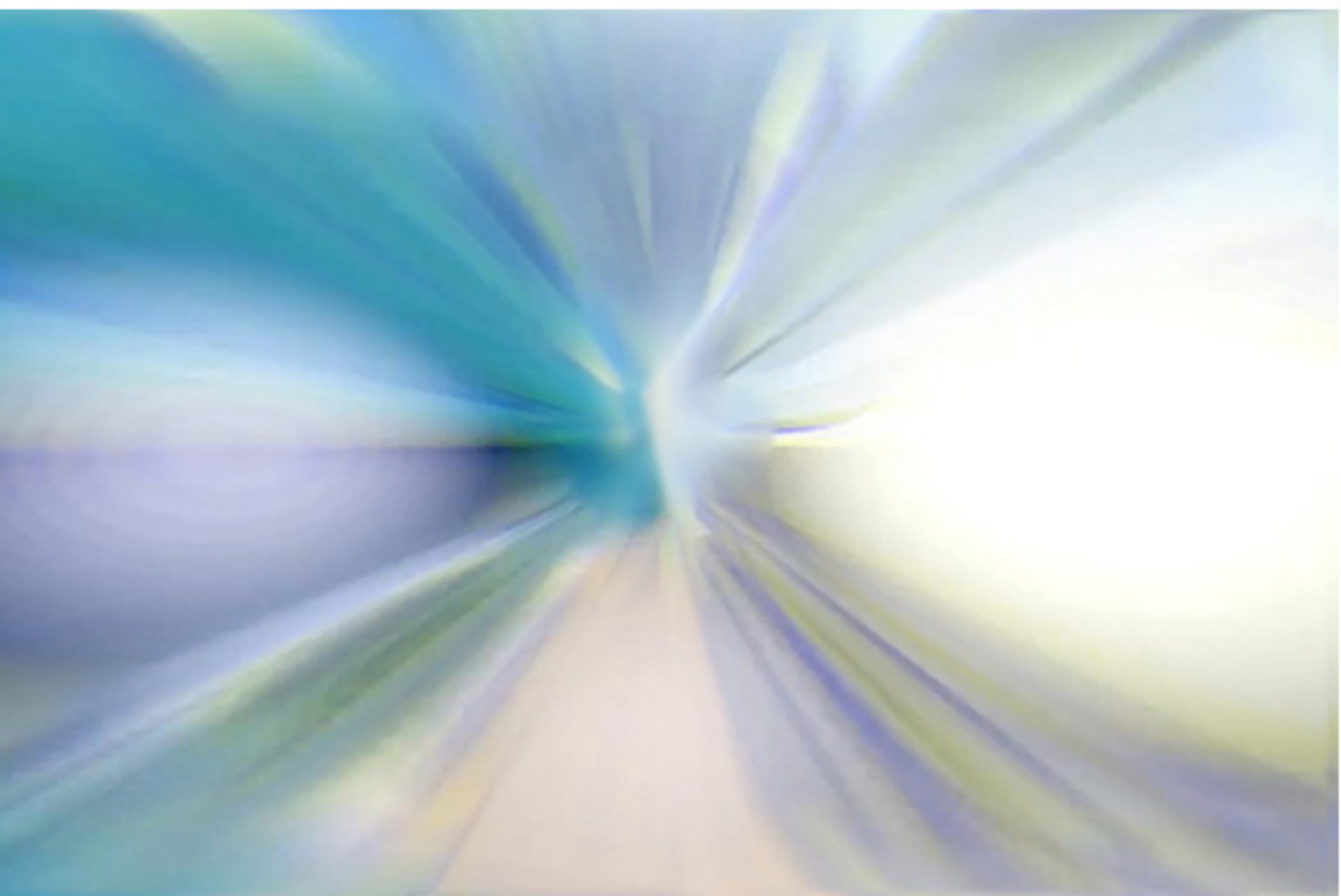


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UVOD

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Korona, bilješke

1.

Gotovo svuda samo jedna vijest: korona. Pandemija.

Odjednom se sve promijenilo. Gotovo sve oko nas, mnogo toga i u nama. Svijet se promijenio. U doba pandemije kovida postao jedan. Nažalost, nakratko i samo u nesreći, ali barem tada.

2.

Još uvijek svako jutro krenem uz ulicu, u šetnju ili kupovinu. Izbjegavam autobus. Sve je manje svijeta na ulici, tišina sve veća, sve češće svi kontaktiramo s drugima samo telefonom ili novim elektroničkim sredstvima komuniciranja. Ljudi kupuju više nego ikad, ali samo hranu i higijenske potrepštine. I u prodavaonicama manje osmijeha, manje ljubaznosti nego ranije. Atmosfera me neobično podsjeća, mada samo u naznakama, na onu u Sarajevu na nekoliko dana pred rat. Doduše, ovdje, u Londonu, sve je pod kontrolom, radnje rade, nitko ih ne pljačka, ali je neprijatelj svuda oko nas. Premjer umiruje stanovništvo, poduzete su mjere, bit će hrane, lijekova, sve što stanovništvu treba, premda će, naglašava, nažalost biti žrtava. To je svakako opreznije od Izetbegovićeve izjave da rata u Bosni neće biti. Na vijestima gotovo samo govore o pandemiji korona virusa. Savjeti, kao i pred rat, bez naročite učinkovitosti. Ljudi su i prije prali ruke, i prije stariji nisu izlazili kada se prehlade ili imaju temperaturu. Ali, sada su "stariji građani" postali opasnost. Vidim i sam kako mi se izmiču na ulici, čak i mladi snagatori misle da sam opasan, nisu kada sam bio mlad. Umnoženi strahovi stvaraju kolektivnu paranoju. Ponovo su se razmahale i stare rasne predrasude, ovaj put usmjerene prema ovdašnjim Kinezima, u čijoj četvrti sada gotovo nikoga. Starijima se sugerira da ne izlaze iz kuće. Možda bi trebali na javnim mjestima (premda nikome nije mnogo do njih) napisati "Zabranjeno za starije od 60"! Ali, sada već izgleda da je to bila samo nada. Ne umiru samo stari, nego svi, svugdje, u svim klimatskim okolnostima. Mnogi govore, kao i ja, da je ova ofenziva smrtonosnog virusa slična ratu. Ali, u ratu znaš s kim ratuješ. Ovaj neprijatelj je mnogo opasniji. Nevidljivi, nijemi neprijatelj. Na sve strane, u svakome. Nitko ne zna kako se od njega možemo potpuno zaštititi, ni kada će i gdje napasti. U ratu sam sebi govorio da smrt dođe brzo; sada ponovo mislim, sebe tješim: ni u najgorem slučaju umiranje od ovog virusa ne traje dugo. Kao i u ratu, sada bi svako mogao ispričati svoju priču. I u tom pogledu isti osjećaj kao u ratu: čemu o tome govoriti, kada je svaka osobna nesreća nesreći bližnjeg slična. A pomoći možemo teško i sebi samima. Nego se nadati, neće dugo. Na ovaj ili onaj način, neće sigurno dugo. I opet sve više mislim o ljudskoj nemoći u odnosu na prirodu, u kojoj se oduvijek potencijalno postojalo svako dobro, ali i sve opasnosti, koje se povremeno razbude, pomalo fatalistički mislim o nekoj tajnovitoj sili, koja uspostavlja svoj red, mislim o onome što nam još nije znano, a utiče na naše sudbine. Koja ni u najbolja vremena ne ovisi samo o nama.

3.

Ljudi kupuju, sve što vide od hrane i pića kupuju. Sjećanje na rat: svaka konzerva koja nije bila pojedena i poslije rata bila bačena oteta je od nekoga tko je umro od gladi i iscrpljenosti.

4.

