause, due to a computer malfunction, starting from 1st January 2000, mass-scale plane crashes, a stock exchange collapse, explosions of nuclear power plants and the like. That was also one of the most popular predictions of the end of the world in 2000, leaving behind other, “apocryphal” versions, created within the boundaries of certain religious congregations, in individual prophetic ecstasies or SF literature. This vision of the end of the world is supplemented by conspiracy theories which insist on the fact that *the Y2K problem* was created as a part of a deliberate design of certain super-powerful structures or a narrow social circle for the purpose of exercising mass control of people.

The art association Apsolutno (Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić [†], Bojana Petrić, Dragan Miletić), founded in 1993 Novi Sad, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia), active until 2005, contextualised the longest and key phase in its artistic opus through the project *1995:2000*, which was supposed to last until the end of the century or the millennium, exploiting precisely this apocalyptic repository of pseudo-science, imagination and hysteria in a decade awaiting *the millennium bug*. The irony of the situation was emphasised by signing their projects using the numbers of calendar years (based on the Gregorian calendar) and counting backwards – marking the number of years that remained until the end of the old and the coming of the new millennium. Hence the works created in 1995 were signed 1995 Apsolutno 0005, those created in the next year were signed 1996 Apsolutno 0004 and so on, thus intoning the dramatic nature of the end or of awaiting the new beginning darkly.

However, in the decade presaging a new Apocalypse, in (the former) Yugoslavia the end of the world was probably “closer”, as a possible final outcome or epilogue of the most dramatic and extreme sequence of events: the Yugoslav wars (1991-1999), violence and international sanctions imposed upon Serbia, and the political, ideological and economic transformation of the socialist (self-management) system and the one-party state of SFRY¹ into a state of *parliamentary democracy* and (wild) capitalist economy. The Yugoslav transition was one of the post-socialist transitions after 1989 (in symbolic terms – after the fall of the Berlin Wall) in the countries that used to be a part of the Eastern bloc. The association Apsolutno registers forensically the locations and situations with a symbolic and metaphorical potential in relation to their social context in the (post-)Yugoslav system undergoing transition. The association proclaims the situations encountered *absolutely real facts* and intervenes, transforming “the known, usual or even marginal (...) into something unusual, outside the everyday, and worthy of investigation”.

In order to understand conceptually the phenomenon and the activities of the association Apsolutno on the local and European/international scene, we need perspectives from diverse cultural and political contexts in which Apsolutno develops its strategies and to which it refers. The web technology and the informatisation of the economic system, the neoliberal mobilisation of industry and the capital market, the privatisation of the major part of national economies, the rise of the financial sector (banking, investments, insurance, etc.), whose services assume a dominant economic, cultural and political role in national economies, the invention of creative industries as a new motor of economic development – that is the global context of the 1990’s in which Apsolutno intervenes. However, that context cannot be applied in the same way for the purpose of analysing the local circumstances in Serbia in the 1990’s, a country isolated from international financial flows and global post-industrial, social and political developments. From that perspective, the fantastic imaginarium surrounding the uncertain entry of Serbia in the new millennium, apart from having the general ironic and dark qualities, invokes a morbid situation wherein the world can be “saved” only through a definitive destruction. Thus the countdown of the time remaining, within the framework of the association’s five-year project *1995:2000*, broadens

1 SFRY – the Socialist Federal Republic was the Yugoslav state that existed from the end of the Second World War (1945) until its disintegration in 1992. It was a socialist state encompassing the territory of today’s independent states of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia. It was established in 1943 on the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia under the name of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, and was internationally recognised as the legal successor of the Kingdom. In 1946 it was given the official name of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia, and based on the 1963 Constitution, it was given its final name, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

the amplitude of meanings of one Apocalypse among many. The Apocalypse in Serbia, quite simply, was closer and more certain than in some other place. That is why, even today, the video work *Good Evening* (1996) leaves a dark, if not downright morbid impression, despite its pronounced humour. For this video work, the authors took one and the same sentence of greeting uttered in various languages as *found footage* moments taken from satellite programmes in Serbia, which TV presenters use addressing the viewers at the beginning of a news programme. The quick succession of images and greetings thus announces the certainty of the “evening” of the century and millennium, presaging a dark ending for the citizens of Serbia.

In wartime surroundings and under sanctions, undergoing a systemic crisis and transformation, amidst a nationalist and militant state policy, there arose the anti-war and civic scene of *the Other Serbia*, as a political and cultural opposition of the 1990's. However, the political scene and society in Serbia, for the most part polarised along the lines of for and against the Milošević regime, were not reflected on the cultural and art scene, whose production in a considerable degree self-isolated itself in an escapist and apolitical manner within a bubble of self-referentiality and aesthetisation, under the guise of *the autonomy of art*. In this situation, artistic and cultural practices in Serbia with a politically enlightened agenda were an exceptional phenomenon and very significant when it came to creating a language of resistance. The social, political and independent media scene of *the Other Serbia*, including a part of the cultural and artistic production made with the assistance of foreign funds, first of all the Soros Foundation and its centres, organised a parallel life of a segment of the population of Serbia. Without official institutional recognition and support, the contemporary “independent” art scene of Serbia was almost completely dependent of the assistance of foundations when it came to creating the basic infrastructure for work and production. It was then that art-activist initiatives appeared which determined the course of the contemporary art scene in the street. The association Apsolutno acted locally in its criticism of the dominant nationalist ideology and war propaganda together with other protagonists of that scene: Škart [Reject], Magnet, Led [Ice] Art, Saša Marković Microbe and others. In ideological terms, the production of Apsolutno belongs to the trend of politically engaged art in Serbia in the 1990's, the street protest, agile and direct in its criticism of the current regime. However, this popular form was not quite typical of the association in practice. Its typical practice, although possessing a pronounced political agenda and referring to acute social problems, is mainly encoded, analytical, an aesthetically refined and witty game of revealing ideological symptoms in its surroundings. The production of Apsolutno is conceptual in terms of structure, mainly cryptical and minimalist in