Korona Virus je učinio jednu dobru stvar: razbudio je našu svijest o kozmosu, o nuždi sklada s logosom stvari, brizi o okolišu i potrebi suradnje s prirodom, a samoj prirodi pomogao da se oslobodi prljavštine. Nadam se da u tu prljavštinu ne spada i ljudska vrsta.

5.

Moj strepnja piše tekst u doba pandemije virusa korona. Naslovih ga Post-borgesovska tiskara. Tekst mi nije objavljen u Oslobođenju. S glasilom sam dugo surađivao, to mi se po prvi put dogodilo. Možda s pravom nisu htjeli objaviti tekst, jer je bio obeshrabrujući. Bilo bi to ranjavanje ranjenih. Mračne tekstove ljudi čitaju kada im je dobro, kao što gledaju filmove strave i užasa kada nije oko njih stvarna prijetnja i opasnost. A sada bi trebao pisati samo nešto vedro, nešto što se otima smrti. Tekst sam ipak sačuvao, onda ga poslao Jergoviću, on ga odmah objavio i na svom FB zidu napravio ovaj komentar: „Predrag Finci je napisao priču koju možete pročitati na dva načina. Kao priču o zbilji, jer je tako napisana: i priča će vas malkice ubiti u pojam. Kao borhesovski artefakt, jer je i tako napisana: i priča će vas oduševiti. Pa izvolite, čitajte .”

6.

Rijetko sam dolazio u dućan na uglu iako mi je najbliži kući. Nije u dućanu bilo mnogo proizvoda, tek poneki kupac, gazda uvijek namršten, jedva i pozdravi. Od kada je nastala pandemija, u radnji gužva, na njegovom licu se konačno pojavio osmijeh.

7.

Takvo doba: mislim sve bi moglo biti još gore, nadam se najboljem. Ljudi se ujedinili, nestale podjele, utihnule mržnje, nitko ne sluša maloumne političare, svi nastoje pomoći koliko mogu. Pa pomislim: dobri su ljudi. A onda, sa uvijek prisutnom sumnjom, pomislim i: kakvi su to ljudi kada samo pred opasnošću postaju bolji? A neki, što je posebno razočaravajuće, baš tada još gori. Srećom, oni dobri još bolji.

8.

Htio bih da ne pišem o koroni, a ne znam mogu li o ičemu drugom. Iz nekoliko razloga. Ne mogu, jer je to najveći problem s kojim se u ovom trenutku svi suočavamo. Svjetske zdravstvene organizacije i mediji na sve strane oglašavaju: „Stanovnici svih zemalja, čuvajte se”. Kovid 19 je postao zajednička briga i tema svijeta. U svijetu u kojem živim, u Velikoj Britaniji do te mjere da predstojeći „Brexit” nije naročito ili barem ne toliko važna vijest, iako će i to trajno utjecati na ovdašnji život. Nitko postignutim sporazumom nije zadovoljan, ni oni koji su bili za, ni oni koji su bili protiv ovog razlaza. A i kako bi bili, kada se sva ta priča oko britanskog napuštanja EU otprilike svela na to da će ljudska prava u još uvijek ujedinjenom kraljevstvu biti manja, nesigurnost ništa manja nego ranije, radni ugovori manje pravedni, prispjeli ilegalni emigranti u još težoj poziciji nego ranije, a sve cijene barem nekoliko postotaka više. Ljudi ipak trenutno mnogo više brinu o pandemiji i prinudnoj izolaciji, nego o političkoj i ekonomskoj budućnosti zemlje. Sada je već registriran i mutirani virus, pa su neke zemlje prekinule zračne veze sa Otokom. Koji postaje Otok u svakom pogledu.

9.

Bilo bi, naravno, nerazumno praviti se kao da problema pandemije korone nema, bez obzira što mislimo o njegovim uzrocima. Uvijek kada neka prijetnja nadvije ona postaje prva briga i nerazumno, a i nemoralno bi bilo ne voditi o njoj računa.

U demokratski ustrojenim zemljama političari uglavnom nastoje da se biračkom tijelu dopadnu, rjeđe da svoje ideje nametnu. Prvi su često bliski kratkovidnom populizmu, drugi lako mogu početi nalikovati zlokobnom političkom totalitarizmu, pa radije savjetuju nego što napadno sugeriraju i zahtijevaju. A u trenutnoj situaciji i konzervativci i oni skloni liberalizmu ipak moraju da se ponašaju kao zastupnici „nanny state”. Zato vlada upozorava da nas vakcina, barem za nekoliko sljedećih mjeseci, neće spasiti, a oni koji su skloni teorijama zavjere dokazuju da će nas vakcina sve uništiti. No, ako je smrt svakako blizu, bolje je probati odgoditi, možda vakcina pomogne.

10.

Sjećam se kako mi je davno jedan dugogodišnji političar rekao da u doba katastrofa političari neometano mogu sprovesti mnoge nepopularne mjere. Tako su gotovo neprimjetno prošle sve nove političke odluke, odobravane sve vrste ograničenja, a nije puno nemira izazvalo podizanje cijena prehrambenih artikala i lokalnih taksi. Naravno, sadašnja vlast će platiti svoje rukovođenje ovom „zdravstvenom krizom”, jer će biti optužena za sve negativne posljedice, a njene posljedice će sigurno biti ogromne, najprije zdravstvene (a tu će, rekao bih, više štete biti na psihološkom nego na fizičkom planu), potom posljedice na planu društvenih odnosa, a ekonomska šteta je već očigledna.

I doista, mnogi su se već navikli na svijet bez kontakata, knjižnica, kina, kazališta, bez kulturnih navika i predali preživljavanju od danas do sutra, u kojem je najvažnije da ima hrane i vode, drugo ih baš briga. Mrak je već stigao. Pred ovogodišnje božićne i novogodišnje blagdane mnogi su napustili velike gradove, London posebno, kao da su u strahu bježali od smrti ili se nadali da će u nekom dalekom mjestu sa svojim bližnjima biti sigurniji. Oni kojima je ova prisilna odijeljenost od svijeta dodijala, postavljaju radikalna pitanja o osobnoj slobodi. Imamo li pravo na smrt? Jesam li slobodan umrijeti ako mi nije do mene samog u ovom vremenu skućenog života? Ili, manje radikalno, imam li pravo riskirati i živjeti na vlastitu odgovornost? Ali, onda dolazi pitanje granica vlastite slobode, jer mi nismo slobodni da svojim odlukama i ponašanjem ugrožavamo Drugog i štetimo bližnjima. Nemoralno bi bilo i izlagati druge riziku ili ne brinuti o njima, ma koliko mislili da je odbacivanje „zaštitnih mjera” pravo slobodne ljudske jedinice, jer nismo slobodni ugrožavati druge. A tu je u pitanju i etičko držanje svakog od nas. Tada se vraćamo onim načelima koja su formulirana već u antička vremena, a koja nas upozoravaju da su medicinska (zdravstvena) pitanja u sprezi sa etičkim pitanjima. I da je solidarnost nužna ako hoćemo da se izbavimo iz teške situacije, pa i iz ove u kojoj smo. Tek nakon toga može doći do „svođenja računa” na svim nivoima. Na političkom planu prije svega, jer će to postati prvo pitanje: što ste i kako činili u doba pandemije?

11.

Sinoć na BBC 4 snimak briljantne predstave Ujka Vanja, malo osuvremenjena drama A. P. Čehova. Prava drama za kraj ove godine: Čehovljevi prigušeni humor, njegovi ranjeni junaci, njegov tugaljivi optimizam. Majstorska režija, briljantna gluma (treba li to uopće reći kada su u pitanju londonska pozorišta/kazališta), svaka uloga sjajno donesena. Na kraju se pogase svjetla. Glumci pozdravili jedni druge. Predstava završena. Nema aplauza, prazna sala. Korona.

12.