design. Thus the process of investigation, the methodology and the actual realisation of the association Apsolutno make up a conceptual art that occurs in the specific ambience of the 1990's.²

In Western Europe, within the post-Cold War ambience, significant reception of the contemporary art scene from Serbia mainly occurred along with exhibitions of and events related to the contemporary art of post-Communist Eastern Europe.³ Soon enough, the focus was on *Balkan exhibitions*,⁴ as interpreted by well-known curators from the West. Such exhibitions, apart from controversially fabricating an exotic and colonial image of contemporary art “from the other side of the wall”, also constituted the entry of contemporary art works from Eastern Europe and the Balkan countries in the international market and the international art system. Works by the association Apsolutno constitute a rare example of the presence of artists from Serbia outside Belgrade in such events. The focus was on Belgrade as the anti-regime art scene, while other “scenes” on the periphery were almost unrecognised. A different kind of connection outside the gallery/museum system, a more direct and egalitarian line of networking and intensifying communication between Western and Eastern Europe was made possible by technology. The development of information and communication technology, the popularisation of the Internet and personal computers, that is, their democratisation, enabled the creation of a specific international art scene from the second half of the 1990's onward, to which the association Apsolutno belonged as well. The establishment of the mailing lists Syndicate and Nettime for the purpose of information exchange and discussion also marked the beginning of a new era for the current artistic and activist initiatives within the context of the culture of networked society. Pondering art and technology on the European scene was especially fostered by festivals of media and digital culture – Ars Electronica (Linz), Transmediale (Berlin) etc. – and also by institutions such as V2_ Rotterdam. The

2 Conceptual art in Novi Sad or Vojvodina is a heritage that existed then more in the form of urban legends than official knowledge. It was mostly through informal contacts that the members of the association developed a certain attitude towards lifestyle and artistic investigation of local conceptual art, which was integrated in the practice of Apsolutno as a corpus of ideas and language. Later on, this interest of the association members continued through a more institutional form of investigation and presentation of ex-Yugoslav avant-gardes from the second half of the 20th century within the framework of the long-term project *An Enduring Art Class* (from 2005 onward), initiated by a team of editors and researchers from the Centre kuda.org, founded by one of the members of Apsolutno – Zoran Pantelić.

3 For example: *After the Wall. Art and Culture in Post-Communist Europe*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1999 (Berlin, 2001).

4 *In Search of Balkania*, Graz, Austria, 2002; *Blood & Honey, The Future Is in the Balkans*, Klosterneuburg/Vienna, Austria, 2003; *In the Gorges of the Balkans*, Kassel, Germany, 2003.

mainstream digital culture of the 1990's brought along, among other things, a renaissance of new techno-utopianism and dreams of liberation of the individual through technology. The futurist fascination with the coming New Millennium certainly belongs to this perspective. This romanticist-progressivist instance, present in art as well, belonged to the corpus of (micro-)ideologies and lifestyles born in the euphoria of the then dot.com culture. The then dominant trend uncritically introduced technology in artistic and media practice, almost entirely neglecting the political and economic implications of the use and influence of technology. As a reaction to this, there appeared media activism and net.art, which constituted critical responses to the dominant enthusiastic culture of the Internet, its commercialisation and the trend of techno-fetishism in art and culture. Certain interventions in the media sphere through the practice of tactical media and net.art, applied by Apsolutno as well, brought a different perspective and a politically enlightened interpretation of the world as it was then, and a scenario for the future. This included, among others, collectives and artists such as mikro.de, Public Netbase t0, Vuk Ćosić, Heath Bunting, Irational.org, Critical Art Ensemble, Jodi.org, Alexei Schulgin, The Yes Men, RTMark, 0100101110101101.ORG, Bureau of Inverse Technology, Übermorgen and others. Apsolutno operated from the media pluralism and technology of the time, and their choice of the medium to work in was determined, in a McLuhanesque way, by the assumption about its communicative capital. Thus their production was realised in the medium of the video, site-specific installation, audio, web project, publication, photography, text, conceptual statements, performance-lectures, etc. Today, when the emergence and justification of the notion of the so-called *post-Internet art*⁵ is discussed, it becomes clearer to what extent the diversity of conceptual solutions, tools and techniques of the Apsolutno production evokes the idiosyncratic media archaeology of a broader art network from recent past. The distance in time made it possible to articulate this archaeology, with or without nostalgia, as a possible narrative about characteristic avant-garde artistic activities from the *techno 1990's*, especially when one takes into account the exceptional nature of such a phenomenon on the art scene of Serbia. Among others, the art projects: *The Absolute Sale* (1997) – one of the pioneering web works in Serbia realised as a computer game (game art), the CD-ROM project *The Greatest Hits* (1998) – conceived as a top ten list of computer and human viruses which, interacting with the user, make errors and reduce or block his

5 Inke Arns explains the appearance of post-Internet art as “hardcore normality” (*normcore*) in times of hypercapitalism. Like pop art, post-Internet art is interested in the surface of the consumer culture, only in this case it is the frightening surface of the *hyped* digital consumer culture. Normcore. Inke Arns (2014). Post-Internet Art: Normcore in Zeiten des Hyperkapitalismus <http://rights-media.de/webbooks/jahresueckblick1415/chapter/post-internet-art-normcore-in-zeiten-des-hyperkapitalismus/>

movement, then computer editing and use of TV satellite broadcast samples in the video work *Good Evening* (1996) – are characteristic examples of this media archaeology, for the realisation of ideas is directly conditioned by the technology of the time and its limitations.

The End From Act III: Death, Confusion, Sale

The exhibition *ABSOLUTELY NOW: Death, Confusion, Sale*, held at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina in Novi Sad (January/February 2015), represents a selection of works and documents of the association Apsolutno through three “scenographies” that follow one another in succession over the course of one month, which is how long the exhibition will last, in the manner of acts in a play. This exhibition reactualises three philosophical themes like acts of a play around which the majority of the works by Apsolutno are concentrated: *death*, *confusion* and *sale*, which can function like a “trigger” for reading that which is *now*. The three “eschatological” acts contain reinstallations of the association’s “old” works in a museum space, which can be read as a possible interpretation of the recent history of the (Socialist) Federal Republic of Yugoslavia ([S]FRY)/Republic of Serbia. Each act of the performance opens with the greeting mantra from the video work *Good Evening*, which, like a *déjà vu*, places us in a situation characterised by the overlapping of experiences of two decades ago and the current moment. A brief review of the social and political *mainstream* in Serbia in the 1990’s and the situation today actually indicates that the main actors of the right-wing political scene of the 1990’s, after a break during the first decade of the new millennium, are present today in the same positions again, and the mystical eclipse seems as near as it was in 1996. However, the drama (tragedy) set up in three acts in this manner does not have to be read in a linear way, for the concepts themselves are actually not diachronically fixed, but oscillate and crop up in time as unstable categories, so that these themes, in a different set-up, can also correspond to a global eschatological composition.

I

The first theme of the exhibition set-up is *DEATH*. In (philosophical or theological) eschatology, looking into the future, death has a special status and assumes a meaning more vibrant than a mere biological end. Death becomes a precondition for a number of transcendental events and processes or reincarnations, through which one attains the absolute (in idealistic terms: God, spirit; in materialistic terms: matter) and a new definitive order of being. Islamic philosophy even compares death to a dream and refers to it as

“sleep between two awakenings” (Al-Gazali). From that interpretive perspective, in this exhibition the works *Absolutely Dead* and *A.Trophy* mark the moment of the extended death of socialist Yugoslavia and the utopia of workers’ self-management, as well as the entire system of socialist values and its transition/reincarnation into a different systemic formation, that of capitalism. In the work *Absolutely Dead* (a series of photographs and a video), on 21st September 1995 a pseudo-forensic examination and identification of “two bodies” was carried out on location – by means of a yellow tape containing the inscription “Keep away! Absolutely dead!”, two ocean liners were marked, which had been standing for years in the shipyard on the Danube in Novi Sad (Vojvodina), partially submerged and exposed to the process of corrosion. The identification of the ships thus found encompassed precise measurement of their dimensions and position, as well as the conclusion that they were absolutely dead. The traces or evidence that could provide an indication of the cause of their “death” were not visible on the spot. The state of those two ships was merely a symbolic symptom of a broader political-economic picture of Serbia in the 1990’s. Actually, the building of these two ships was stopped during the Yugoslav wars due to the imposition of international sanctions upon Yugoslavia, the closing of the state borders, economic catastrophe and the onset of *hyperinflation* (1992-1994). The party from Western Europe that had commissioned the building of those ships was thus left without the products it had ordered. The absurdity of this situation, apart from the presence of two giant ocean liners on the river Danube, is underscored by the premature death of these two “victims” of the end of Yugoslavia, before they even had an opportunity to live. It is interesting to note that this investigation was conducted a couple of months before the conference in Dayton and the signing of the *Dayton Peace Accords*⁶ (November/December 1995), a historically significant legal act that contributed to officially ending the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and defining the wartime borderlines and ethnic divisions. Actually, by signing this act, all three official representatives of the ethnic entities participating in the bloody conflict agreed upon at least one thing – that Yugoslavia no longer existed. However, our story about ships does not end there. According to unofficial accounts, the ships awoke from their sleep, that

6 The Dayton Agreement (or the Dayton Peace Accords, or just Dayton) is a legal act of consensual nature, signed at the air force base Wright-Patterson near Dayton, in the US state of Ohio, for the purpose of officially ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had lasted from 1992 to 1995. The Agreement particularly dealt with the future administrative and constitutional order in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conference lasted from 1st November to 21st November 1995. The main participants were the Bosnian President Alija Izetbegović, the Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, the Croatian President Franjo Tuđman, and the chief American mediator Richard Holbrooke and General Wesley Clark. The Agreement was officially signed in Paris on 14th December. The current administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the composition of the government were some of the results of the Agreement.

is, from the state of *clinical death*, and sailed away from the Novi Sad shipyard to the ocean a decade later. A purely superficial investigation of the circumstances surrounding the delivery of those ships leads us into a dark and convoluted story about ownership relations, the privatisation of a socialist firm, the bankruptcy of the said firm, archives disappeared without a trace, finally leading us astray into a conspiracy theory, detecting in a newspaper article an occult connection between the firm's manager and the "masonic chapter" of *wine knights*. A case of transition commonplace in Serbia.