Moj susjed, s kojim ponekad pijem kavu, zna da se bavim filozofijom. Ne znam što on pod filozofijom podrazumijeva, ali mi se po njegovom pitanjima čini da on pod filozofima podrazumijeva neke „**stručnjake opće prakse**”, koji imaju odgovore na sva pitanja. Zato me svaki čas pita o nečemu drugom. U zadnje vrijeme samo o **koroni**, a tome odmah uslijedi pitanje kada će kavane početi raditi kao nekada, hoćemo li moći uskoro bez brige otići na po jednu.

O tome ponešto kažem, ali za razliku od sveznalica koje se na sve strane oglašavaju pod raznim pseudonimima sa izvještajima iz svojih fantazija, ne znam mnogo. **Imam mnogo više pitanja, nego odgovora.**

Tvrđnja u filozofiji mora biti dobro utemeljena, razložna i argumentirana. U njoj ne smije biti **brzopletosti**. Je li refleksiji nužna distanca u promišljanju problema i fenomena? Nužno joj je odstojanje od osobnog interesa, od samog predmeta interesa, a i vremensko odstojanje. Može li

onda filozofija odgovoriti na izazov trenutka? Iskustvo uči mišljenju. Mislimo situaciju, a situacija uvjetuje mišljenje. Ne diktira mišljenje iskustvo, nego **iskustvo mišljenje**. Jedno je ono što sam o ratu mislio za vrijeme rata, pogotovo dok sam ratu izravno svjedočio i ratne nedaće osjećao, a drugo što danas o ratu mislim. Kada pomislim na rat i danas je u meni isti osjećaj, ali sada malo bolje znam zašto je rat bio. Spoznaja mijenja našu predodžbu. Što je potpunija, naša slika problema o kojem mislimo je cjelovitija. Barem mislimo i vjerujemo: jasnija.

U promišljanju određenog fenomena postavljamo najprije pitanje što je taj fenomen u određenoj situaciji i potom što je fenomen sam po sebi. Fenomen najprije opisujemo, onda počinjemo analizirati, razumijevati, tumačiti, uistinu spoznavati. Za sada našu novu, planetarnu nevolju, pandemiju korone, samo opisujemo. I pokušavamo razabrati što su joj uzroci.

U slučaju korone sam fenomen je lako identificiran, čak i vizualno predstavljen. Odmah je izbilo pitanje: **otkud ova napast?** Do sada smo dobili tri vrste odgovora-hipoteza: korona je rad prirode; ljudsko djelo (virus proizveden u laboratoriju) ili volja više sile (sudbine ili samog Boga).

Ova posljednja tvrdnja se ipak najmanje spominje, jer bi time Svevišnjem bile pripisane zle namjere, zloća, što većina vjernika ne može prihvatiti, jer bi takva heretična misao vodila raskidanju saveza s Bogom i pripisivanje sotoninih namjera Svevišnjem. O tome da je u pitanju priroda govore oni koji su skloni osuvremenjenoj verziji Malthusovih stajališta, po kojima sama priroda vodi računa o ravnoteži i harmoniji, pa je došlo vrijeme da se oslobodi suviška. Ni ova biološki ideja nije previše u opticaju. Oni pak koji su bliski „teorijama zavjere” i svojim vlastitim fantazijama, a najčešće pomažu u širenju panike i udovoljavaju vlastitom nezadovoljstvu, ponajviše vjeruju u moćne demone, otjelovljene u liku pojedinih znanstvenika ili političara, koji nam spremaju propast.

Na sve načine ljudi nastoje naći neki zadovoljavajući odgovor na ovu novu infekciju. No, mi sa svojim udesom potencijalno odavno, zapravo oduvijek živimo. Živimo sa svojom ranjivošću, izloženošću, smrtnošću. I bez prethodnih upozorenja i iskustava, *a priori* znamo za postojanje smrtonosnih virusa, infekcija i bolesti, ali se nismo pripremili. Mnoge, posebno razvijene zemlje su mnogo više uložile u naoružanje (tako bespomoćno u borbi protiv stvarne opasnosti, a ipak ugroženo stanovništvo rijetko spominje te nepotrebne izdatke), nego u znanost, u medicinu posebno.

Uz sve pretpostavke, nisu nam još uvijek znane sve okolnosti. Zato ni uzroke još ne možemo s dovoljno pouzdanja označiti. To je trenutno stanje. Poslije će **svi biti „pametni”**, poslije će se javiti oni koji su „oduvijek znali”, to na sav glas dokazivati. Kao i uvijek.

Govorimo o fenomenu koji nam samo kao oblik nije znan, premda nam je znana bolest kao takva. Govorimo o razvoju korone u njenom pojavljivanju. Mislimo o prisutnoj opasnosti koju svakojaka nagađanja nisu učinila manje nepoznanicom. Ono što je već vrlo jasno jest da opasnost po tijelo kao i uvijek postaje i opasnost po duh, po psihičko stanje subjekta, i da kao i uvijek inficirani duh razara

tijelo. A to jasno pokazuje da je naše postojanje ugroženo. Najprije je nastala ugroza pojedinca, onda problem komunikacije, a iz toga prijete opasnost samoj egzistenciji, koja će u „novom nenormalnom” sigurno doživjeti neugodne transformacije.

U nas je o koroni s filozofske točke najviše pisao **prof. Hrvoje Jurić**. Njegova knjiga, koja je po mojim informacijama već spremna, unijet će novo svjetlo u ovaj tamni fenomen. Meni taj fenomen nije jasan, pa bih za ovu priliku najradije parafrazirao čuvenu Marxovu završnu “Tezu o Feuerbachu”: Filozofi su do sada različito tumačili koronu. Radi se o tome da se korone oslobodimo.

Diskutiranje o urgentnim i dramatičnim situacijama bilo je vrlo prisutno u **filozofiji egzistencijalizma**. U njoj je upozoravano: filozofija se mora suočiti sa aktualnim problemima. Mora odgovoriti na izazove situacije, na izazove svog vremena. Oni donose one probleme i pitanja o kojima je nužno misliti. Otud, iz filozofije egzistencijalizma dolazi i prvi odgovor što nam je činiti: brinuti i odgovarati na moralna pitanja. Ako taj filozofski zadatak malo pojednostavim, onda ću mojem susjedu moći reći da najprije moramo brinuti jedan o drugom, jer je ljudska solidarnost prvi uvjet spasa u svakoj nevolji. Reći ću mu: „We will stick together!”. Ako on kaže „Separately”, i to će biti u skladu s ovdašnjom tradicijom, a i „**novim nenormalnim**”.

13.

Moje postojanje dokazuje Drugi. Bez Drugog koji potvrđuje moju egzistenciju moje stajalište je bezvrijedni solipsizam. Bez iskustva i svjedočanstva Drugog moja egzistencija nije stvarna egzistencija. U tome bi se složila većina filozofa, pogotovo onih koji su bliski filozofiji egzistencije, egzistencijalizmu i neomarksizmu. Moje postojanje dokazuje susret, komunikacija, interakcija. U doba pandemije virusa odjednom se sve izmijenilo. Da parafraziram slavnu Sartreovu riječ: Drugi je Korona. Društvo je mjesecima postojalo samo još u virtualnom prostoru. Baš kao što su mi u djetinjstvu u bajkama koje sam čitao ili gledao bili stvarni junaci tih bajki, iako ih nigdje osim u imaginaciji nisam susretao, tako se u doba „društvene izolacije” ono što mi je do jučer bila stvarnost polako udaljavalo od mene i postajalo moguće samo kao virtualna stvarnost, kao stvarnost koju stvarna gesta više ne dokazuje. Nastao je svijet bez razmjene, zajedničke djelatnosti, bez dodira, bez tjelesnosti. Samo riječ i slika, čija značenja znam i koja osjećam na osnovu ranijih iskustava, na osnovu onoga što je sada bilo sve manje moguće. Što takvo stanje bude duže trajalo, ono što mi je do nedavno bila stvarnost postajat će mi sve dalje, sve manje stvarno. Mogli bismo uskoro postati jedni drugima potpuno imaginarna bića.