After Dayton, the Yugoslav sequence of wars continued with conflicts in Kosovo in 1998-1999. By adopting UN *Resolution 1244*⁷ of 10th June 1999, the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁸ officially accepted the establishment of a temporary United Nations administration (UNMIK) in Kosovo. The idea for the video work *A.Trophy* (1999) originated during the NATO intervention in Kosovo and the bombing of military and civilian targets in FRY, which preceded the passing of the Resolution. The witty pun contained in the title *A.Trophy* (combining atrophy and trophy) broadens the amplitude of the instability of the notions of destruction and death, which turn into their opposites. A scene from the extraordinary documentary-artistic film made by the director Petar Lalović entitled *The Last Oasis* (1983), wherein a deer casts off its horns, was taken over and edited as a *slow motion* video. The symbolic repository of this video work seems to broaden and grow over time, and with it new interpretations multiply. Owing to an artistic transposition, one brief scene from Lalović's film has been translated to eternity, into a monumental metaphor of the death of Yugoslavia and a prolegomenon of the Yugoslav transition to peripheral capitalism. A masterpiece of an era.

II

The second set-up marks *CONFUSION* as an important theme for this eschatological sequence. The former Yugoslav countries are passing through a process of structural adaptation to the capitalist system, and in the space between the old and the new absolute confusion levitates, wherein ideologies clash, as do old social relations and those in the

7 The UN Security Council Resolution 1244 was adopted on 10th June 1999. Resolution 1244 placed Kosovo under the mandate of UN. The Resolution was passed one day after the signing of the Military-technical Agreement in Kumanovo, which ended the bombing of FRY that had lasted 79 days.

8 The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) – the state formation that was the successor of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). It was established based on the decision of the Federal Executive Council of SFRY (on 27th April 1992), as the joint state of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro.

process of being formed, material culture and historical narratives, epistemology and identities. If we were to seek an analogy, for example, in Christian theology, this phase would probably be identical to the phase of Christ's 40 days of wandering that preceded his Ascension. More liberal interpretations maintain that the Messiah then actually became a *vampire* or a *zombie* – a dead body or a ghost wandering through the world looking for “energy” in order to survive. Thus (the former) Yugoslavia, in a dead body and new clothes, wandered through a labyrinth of signs, symbols and value systems. This situation is paradigmatically illustrated by the work *Semiotics of Confusion*, in which the association Apsolutno photographically documents an investigation conducted between 1995 and 1998 in FRY. The authors register the identity (national) confusion which they come across in free individual interventions on state symbols and car licence plates, or in mutually different and opposing national symbols and flags used by supporters of the same football club during football matches. The confusion in the iconosphere is also increased by official “art” interventions of the executive powers-that-be on a stone marking a border crossing: they removed the letter F from the previous acronym of the state, SFRJ,⁹ by painting it over with a brush, thus creating a “pause” in the acronymic sequence of letters.

In the work *Le Quattro Stagioni* (1996), through an artistic action carried out in several phases, the authors symbolically recreate the confusion of the time they live in. The work, made in the form of a pseudo-calendar, was created as a photo action over the course of the four seasons of a year in the memorial cemetery in Sombor, Vojvodina. The iconosphere of the actual location, a cemetery pulsating with contrasting ideological symbols and situations (a Communist memorial to Soviet soldiers in a plot of land belonging to the Orthodox Church, the five-pronged star vs. the cross) is saturated by the authors by introducing their own figures in 19th-century costumes, along with a bicycle which has a corn cob inserted among the spokes for the purpose of increasing the speed of wheel rotation. This photo performance is an ironic comment on the persistence of outdated 19th-century thought matrixes, despite the pressure of progressivism, at a time of absolute ideological confusion. In the next phase of production, the work LQS was raised, in a calculated manner, to a new level of artificialisation by means of processing the photographs through a digital pixellised raster which served as a pattern for monumental needlepoint images with a golden baroque frame. By involving professional needlepoint stitchers in the production process, the Apsolutno time machine turns the digital into

9 Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija (SFRJ) was changed to Savezna Republika Jugoslavija (SRJ).

manual work, as an anachronistic process contrary to the progressivist vision of the role of technology of that time.

The video work *In the Balkans* (1998), through a very complex technical process of dealing with video footage from the Black Sea in Bulgaria and its production filtering through incompatible video standards in Eastern Europe and the US, creates a seemingly meaningless and inarticulate audio-visual structure, a product of “noise” in the translation between two systems. This video work symbolically represents confusion in the mediation between two systems and presents an image of how one system perceives the other. *In the Balkans* is an exotic look from the West directed towards Balkan “gorges”.