Svijet je barem na neko vrijeme postao nedjelatni svijet. Svijet u kojem se preporučuje, a ponegdje i naređuje izolacija, svijet pasivnosti, svijet bez produktivnosti, privremeni svijet obamrlosti. U takvom svijetu je još jedino smrt stvarna, a i ona se pretvorila samo u navođenje statističkih podataka. Ljudi je, kažu, svakako previše, i da ih milijarda ostane bit će ih opet puno, previše (pri takvom računanju svako računa da će preživjeti, umrijet će drugi!), a ovo

doba njihovog prinudnog odsustva dokazuje da su samo balast prirodi: čak ni u ogromnom Londonu nema nesnosne buke, zrak je čišći, voda ponovo pitka, priroda ljepša nego ikada. Korona je ugrozila ljudsku vrstu, a pomogla prirodi. Iz toga može biti izvedena deprimirajuća poduka.

Ali, svijet neće moći biti zadugo takav. Nestat će hrane, presušiti izvori, ni struja ne može zauvijek, sve će prestati sa radom, pa i naše elektroničke spravice, proizvodnja i snabdijevanje će zamrijeti, a ni politika više neće biti moguća, osim kao kontrola i teror. Sve više mislim da su distopijski romani bili djela realista. Iako sam oduvijek bio optimist i jedan od preostalih zagovornika utopije, ono što iskusih u krajnjim situacijama potvrđuje mi da ono što je loše uglavnom bude još gore. Zato previše ne vjerujem da će biti bolje, ne vjerujem ni u naglo sticanje svijesti o okolišu i nuždi pravednijeg društva. U doba korone razbudila se nada u bolji svijet. Ali, brzo će opet doći naša kukavna stvarnost. Ljudska priroda se teško mijenja i većina će se vratiti svojim starim navikama. Čak strahujem da bi egoizam lako mogao postati dominantno moralno načelo. Iz krajnjih situacija malo što pozitivno nastane, a mnogo dobrog nestane. Pandemija korona virusa omogućila je postojanje svjetskog dobrovoljnog zatočeništva. U njemu su oni u samoći sve više sami, oni u daljini još dalji. Što duže bude ovo stanje trajalo, vlastodršci mogu biti sve skloniji despotizmu i porobljavanju. Već su se posvuda pokazali efikasnim samo u donošenju i sprovođenju restriktivnih mjera, a potom „popuštanja”. I u jednom i u drugom slučaju bez dovoljno utemeljenih obrazloženja. Odjednom je postalo bjelodano da je u svakoj postojećoj državi politička vrhuška nekompetentna, svaka odluka političara problematična, a naša sloboda zapravo „uvjetna sloboda”, koja može biti ukinuta „u slučaju potrebe”. Ovi privremeni a za to neovlašteni čuvari naših života morali bi misliti da odgovor na nastalu neslobodu lako može biti nekontrolirana i nezaustavljiva erupciji bijesa. Stvarnost je još tu, samo se primirila. Ideja slobode nije nestala. A opasnosti je mnogo. Ako ne budu pronađena efikasna i dugotrajna rješenja, onda bi se moglo desiti da počne dominirati stvarnost „prirodne selekcije”, okrutno doba preživljavanja najjačih, atavizam koji je latentno uvijek bio prisutan, koji bi mogao postati svijet spašenih a svakojakim frustracijama upropaštenih ljudskih kreatura. Pogibelji koje stoje pred čovječanstvom mnogo su veće od trenutne ugroze pandemije. U opasnost je svijet kakav smo poznavali. Što je sada postala naša stvarnost saznat ćemo brzo, čim se odmaknemo od naših elektroničkih spravica, a na još jasniji način kada virus nestane.

Danas je mnogo tekstova o pandemiji, a malo jasnih vizija. Najčešće su ti tekstovi opisivanje općih mjesta, neuvjerljivo mistificiranje, neosnovano spekuliranje, fantaziranje ili neznanje o virusu. Ostalo su više ili manje zanimljivi osobni dojmovi i poneko potresno svjedočanstvo. A nama nadasve treba jasan, učinkovit odgovor, uputa „Što da se radi?” u doba pandemije. I kako iz nje izaći. Sve drugo je povlađivanje užasu, sijanje straha, dokaz neznanja, priča u prazno i produživanje neželjenog stanja.

Znanje i moć su odavno, još u Baconovoj filozofiji, izjednačavani. Točnom se sada pokazuje i obrnuta tvrdnja, po kojoj je neznanje nemoć. Ono što ne znamo o virusu koji hara, kao i o raznim bolestima i infekcijama koje nas tek očekuju, čini nas nemoćnim pred opasnošću i izloženima pogibelji. Zato su nam potrebni jasni odgovori. O svakom problemu kompetentno može govoriti samo onaj koji razumije prirodu problema. Zato u ovom trenutku najradije slušam znanstvenike. Pragmatičnost, racionalizam i etičko držanje nužni su u svakoj krizi, pa i ovoj. Pri čemu je za svakog važno da i u teškim časovima krize i trenutne pandemije sačuva svijest o svojim pravima i sebi samom, a i altruističku brigu o bližnjima. U tome spasonosna može biti samo solidarnost i pravičnost. Ono što je sada i uvijek nadalje potrebno jest etičnost u pristupu sveprisutnoj opasnosti. Da upotrijebim jedan starinski, ali barem nekima još uvijek znakovit izraz: humanizam.

14.

Nova vremena: danas se u Ljubljani završava simpozij na kojem sam učestvovao, sutra otvaram skup o medijima i ludilu u Beogradu, iza nedjelje ću biti na skupu u Zagrebu, a iz kuće nisam mrdnuo! Navikavam se na novu situaciju, a ne bih da postane mojom prirodom. I neće, dokle god se nadam i dok me moja veselost ne napušta. Vraćam se iz samotne šetnje i zapisujem:

Nedjeljni korona haiku

Nigdje kola, nigdje raje.

Samo baje.



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Bits and Pieces: Experiences of Social Reality in the Midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Abstract

Covid19-pandemic has had a profound impact on the way we live and on the social reality in the world around us. Except for the enormous strain on public and health of individuals, it has affected social functioning to great extent, at least temporarily. It has sped up digitalization and forced social activities to transfer to the digital realm to an unprecedented level. It has simultaenously confined social actors to their geographical localities. In all of this, it has offered an opportunity of different observational point of human being in the world in the context of late modernity. It is possible to assume that this kind of social situation has the potential to affect the sense of ontological security of social actors, as well as their experience of space. The contradictory implications of the transfer of the social activitiy to the digital communicative spaces to current extent are also discussed.