III

SALE is a contemporary *mainstream* regime that regulates social relations and has the status of an epistemological category. We get to know the world through “commodity”. Perhaps in eschatological terms this would mean straying from the path of salvation, but an absolute sale of dogma is an imperative under the pressure of the competition of the market of ideas, knowledge, identities, lifestyles, and less abstractly – biological life itself. In capitalist economy, commodification means, among other things, and absence of new contents and concepts, and the exploitation and “repackaging” of old ones. The adjustment of post-socialist countries, following the example of Western neoliberal capitalist economies, also presupposed the ideological process of creating attitudes towards the socialist/Communist heritage: from their demonisation and erasure to today’s hipster revelation and gentrification, as in the example of Moscow’s *hipster-Stalinism*.¹⁰ That is also a commonplace of contemporary depoliticisation of the revolution and the socialist past. The former rigid geopolitical, economic and cultural division of Europe during the Cold War into the First and the Second World of capital endures today in a more flexible mode. This demarcation line is confirmed by, among other things, the economic migrations of people from the East to the West of Europe, the strict immigration policy of the European Union, the *nearsourcing* exploitation of cheap services from neighbouring countries that do not belong to EU (especially in the sphere of information and communication technology and the so-called *creative industries*). The association Apsolutno analyses and comments on this situation in the post-Cold War integration of Europe through the projects *HUMAN* (1996-1999) and *Absolute Sale* (1997-2002). Both projects, be it through intervention in

¹⁰ <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/dec/12/moscow-hipster-stalinism-gentrification-artkvartal-zaryadye-park>

the physical space between the “territory” of Eastern and Western Europe or through the online auction game intended for “buyers” from the West, register the biopolitical aspect of this economy of inequality. The project *HUMAN*, at the same time, refers to the local situation in Serbia in the 1990’s and to the impossibility of moving freely outside the country on account of the sanctions, the visa policy and the centralised control of the EU¹¹. The online pseudo-auction *Absolute Sale* ironises the positions and the relations between the art systems of Eastern and Western Europe. A “buyer” from the West, on the basis of a succession of predictions relying on cultural-racist stereotypes and the future interest of the Western market, buys “blindly” an Eastern European artist who is yet to be born. In the meantime, many of them will die.

The End

Finally, the association Apsolutno describes for us the experience of a protracted end of a utopia, a system and a society. From today’s perspective, their appearance on the local and international scene in the 1990’s and at the beginning of the 21st century left a unique conceptual inventory as a kind of “guide for beginners” through the extreme situations produced by (hyper)capitalism. The imbalance in the recognition of the work (and the pioneering role) of this collective in the international context and on the local scene constitutes a good reason for intervening in *the master narratives* of art history and the policy of visibility and presentation.

11 The Schengen Agreement on free movement was signed by the majority of European countries that are EU members. The signatories of the Schengen Agreement make up the so-called *Schengen zone* (Schengen area). Serbia is not a part of the Schengen Agreement, but is on the Schengen White List today – a list of countries whose citizens may travel to the Schengen zone without visas.

Absolutno fuit hic

BIOGRAFIJA

Asocijacija APSOLUTNO osnovana je 1993. godine u Novom Sadu. Članovi asocijacije su bili Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić (†), Bojana Petrić i Dragan Miletić (član od 1995. do 2001). Od 1995. godine produkcija asocijacije je potpisivana bez navođenja ličnih imena članova, i kolektiv razvija interdisciplinarni proces rada i medijski pluralizam. Naziv asocijacije – apsolutno- je prilog (a ne imenica), te se često pojavljuje u nazivima radova u igri reči sa namerom da se naglase određena značenja.

Produkcija asocijacije APSOLUTNO proistekla je iz vizuelnih umetnosti, da bi se vremenom proširila na interdisciplinarna istraživanja činjenica iz neposrednog okruženja sa ciljem da se otvore mogućnosti njihovog novog iščitavanja. Ovakav istraživački proces bio je otvorenog karaktera i usmeravan na najrazličitije pojave u okruženju. Projekti su se često realizovali na javnim mestima ili lokacijama posebne namene (npr. brodogradilište, most, groblje, granični prelazi itd.), a u zavisnosti od ideje projekta i u različitim formatima: video, štampani materijali, instalacije, akcije, site specific projekti, audio, web projekti, itd.

Svoju produkciju asocijacija APSOLUTNO je prezentovala na brojnim izložbama, festivalima i simpozijumima u zemlji i inostranstvu, uključujući BITEF 96, Beograd; Kwangju Biennial '97, Južna Koreja; OStrannenien festival, Dessau 1997; 44. Festival kratkog i dokumentarnog filma, Beograd; Transmediale, Berlin 1998; ISEA, Liverpool 1998; Wrocław New Media Festival 1999; Media Festival Oberhausen 2000; VIPER Media Festival 2000, Basel; „Inside/Outside“ 2000, Varšava; „Hiroshima Art Document 2000“, Hiroshima, Japan; Tribu' dell'arte, 2001, Rim; TELE[VISIONS], 2001, Beč; EVIDENCE, DVC Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Biennale BigTorino 2002, Torino; Evropsko Bijenale Manifesta 4, Frankfurt; De Appel, Amsterdam; Artists Space, Njujork; itd.

U periodu aktivnog rada asocijacije, paralelno je razvijana i kustoska praksa asocijacije APSOLUTNO kroz realizaciju izložbi drugih autora, grupnih izložbi, seminara i radionica. Za svoj rad asocijacija je nagrađivana (Berlin, San Francisco), njihovi radovi se nalaze u zbirkama Muzeja savremenih umetnosti i kolekcijama privatnih kolekcionara.

Umetnička aktivnost kolektiva prestaje 2005. od kada je iskustvo transferisano i integrisano u nove oblike za kreiranje uslova i propitivanje umetničke produkcije i umetničkog organizovanja (Centar_kuda.org, Novi Sad; VacuumPack, Sombor).

BIOGRAPHY

The association APSOLUTNO was founded in 1993 in Novi Sad. Its members were Zoran Pantelić, Dragan Rakić (†), Bojana Petrić and Dragan Miletić (from 1995 to 2001). Since 1995, the production of the association was signed without referring to the members' personal names, and this collective developed an interdisciplinary work process and a media pluralism. The association's name - apsolutno [absolutely] - was used as an adverb (rather than a noun), and frequently features in the titles of the projects to emphasise certain meanings through word play.

The production of the association APSOLUTNO arose from visual arts, and over time it expanded to include interdisciplinary investigation of facts from their immediate surroundings, with a view to opening up new possibilities for reading them. Such an investigative process was of an open character and focused on very diverse phenomena in the association's surroundings. Their projects were often realised in public places or in locations serving special purposes (for example, a shipyard, a bridge, a cemetery, border crossings, etc.), and depending on the idea of the project, they were realised in various formats: video, printed materials, installations, actions, site specific projects, audio, web projects, etc.

The association APSOLUTNO presented its production in numerous exhibitions, festivals and symposia at home and abroad, including BITEF 96, Belgrade; Kwangju Biennial '97, South Korea; OSTRannen festival, Dessau 1997; The 44th Festival of Short and Documentary Film, Belgrade; Transmediale, Berlin 1998; ISEA, Liverpool 1998; The Wroclaw New Media Festival 1999; The Media Festival Oberhausen 2000; The VIPER Media Festival 2000, Basel; "Inside/Outside" 2000, Warsaw; "Hiroshima Art Document 2000", Hiroshima, Japan; Tribu' dell'arte, 2001, Rome; TELE[VISIONS], 2001, Vienna; EVIDENCE, DVC Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Biennale Big Turin 2002, Turin; The European Biennial Manifesta 4, Frankfurt; De Appel, Amsterdam; Artists' Space, New York; etc.

During the period while the association was active, there was a parallel development of its curatorial practice through the realisation of exhibitions of other authors, group exhibitions, seminars and workshops. The association received awards for its work (Berlin, San Francisco), and its works are to be found in the collections of contemporary art museums and in those of private collectors.

The artistic activity of the collective ceased in 2005, since when its experience has been transferred and integrated in new forms aimed at creating conditions for and examining artistic production and artistic organisation (Centar_kuda.org, Novi Sad; VacuumPack, Sombor).

UMETNIČKA PRODUKCIJA (izbor) SELECTED WORKS

1994

Požurite, poster, Cetinje Biennial (with ŠKART)

1995

PRElom, installation, catalogue, Gallery "Zlatno oko" Novi Sad
Novine, photo action, Riblja pijaca/Fish market, Novi Sad
Absolutely Dead, performance, video, special edition, Shipyard
Novi Sad

Apsolutna anamneza, audio installation, Bijenale akvarela,
Zrenjanin

AZBUKA absolut in Wien, action, exhibition, flyer, Vienna
Ja sam apsolutno svakog trenutka apsolutno ovde, fax action

1996

APOLUTH NIKH, photo action, card, Acropolis, Athens
UPOZORENJE!, installation, Gallery "Andrićev venac", Belgrade
Absolutely temporary, performance, special edition, Novi Sad
Good Evening, video, poster
Human-Covek, photo action, dominos, T-shirt, flyer (1996-1999)
Beograd 00,04, site-specific installation, Oktobarski salon
Belgrade
0004, performance, off-BITEF Festival, Belgrade
VOYAGER 0004, video, flyer
PYRUS COMMUNIS, actions during the civil protest 1996/97
Apsolutno Fuit Hic, label

1997

Good Evening, special edition, Novi Sad
Time Out, photo action, printed matter, Sombor
Le Quattro Stagioni, photo action, cards, special edition, Sombor
Instrumental, audio installation, poster, cards
The Absolute Sale, web project
Tyme Tryeth Troth, site-specific action, Somerset
1/1, video, Vukovar, Croatia
Human-Covek, digital print (1996-1999)

1998

intermezzo, radio project, Radio 021, Novi Sad
Your Card Is Invalid, card, UA!US (United Artists ! Under
Sanctions), with p.RT
Clean/Unclean, card, UA!US (United Artists ! Under Sanctions),
with p.RT
Welcome to the System, stamp, UA!US (United Artists ! Under
Sanctions), with p.RT
In the Balkans, video
The Greatest Hits, CD Rom project

1999

a.trophy, poster, Stop The Violence, Vienna, Academy of Fine Arts
Reality Check, cards/flyer, Centar za Savremenu umetnost
Beograd & Free B92, Belgrade
1999aA0001, video installation, VEAG – Medien facade, Berlin
Willing Refugees, poster, Schloss Puschow/Rostock

2000

Serbeiko, installation, Gallery SULUJ, Belgrade
We Must Accept the Unacceptable, site-specific installation,
Creative Union Hiroshima

2001

Intermezzo, CD ROM project

2002

a.trophy, video installation, flip book, BIG Torino Biennale, Turin
Le Quattro Stagioni, neo gobelin (petit point), Salon MSU/ MOCA
Belgrade