Key words: *pandemic, ontological security, late modernity, digital media.*

The COVID19-pandemics functions as the situation which throws us out of the ordinary social functioning. With its massive shutdown of social activity, its disruption of the functioning of the interconnected expert systems basic to social functioning in late modernity, as well as its transference of social activity to the sphere of digital communication channels it disrupts the usual social routines that are constitutive of our social reality. It can therefore affect our sense of ontological security. This can be connected to the rise of the feelings of anxiety. What we rely on for our everyday functioning is a sense of ontological security - Anthony Giddens posits this sense as a sense of stability and continuity felt by the individuals.¹ Giddens links trust directly to the sense of ontological security through the evolvment of the safe environment created by the habit and routine and emotional investment of our caretakers in early childhood which further transforms into a sense of protective cocoon that makes human beings feel safe later in life – what he calls „ontological security“.² For the understanding of how current lockdown can impact the sense of ontological security, it is important to especially emphasize here that Giddens, building on the work of psychoanalysts, closely connects everyday routine to the feelings of ontological security and that this sense of order is further maintained by the routines that accompany everyday social functioning in later phases of life of human beings. As Giddens notes, the robustness of the shared social reality is conveyed by the high level of reliability of the contexts of day-to-day social interaction.³ Ontological security functions like an envelope that shields human beings from their awareness of those questions of existence, which, if one was to ponder them all the time, would produce paralysis, Giddens notes, or the feelings of engulfment.⁴ This envelope keeps existential anxiety at bay, anxiety which can be triggered by things that we do not usually ponder about in our everyday reality but they have to do with the basics of our human existence. These questions concerning the existential structure of human existence beyond our everyday lives are what existential philosophers and psychotherapists have called existential givens - various philosophers have interpreted them differently but they are all those things that the human condition will inevitably contain, such as bodily existence, aloneness, illness or death. Anthony Giddens sees those as questions of time, space, continuity, and identity.⁵ To be able to function on an everyday level in our human lives, it is necessary to bracket these things and this is what ontological security contributes to⁶. In the course of everyday life, individuals do not usually ponder about things that could endanger them existentially on a day-to-day basis. Giddens explains how day-to-day routines together with the practical consciousness help bracket such anxieties because of their constitutive role in organizing an „as if“ environment concerning these issues of existence and provide modes or orientation which serve as cognitive and emotional answers to these questions⁷. He proposes that the maintenance of habits and routines provides a

1 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, Polity press, London, 1991., p. 3

2 Ibid, p. 3

3 Ibid, p. 36

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid, p. 37

6 Ibid, p. 36

7 Ibid.

“formed framework” which is a crucial bulwark against threatening anxieties.⁸ It is usually only in the cases of encounter with happenings that bring to one’s awareness the possibility of endangerment of one’s existence, such as in an encounter with an accident, that this bulwark can thin out.⁹

It can be argued that this is precisely what is happening within the COVID-19 pandemics. An encounter with a possibly life-threatening virus not yet sufficiently researched with potential deadly consequences and virulency is enough in itself to affect the sense of ontological security since it presents precisely such encounter that Giddens posits as the events that bring to our awareness the possibility of a threat to our very existence. Added to that, the imposed lockdown measures are disrupting shared daily social routines due to the shutdown of the shared social activity to great extent, from the work-routines to educational activities. Some of the routines can be transferred online, but most social activities in physical spaces that allow for shared social framework are discontinued due to the fear of contagion. It can be argued that replacement activities in the isolation of private households or the ones in the digital communicative spaces can only partly replace daily routines of social actors happening within the shared social settings which are, as explained before, constitutive of our sense of ontological security. All of this can thus affect the sense of ontological security. The sense of ontological security can become unsettled in the wake of the lack of the shared social activities that contribute to its maintenance. Ontological security is a concept of well-being in the world that is rooted in a sense of order in one’s social and material environment - in a qualitative grounded theory, thematic analyses indicated that the markers of ontological security were, for example, constancy, routine, and control.¹⁰ We can see how these markers could be disrupted in times of COVID19-pandemic. When the number of those infected with the COVID-19 virus is measured daily and unpredictably varies, therefore causing measures to be introduced to capriciously fluctuat, a shared social reality is created that does not have an emphasis on constancy. Furthermore, the discontinuation of the aforementioned routines that constitute a shared social framework and can cause a rip in the social reality. It can potentially disturb the modes of orientation usually provided for social actors through social activities. To put this into metaphor, it is as if social actors get bits and pieces of their usual social routine and shared social framework. For example, qualitative research of the experiences of young adults in Portugal with COVID-19 has shown that many participants reported experience of abrupt changes to major events, as well as lack of stimulation and the absence of a structured routine, further noting felt loss of contacts, increases in distrust of others and the experience of a loss of social competences through reduced interactions with others and shared social activities.¹¹ It can be proposed that this

8 Ibid, p. 39

9 Ibid, p. 40

10 Benjamin, Henwood, Brian Redline, Sara Semborski, Harmony Roades, Eric Rice and Suzanne L. Wenzel, “What’s next? A grounded theory of the relationship between ontological security, mental health, social relationships, and identity formation for young adults in supportive housing“, *Cityscape*, 20(3/2018), p. 87-100.

11 Catia Branquinho, Colette Kelly, Lourdes C. Arevalo, Anabela Santos, Margarida Gaspar de Matos, „Hey, we also have something to say“: A qualitative study of Portugese adolescents’ and young people’s experiences under COVID-19“, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 22(5/2020).

kind of experience can put great pressure on the sense of ontological security, and can provide a fertile ground for the disturbance in the sense of ontological security of social actors. This kind of rip in social functioning can bring individuals into greater proximity to the so-called existential givens. Usual continuity of social activity and daily routines produce a sense of being-in-the-world¹² whose felt sense is immersion which prevents one from thinking about existential questions and enables the social actor to take social and existential reality for granted. The discontinuation of the social activity to the current extent due to measures against the spread of COVID-19 can unsettle this. It has the potential of making social actors fall out of this immersion and bring them into contact with the existential structures beneath this sense of immersion. It can, in other words, bring into awareness the possibility of existential threats that are inherent in human existence. Consequently, there is a risk of the flood of existential anxieties kept at bay by social activities¹³ that constitute usual social functioning. This can manifest as a variety of changes in the experience of bodily existence, perception of time and space or one's relation to the world. For the social actors unaware of the ontological nature of these processes, but even to those aware of it, this can have an unsettling effect.

What also creates potential conditions for unsettlement on the collective level is the lack of the possibility for the ascription of meaning to events of COVID19-pandemics within the confinements of the system of technological rationality whose principles are prevalent in the social system of today. Pandemic is namely on the social level interpreted within the discourse of technological rationality, which is the principle underpinning the management of the social system in contemporary society. Social system based on technological rationality has from the time-period of industrialism¹⁴ continued functioning on these principles also in the age of late modernity. Such a system manages social organization on the principles of calculability and utility.¹⁵ This is happening also with the management of the social crisis caused by the COVID19-pandemics. It is reflected in the areas that it handles, but also in the kind of narrative that it uses. The areas it handles are the ones of the instrumental rational action, while the language of this kind of narrative is technical and is reflected in terms used in public discourse to handle the crisis, such as "social distance", "numbers of the diseased", "number of the deceased". Such a language is oriented towards measurements. It reduces social handling of this crisis to the principles of calculability and utility, as Adorno and Horkheimer have noted that principles of technological rationality tend to do.¹⁶ Such a narrative can be equipped to address the technical dimension of the COVID19-pandemics, but its potential to address the emotional and symbolic dimension of the experience is limited. Phrases such as „social distancing“

12 Martin Heidegger, *Being and time*, Harper&Row, New York, 1962.

13 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, Polity press, London, 1991., p. 39.

14 Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno: *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical fragments*: Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2002.

15 Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno: *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical fragments*: Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2002., p. 3.

16 Ibid.

are devoid of human content, as Adorno and Horkheimer have posited about the principles of pure reason¹⁷ guiding contemporary systems of technical management. The dealing with the crisis that is concerned with purely managerial aspects of the crisis handling does not include understanding of the consequences felt after the isolation or the need for human touch that people lack during the lockdown. These needs are of no concern to the system of technological rationality. Technological management of the crisis is not capable of offering the meaning or a point for social actors to orient themselves to during the handling of the crisis, beyond instructions of technological rationality. These instructions do not concern themselves with the needs regarding the sociability, emotional or symbolic needs. They reveal the full extent to which such a system of technological rationality is lacking when it comes to handling the human needs beyond those of practical functionality. Emotional or symbolic needs are left for the individuals to handle themselves. This is in line with the principles guiding the age of individualization which deem systemic problems to be dealt with in an individualized manner.¹⁸ However, in the times in which social support is minimized and the social activity is significantly reduced, in times in which the access to the shared social routines is to great extent disabled, it is questionable whether such handling of the COVID-19 pandemic can create sufficient support to handle experiences of loneliness and anxiety potentially created by isolation and ontological insecurity that the COVID19-pandemic threatens to unleash on a collective level. The social conditions in which the disruption of social activity which contributes to preventing existential anxiety is extreme enough to bring the sense of instability to the forefront of human experience, accompanied by the lack of meaning-making symbolic narratives does not seem supportive of the sense of psychological stability of the social actors participating in it.