2005

Radio Days, installation, Gallery De Appel, Amsterdam

2006

Book: *The Absolute Report*, ed. by aA, Springerin-Revolver,
Frankfurt Archiv fur aktuelle Kunst, ISBN 3-86588-288-9

IZLOŽBE / PROJEKCIJE / PREZENTACIJE (IZBOR) EXHIBITIONS / SCREENINGS / PRESENTATIONS (SELECTION)

1995

Novi Sad, *Zlatno oko* Gallery, PRElom, installation
Novi Sad, Riblja pijaca, Novine, photo action
Novi Sad, Shipyard Novi Sad, Absolutely Dead, action
Vienna, Absolutely Dead, screening
Vienna, AZBUKA absolut in Wien, Kulturkontakt, exhibition

1996

Belgrade, Cinema Rex, presentation
Novi Sad, *Zlatno oko* Gallery, screening
Belgrade, SKC Gallery, exhibition & screening
Schrattenberg, art symposium, presentation
Mostar, Simpozijum 4. LUR, presentation
Belgrade, Cinema Rex, OFF BITEF, performance
Budapest, C3-Center for Culture and Communication,
presentation

1997

Vienna, Secession, production O.R.F., exhibition
Thessaloniki, Yugoslav Contemporary Art, exhibition
Belgrade, Ubistvo, Annual exhibition SCCA
Gent, Experimental Intermedia Gallery, exhibition
Dortmund, MeX, Kunsterhaus, presentation
Sarajevo, Simpozijum 5. LUR, presentation
Schrattenberg, Art Symposium, Flaschenpost
Nettlecombe Studios, Shave Farm '97, Somerset
Kwangju, '97 Kwangju Biennial, installation
Linz, Ars Electronica Center, Syndicate Netshop
Graz, Steirischen Herbst '97, Neue Galerie, Graz: 2000 minus 3,
ArtSpace plus Interface
Cape Town, Michaelis Art Gallery
Belgrade, "Exces..." , Beograd Gallery
Brno, Gallery FaVU VUT, Hi-Tech
Belgrade, Cinema Rex, The Absolute Sale
Sombor, Laza Kostić Gallery
Ljubljana, Š.O.U. Kapelica Gallery
Dessau, The International Electronic Media Forum OSTranenie 97
Dortmund, Kunsterhaus Dortmund, I Dortmunder
KunstSupermarkt

1998

Belgrade, „Kritičari su izabrali“, Galerija kulturnog centra Beograda
Budapest, Film Center “Balazs Bela Studio” – Cinema Toldi
Sofia, Galerija strane umetnosti
Varna, Prezentacija projekata, TED Gallery, Bugarska
Seattle, “Independent Exposure”, Seattle Independent Film & Video Consortium
Plovdiv, VideoArt Festival
Belgrade, Gallery Grafički kolektiv, “Grifon”
Schrattenberg, Intermedia Symposium, “2000”
London, Backspace, screening
Liverpool/Manchester, ISEA98, Revolution98
Berlin, Galerie i.f.a., “Focus Belgrad”
London, Pandaemonium Festival, London’s Festival of the Moving Image
Novi Sad, VideoMedeja Festival
Pula, Prezentacija projekata, INK
St. Petersburg, “Balkan answer”, Yugoslav Video Art

1999

Berlin, Internacionalni media festival “Transmediale 99”
Belgrade, TGH, Cinema Rex, B-92
Paris, VIA Festival # 5
Barcelona, MECAD, 2nd International Show of Art in CD-ROM
Berlin, “mikro.lounge”, “Small and alternative media in and around (ex-)YU”
Budapest, Cinema Toldi, ex-YU video
Wroclaw, WRO99 – Media Art Biennale
Graz, Galerie Raum fur Kunst, „Stop the War“
Paris, “Off Tracks International Meetings” (Berlin-Pariz) Video festival
Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste
Berlin, Shift Gallery – “shift-tage”
Graz, Forum Stadtpark – “Stirring, streaming, dreaming”
Vienna, Basis Wien, TGH CD Rom
Vienna, MAK – Stop the Violence
Munich, MEDIENFORUM, Literaturhaus
Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Reality Check, Centar za savremenu umetnost Beograd & Free B92
Berlin, VEAG Medien Fassade
Sofia, Video Festival “Videoarcheology”
Helsinki, Kiasma Museum
Dessau, Bauhaus-Dessau, “Apsolutno – Interventions In The Urban Space”
Dessau, Bauhaus-Dessau, “The Semiotics of Confusion”
Berlin, Mikro.lounge #19, WMF Club
Rotterdam, WHIPPET – Deunde Fudation
Maastricht, Jan van Eyck Academie – “en/passant 99” programme
Plüschow, art-in-residence Schloss Plüschow,
Vienna, Muzej Moderne umetnosti – Palais Liechtenstein
Belgrade, Video Art in Serbia, SCCA – Centar za savremenu umetnost

2000

Belgrade, Gallery SULUJ, Centar za savremenu umetnost
Berlin, Transmediale 2000 – international media festival
Oberhausen, 46 International Film Festival
Manchester, DADI Center, Yugoslav Art
Belgrade, 47 Festival Short and Documentary Film
Graz, Rotor – association for contemporary art, UA!US