It is no wonder that in such social circumstances there is a danger of mental health crisis ensuing. The studies that have documented the extent of the mental health crisis following the pandemics or being linked to pandemics are numerous and growing. Anxiety, loss of identity, disruption in usual activity, increases in feelings of loneliness are some of the experiences related to the COVID-19 imposed quarantine¹⁹ reported by the social actors on a global scale. Further, a longitudinal research in the UK during the three waves of the lockdown has shown that the 21% of the general population experienced above the cut-off point for moderate or severe levels of symptoms of anxiety and that the rate of suicidal ideation felt by young adults increased.²⁰ The study predicts the effects on mental health to be profound and long-lasting, while especially impacting the mental health of women, young people those from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds, and those with pre-

17 Ibid, p.71

18 Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Gernsheim-Beck: *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences*, Sage Publications, London, 2001.

19 Samanta K Brooks, Rebecca K Webster, Louise E Smith, Lisa Woodland, Simon Wessely, Neil Greenberg, Gideon James Rubin, "The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence", *The Lancet*, 10227(395/2020), p. 912-920.

20 Rory O'Connor, Karen Wetherall, Seonaid Cleare, Heather McClelland, Ambrose Melson, Claire Niedzwiedz, Ronan E. O'Carroll, Daryl B. O'Connor, Steve Platt, Elizabeth Scowcroft, Billy Watson, Tiago Zortea, Eamonn Ferguson and Kathryn A. Robb, "Mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: Longitudinal analyses of adults in the UK COVID-19 Mental Health & Wellbeing Study", *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 2020.

existing mental health problems.²¹ Another study in Germany found increased levels of psychosocial distress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, irritability, and a decrease in overall well-being, sense of coherence, sexual contentment, and sleep quality.²² It can be suspected from these findings that there can be a mental health crisis following the current modes of social functioning within the COVID19-pandemic. Perhaps it is also important to note that the research has shown that actual and perceived social isolation are in general both associated with increased risk for early mortality.²³ This should be taken into account upon crafting the measures to prevent contagion.

In an attempt to further explore the lived experience of the pandemic, it is interesting to note how the transfer of social activity to the digital communicative spaces has the potential to affect the social experience of time and space of social actors. Manuel Castells noted that the space is in contemporary society becoming less important due to the development of what he terms the „space of flows“, based on the understanding of the space in terms of experience and social actions, which is a new type of space – the material support of simultaneous social practices communicated at a distance.²⁴ Separation of time and space is noted as crucial to the dynamism of the process of disembedding in late modernity by Anthony Giddens; the separating of time and space into standardized dimensions cut through the connections between social activity and its „embedding“ in the particularities of time and space.²⁵ This can be noted in the “lifting out” of social relations from local contexts and their re-articulation across indefinite tracts of time-space.²⁶ Furthermore, in late modernity, the influence of distant events on the proximate ones as well as on one’s self becomes more commonplace.²⁷ This is enabled by the ICT-supported digital communication channels. Breaking free from local practices and habits is what can be recognized as one of the implications of this process. These processes have accelerated with the rapid technological development at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. However, the current organization of everyday life during the COVID19-pandemics where the social activity is increasingly situated within the communicative realm of digital communication channels further accelerates the transfer of social activity to the digital communication realm. What happens is an incrementation of time at home and increased communication and relationship-maintenance through digital devices²⁸. The imposed social isolation measures due to the risk of contagion have fostered the use of digital

21 Ibid.

22 Stefanie Jung, Jonas Kneer, Tillmann H.C. Krüger, “Mental Health, Sense of Coherence, and Interpersonal Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown in Germany”, *Journal of Clinical Medicine* 9(11/2020) .

23 Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Timothy B. Smith, Mark Baker, Tyler Harris, David Stephenson, „Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality: A Meta-Analytic Review“, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(2/2015), 227-37.

24 Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society, Volume I: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010., xxii.

25 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity press, Stanford, 1990, p. 20.

26 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, Polity press, London, 1991, p. 18.

27 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, Polity press, London, 1991.

28 Valeria Saladino, Davide Algeri and Auriemma Vincenzo, “The Psychological and Social Impact of Covid-19: New Perspectives of Well-Being”, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11/2020.

communication in everyday lives of people at an unprecedented level in modern history. There is observed change in the noticeable increase in digital communication – the research from the USA shows that during the COVID19-lockdowns 43% of respondents used text messaging more often, while voice calls increased for 36%, social media use for 35%, video calls in 30%, almost a quarter of people used email more frequently (24%).²⁹ They have also forced some people to use new digital practices for the first time.³⁰

This is bound to be felt in the experience of time and space of social actors. It can be proposed that the increased organization of social activities through the digital communication realm further lessens the importance of space which was already taking place in late modernity. During COVID-19 pandemics most social events are held online due to the measures of social distancing intended to prevent the contagion. It is thus now possible to attend a conference or to see a theatre-play anywhere in the world, to attend class or hold a meeting from one's living room. The increase in the social and digital practices during the COVID19-pandemics has, in other words, enabled social actors to attend an event without being physically present – it has further freed social actors of their physicality as precondition for the participation in social activity. Giddens's consequences of modernity in terms of disembedding of events from their local context³¹ seem to be even more radicalized. It seems that space is due to the measures imposed on the social gatherings and consequently the transfer of all events online, becoming even more irrelevant. Human beings are now able to participate in an event held anywhere in the world, which constitutes a new lived experience of the globalized shared social reality with people in different geographical locations worldwide. This novel situation has the opportunity to turn the world into McLuhan's global village unlike ever before.³² Global happenings on digital applications are currently held daily on Facebook and are attended by the participants on the global level. In the COVID19-lockdowns, most social activities transcend the scope of the nation-state and turn into a stream of events in the digital realm. Physical presence is during the COVID-19 pandemic being erased as the condition necessary to one's attending of an event to such an extent on a social level that it is becoming the norm. Another example of this is the phenomenon of "remote work"; significant scope of labor activities are being transferred to the digital communication realm and at distance from the actual working location. This phenomenon is during the COVID19-pandemics being normalized to such an extent that it has the potentiality of becoming the usual form of the social activity of work³³, at least partially.

29 Minh Hao Ngyuen, Jonathan Gruber, Jaelle Fuchs, Will Marler, Amanda Hunsaker, Eszter Hargittai, "Changes in Digital Communication During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic: Implications for Digital Inequality and Future Research", *Social Media + Society* 6(3/2020).

30 Eszter Hargittai, Minh Nao Nguyen, Jaelle Fuchs, Jonathan Gruber Will Marler, Amanda Hunsaker and Gökçe Karaoğlu, Marco Gui, Tiziano Geroza, Elissa Redmiles, Marina Micheli, John E. Evans, Kerry Dobransky, *Covid – 19 Study on Digital Media and the Coronavirus Pandemic, Internet Use and Society Division*, Institute of Communication and Media Research, University of Zürich, 2020, available at: <http://webuse.org/covid/>.

31 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity press, Stanford, 1990.

32 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding media: The extensions of man*, Mc Graw-Hill, London i New York, 1964.

33 Rahul De, Neena Pandey and Abhipsa Pal: "Impact of digital surge during Covid-19 pandemic: A viewpoint on research and practice", *International Journal of Information Management*, 55(2020).