Enschede, Dutch Art Institute

Amsterdam, Montevideo – Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst, Media Art in Serbia
Ljubljana, ŠKUC Gallery, “MSE – Project”, Meaddle-South-East Project, Rotor-Graz
Hiroshima, Creative Union Hiroshima, “Hiroshima Art Document 2000”
Belgrade, Škola za teoriju i istoriju umetnosti, CCAB
Warsaw, Zacheta Gallery,
Basel, VIPER – International Festival Film Video and New Media
Berlin, Akademie der Künste, „Dosije Srbija. Procena stvarnosti ‘90-tih”
Vienna, Technical Museum, World-Information.Org, Public Netbase
Parnu, 3. International offline@online Media Art Festival, “dig_in_time”
Tirana, Piramye and ICC, Exhibition In/Out

2001

Munich, “inSITEout” Lothringer 13/ halle Gallery
Pluschow / Rostock, “Willing Refugees” Kunsthalle Rostock
Umag, “Zero_Absolute_The Real”, Gallery Marino Cettina
Roma, Tribu’ dell’arte, Galleria Comunale d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Roma
Belgrade, BELEF, Dysfunctional places / Displaced functionalities
Berlin, Akademie der Künste, Dossier Serbien: Einschätzung der Wirklichkeit der neunziger Jahre
Barcelona, Macba, Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona
Hong Kong, CGI 2001 Media Art Track
Graz, Forum Stadtpark Gallery, Steirische herbst
Vienna, TELE[VISIONS], Kunsthalle Wien
Munich, Make-World Festival 0YES, Muffat Halle
Skopje, Understanding the Balkans, Center for Contemporary Art

2002

Herceg Novi, Salon 2002
Nizhny Novgorod, PolyScreen, MediaArtLab-Moskva, SCCA
Moscow, Structures Of Art, Polenov House, SCCA,
Turin, BigTorino 2002, Art Biennale
Frankfurt, Manifesta 4, evropski bijenale
Zagreb, Urbani Festival, BLOK
Montreal, Champ Libre – Cite des Ondes
Novi Sad, MSLU, “Central European avant-garde aspects of Vojvodina 1920-2000”
Belgrade, “Absolute Report”, Salon muzeja savremene umetnosti, Beograd
Amsterdam, World-Information.Org

2003

Belgrade, Izložba World Information.Org, MSUB
Vienna, Open Cultures, Vienna, Austria
Belgrade, International Danube Conference on Art and Culture
Skopje, ARF Strategy, Center for Contemporary Art
Novi Sad / Belgrade, Word-Information.Org, Public Netbase to
Vienna, Kunsthalle Wien, Attack! Art and War in the Media Age
Wroclaw, GLOBALICA, WRO 03, 10th International Media Art Biennale

2004

New York, Artists Space Gallery, Exhibition Flipside
Munich, NEURO, Networking Europe: Make World festival

2005

Amsterdam, De Appel Gallery, Radio Days
Dortmund, Phoenix Halle Dortmund
Stuttgart, WKV-Wuerttemberg Kunst Verein, „On Difference# 1“
Belgrade, Museum of Contemporary Art Beograd, Serbian Art in the 90s: 1989-2001
2006
New York, Symposium “Cities, Art and Recovery”, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council
Vienna, Galerie ArtPoint, Book The Absolute Report
Belgrade, Salon MSUB, “I love you”, Digitalcraft.org, Frankfurt
Frankfurt, *Dictionary of War*, Staedelschule Frankfurt
Graz, Galerie Medien KunstLabor, Media Ontology

2007

Paris, Jeu de Paume, International symposium

2008

Kyiv, Center for Contemporary Art Kiev, lecture and workshop
Doneck, Center for Contemporary Art Kiev, lecture and workshop
Minneapolis, Galerija Midway Gallery, “Media ontology”
Novi Sad, Festival Videomedeja, Pop Video

2009

Vienna, Simposium „Kulturen der Differenz. Transformationen in Zentraleuropa nach 1989 – Transdisziplinäre Perspektiven“, Vienna University
Belgrade, Media archaeology and Visual Art in Serbia in 1990s', CZKD

2011

Berlin, Spaceship Yugoslavia, Galerie Arsenal

2013

Belgrade, Salon MSUB, “Video, television, anticipation”, exhibition
Novi Sad, Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, “Tehnologija narodu”, exhibition

2014

Novi Sad, Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, “Tehnologija narodu”, presentation
Zagreb, MSU, “Video, television, anticipation”, presentation & screening

PERFORMANCES

The anatomy class by professor Branko Andrić, Hedonia Festival, Lomodepot, Vienna, 1995.
0004, off – BITEF, Belgrade, 1996.
Kleine Suiten für Scheifling, Merzweckbau 96, Schratzenberg, 1996.

THEATRE / TEATAR

Zmijin svlak, Slobodan Šnajder, režija/director: Bojan Đorđević, CZKD, Belgrade, video “Serbeiko” i “Good Evening”, 2001.

VIDEO PRODUCTION

Absolutely Dead (7 min), APSOLUTNO, 1995.
Good Evening (8 min), SKC, Novi Sad & KulturKontakt, Austria 1996.
Voyager 0004 (9 min), SKC, Novi Sad 1996.

1/1 (15 min), SKC, Novi Sad 1997.

In the Balkans (2.5 min), APSOLUTNO, 1998.

Serbeiko (2.5 min), APSOLUTNO & CCA Beograd, 2000.

a.trophy (55 min), APSOLUTNO, 2002.

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