What is happening is a kind of a workplace displacement or its disembedding from the working place and re-embedding into the private household or the location freely chosen by the social actor. In all of these aspects, it indeed seems that the significant aspect of the COVID19-pandemic is that physical space is becoming even more increasingly irrelevant in the context of social activity than it was at the advent of late modernity. However, social phenomena are rarely one-dimensional. Instead, they often contain inherent contradictions. Manuel Castells recognized the contradiction inherent in the supposed lessening of the relevance of the space in the conditions of contemporary society - it is reflected in the fact that while the world is constructed around the logic of the space of flows, people still make their living in the space of places.³⁴ This contradiction can be seen as the contradiction inherent in the general feature of the digital communication realm, which is its divorce from the material and physical aspects of the social reality, as well as the its features determined by those aspects. This contradiction is becoming palpably accentuated during the current COVID19-pandemics. Social actors are increasingly spending their time in the realm of digital communicative spaces, relying on them to maintain their everyday social functioning. This current situation, however, simultaneously reveals the extent of their constraints by the physicality and spatiality in terms of material practices and social support in the local social context to which social actors have or lack access to. Digital communication channels are enabling the continuation of those social practices that can be maintained only through the communicative aspect online. However, the satisfaction of the parts of social practices that require embodiment within digital communicative spaces is questionable. For example, a birthday or Christmas party thrown over Skype makes for a different experience than the birthday party in physical presence, which is reflected in the uncanny feeling when participants having to provide their drinks and food themselves and send gifts per post. The usefulness of the digital communicative spaces during the lockdown is indisputable, since they allow for at least partial continuation of the social activity. It is the phenomenological quality of those activities that is explored here. The absence created by the lack of the possibility of embodiment of symbolic social practices during digital communication point us to the limitations that the digital communicative spaces have for the replacement of the multifaceted nature of the human social activity. If there is a need for care by a certain social actor it becomes palpably evident that the task can be performed only by those living in the geographical proximity. It can be seen as revealing of how the material practices that support the survival of our bodily existence as well as determine it to some extent in the social sphere, such as in the cases of material support needed for basic care or human contact needed for social support, resist the transfer of the social activity to the digital realm. When borders between geographical areas were closed for the prevention of contagion in Croatia at certain points during the lockdown, the digital communicative realm had difficulties compensating for the lack of physical geographical locality and its social and material circumstances. However, here it should be warned against, as Eva Illouz calls, „the paradigm of

34 Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society, Volume I: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010., xxxix.

pure critique“ and what she calls its „longing for purity“ and its requirement for the evaluation of certain cultural practices – progressive or regressive in their totality.³⁵ The aim of this paper is not to discard or undervalue all the aspects of digital communication practices. It is needless to say that the possibilities of continuation of communicative aspects of social practices offered by digital communication channels enable at least partial social functioning and partial retaining of the social routines during the ongoing pandemic. Furthermore, it is also evident that the stretch of the events beyond their geographical localities to the global sphere of digital communicative spaces can be beneficial for the social actors of late modernity. At least in the communicative aspects and in relation to education and exposure to new influences, this can be advantageous for social actors. The aim of this paper is not to undervalue the extent of the opportunity of these practices to further lift social relations out of local context at least partially regarding the spread of the knowledge and reach. The aim is instead to use the opportunity that was granted by the transition of social activities online to this extent due to the COVID-19 pandemic – to explore the implications of the transference of the social practices online for the lived experience of social actors. Eva Illouz advocates for the critique to leave the area of purity and try to understand certain cultural practices from the perspective of their participants.³⁶ Building on this, to explore this further, an insight into how participants themselves see digital communicative spaces during COVID-19 would be required – an inquiry into how they experience these practices as a tool for relationship-maintenance during pandemic and to which extent the lack of the possibility of the embodiment of the social practices through digital channels affects the very social activities maintained through them. Namely, there is an intimation of a special type of exhaustion that is felt after participation in social activities online, which differs from the fatigue felt within embodied communication in physical reality. This exhaustion could point to the human physicality as understood by Maurice Merleau-Ponty³⁷, where the spatiality of the phenomenal human body takes hold of the space and social situations through the objects it touches and stimuli it anticipates in the space, thereby creating situational intentionality necessary to make full sense of social situations. To what extent can this intentionality be engaged when the only points of access to the communication process are a voice and picture of another person on a computer screen instead of other bodies? One is in contact only with the picture and the voice of the person we are communicating with, bits and pieces, but the body’s inclusion in the process is limited. It is as if one gets only the communication aspect of the multifacetedness of the embodied social situations – these are felt intimations of the experience of the lack of embodiment of social practices online, after what is currently almost a year-long transfer of digital practices online and lack of shared physical social activity. There are also some intimations of the difference in the phenomenological experience between face-to-face and online communication given that the research has pointed to the face-to-face communication being associated with lower levels of

35 Eva Illouz, *Hladne intimnosti: Oblikovanje čustvenega kapitalizma*, Založba Krtina, Ljubljana 2010., p. 112.

36 Eva Illouz, *Hladne intimnosti: Oblikovanje čustvenega kapitalizma*, Založba Krtina, Ljubljana 2010., p. 112-114.

37 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, The Humanities Press, New York, p.100.

loneliness and higher life satisfaction in comparison with online communication.³⁸ Given such possible implications that point to the different phenomenological experience of the face-to-face encounter and consequently shared social activities in comparison to online communication there is a need for further discussion on this matter.

Furthermore, it has to be noted that the sudden transfer of social activity to the digital realm to the current extent is bound to have implications for social marginalization. Digital inequality research has documented how the internet use functions according to the patterns of inequality correlated to different educational, race, and age backgrounds which may then influence the benefits one can get from the use of the internet.³⁹ The internet is mostly used as a resource of support by those with greater Internet experience and skills, while people who lack digital skills or access to digital technologies are less likely to receive digital support since they have fewer resources of support for establishing new ways of communicating – those are older people or those with lower Internet skills, who are according to the research more likely to reduce digital communication in times of COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁰ In this way, the transfer of the social activities to the digital realm of the internet can deepen already existing social inequalities. This is especially troublesome when it is considered that digital communication is related to the building of certain kinds of capital: economic, social, cultural, political, and civic.⁴¹ Due to the extent to which social activity is transferred online in times of COVID-19 pandemics the maintenance of the social capital is to a large extent also transferred to the digital realm and that this can have implications for further widening of already existing social inequalities. Marginalized social groups can experience hardship in the request to maintain social activities and routines through the digital communication realm if they possess no access or lack of high-quality equipment needed to engage in them and/or the lack of the skills needed for the engagement. Data shows that those with lower internet skills, as well as older people, are more likely to reduce digital communication during the pandemic, which might add to their disconnection from society.⁴² When social activities are to large extent moved online, the exclusivity of access to them is based on the premises of digital skills and/or digital access to the extent unknown before. This further brings us back to the necessity of material practices that digital communicative spaces require for their functioning and their consequent inherent physical aspect. It seems that so-called virtual reality is still determined by the physical one to great extent.

38 Donghee Yvette Wohn, Wei Peng, Doug Zytoko, „Face to Face Matters: Communication Modality, Perceived Social Support, and Psychological Wellbeing“, ResearchGate, available at: file:///C:/Users/paska/Downloads/2017-chi17-facetofacematters.pdf

39 Paul DiMaggio, Eszter Hargittai, Coral Celeste, and Steven Shafer (2004). Digital inequality: From unequal access to differentiated use, in K. Neckerman (Ed.), *Social Inequality*, Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 355-400.

40 Minh Hao Ngyuen, Jonathan Gruber, Jaelle Fuchs, Will Marler, Amanda Hunsaker, Eszter Hargittai, “Changes in Digital Communication During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic: Implications for Digital Inequality and Future Research”, *Social Media + Society* 6(3/2020).

41 Ellen Helsper, *Digital inclusion: an analysis of social disadvantage and the information society*, Department for Communities and Local Government, London, 2008.

42 Minh Hao Ngyuen, Jonathan Gruber, Jaelle Fuchs, Will Marler, Amanda Hunsaker, Eszter Hargittai, “Changes in Digital Communication During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic: Implications for Digital Inequality and Future Research”, *Social Media + Society* 6(3/2020).

In general, it can be noted that the implications of COVID19-pandemic are contradictory. On one hand, they force social actors to transfer the activity online and render space more irrelevant. In this sense they offer new opportunities for global interconnectedness, rendering physicality as unnecessary precondition for attendance of social activity. However, in the context of accompanying lockdowns they simultaneously also enforce the return to the spatial confinements of social material reality and physical bodily existence. They reintroduce social actors to the material reality of the social reality that the digital realm has trouble overcoming – the local economic and social context we have increasingly started to believe that we were in the process of abandoning by the possibilities of distanced social activity through digital communicative spaces and the increased mobility in the age of late modernity and globalization. It is almost as if the COVID19-pandemic functions as the reminder of the importance of the physicality of social space that human beings inhabit despite the space becoming more irrelevant due to technological advancements of late modernity. This is happening in the advent of late modernity which, building on the legacy of modernity stemming from the Enlightenment as well as the processes of individualization, has started taking self-determination and bodily autonomy for granted, expanded further by the possibilities of self-exploration offered by the increased mobility and digital communicative spaces. In this context, the return to the confinements determined by geographical spatiality and its social and material constraints might come as a shock.

What can be noted by now in general is that the pandemic has interrupted the framework of the shared social practices. They are now engaged in partially and to great extent in digital communicative spaces which functions as bits and pieces of the shared offline social reality in pre-COVID19 times. In this manner the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the routines needed for the maintenance of the sense of ontological security of social actors. This pandemic can also be seen as a forced re-encounter with the spatial nature of human existence. It has seemingly freed us from the restrictions of physicality by removing the physical presence as the necessary condition for the social encounter and rendering physical locality as irrelevant to the unfolding of social activity. However, it has simultaneously revealed the extent to which digital communicative practices have trouble following material and spatial determinants of our social localities. The ultimate implications of the COVID19-pandemic on social and individual functioning are complex and yet unclear. Since the pandemic is still ongoing, their extent and shape is yet to be assessed.

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Dijelići i komadići: Iskustva društvene stvarnosti usred pandemije Covid-19

Sažetak

Pandemija uzrokovana koronavirusom imala je dubok utjecaj na načine na koji živimo, kao i na društvenu stvarnost u svijetu oko nas. Osim ogromnog opterećenja na javno zdravstvo te pojedinačna zdravstvena stanja, utjecala je na čitav niz promjena vezanih uz socijalno funkcioniranje. Ubrzala je digitalizaciju i prijelaz društvenih aktivnosti na digitalno područje u dosad neviđenom opsegu, a s druge strane je ograničila društvene aktere na lokalna zemljopisna područja. U svemu tome pružila nam se prilika da zauzmemo novu točku promatranja ljudskog bivanja u svijetu kasne modernosti. Moguće je pretpostaviti da navedena društvena situacija posjeduje potencijal utjecaja na osjećaj ontološke sigurnosti društvenih aktera, kao i na njihovo iskustvo prostora. Kontradiktorne implikacije prijelaza društvene aktivnosti na digitalne komunikativne prostore u trenutnom opsegu također se promišljaju.

Ključne riječi: *pandemija, ontološka sigurnost, kasna modernost, digitalni mediji.*



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Media and Health – “Angel and Devil”

Abstract

All media have been flooded with news related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Top scientists have been addressing the public more frequently than ever before. In addition to positive attitudes, there have also been negative ones. In the midst of the pandemic, information about health systems that cannot respond adequately, a large number of deaths, and the lack of vaccines provoked a number of unwanted reactions, such as fear and associated disorders. Bad news kept coming. They were followed by conspiracy theories. Certain groups set out to find information they wanted to accept as true on various social networks.

Should the media be allowed to inform about health without check, should they be allowed to pass on “fake news” in the domain of illness and health, or even manipulate information?

They shouldn't? In order to minimize the negative impacts, there should be mutual responsibility of experts and the media in presenting health-related topics and in disseminating useful and credible information, whereby the media literacy of the end users is indispensable.

Key words: media, health, pandemic, infodemic, COVID-19.

Introduction

“Informing people is more important than the law”...

... was one of the ten principles of Andrija Štampar, the father of the school of public health that sought to achieve “Health for All.” The results of his work, accomplished within less than ten years during the period between the two world wars, are magnificent, especially if we take into account that there was only one health institution south of the Sava at the time, that the country had a predominantly rural population, uneducated and for the most part illiterate, that 60 out of 100 children were dying, and that both acute and chronic diseases were ravaging the country.⁴³ The media in various forms, such as posters, leaflets, brochures, or films, also contributed to Štampar’s success and the results he was achieving.

Today, the media, in addition to their educational function, play a major role in informing the public regarding all spheres of human activity. With the development of technologies, they have become ubiquitous, and their easy availability has made them one of the most important sources of information on any topic. We live in a world in which we can use modern technologies through the smartphone, which is owned by a large number of people. It is actually a computer that grants us access to expert information, here at our fingertips, in our pocket.

In addition, the media today have a new dimension. Instead of being mere providers of information to the passive user, communication has become two-way and this is where the use of social networks comes to the fore. It is estimated that nowadays some 2.47 billion people use Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, or Messenger on a daily basis, and more than 3.14 billion use at least one Facebook service per month on the average.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the number of users is growing every day. According to research conducted by the Pew Research Center in the United States, the number of social network users increased from less than 20% to almost 80% in the period from 2005 to 2019.⁴⁵

The use of social networks is present in all age groups, including persons over 65, although their use is often mistakenly associated exclusively with younger age groups. There is a trend of increase in all age groups, and the frequency of use grows as well. Behavioural patterns are similar in the countries of Western civilization as in developed Eastern civilizations, regardless of which social networks are observed.

All of the above shows that social networks have imposed themselves as one of the dominant factors in the media space.

43 Andrija Štampar, *Pet godina socijalno-medicinskog rada u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca 1920-1925* [Five years of social-medical work in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, 1920-1925]. Institut za socijalnu medicinu, Zagreb, 1926.

44 Zephoria Digital Marketing, “The Top Valuable Facebook Statistics,” <https://zephoria.com/top-15-valuable-facebook-statistics/> (last accessed on November 9, 2020).

45 Pew Research Center, “Social Media Fact Sheet,” <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/> (last accessed on August 27, 2020).

Therefore, it has become important to use this potential related to health information: through targeted messages, through the ability to interact with the public and the two-way communication, which is why an increasing number of health organizations are turning to social networks, especially in health interventions.

Opportunities for discussion (social cohesion) are considered 14 times greater on social networks compared to the written word, i.e. information shared through the social networks have been proven to result in a higher assessment of knowledge than when shared through info-brochures.⁴⁶ This is the potential of social networks as a space for action offering the possibility of changing health behaviour. And yet, the question of the exact mechanism by which the social networks raise awareness and influence behavioural change remains open.

“What makes a social media campaign successful? Does sharing content or liking imply a change in behaviour?”

In the field of marketing, it is clear what it means to increase the number of clicks or sales, but in the field of public health, such questions remain unanswered.⁴⁷

The situation becomes even more complex in crisis situations related to all segments of human activity, when negative echoes in all fields receive special emphasis, including the media.

Pandemic and the media

Undoubtedly, the media are a powerful means of fostering health education. They play a fundamental role in the public response to a pandemic, as they serve as a portal for communication between governments, health facilities, and people. The “invisible” nature of pandemics imposes an important role on the media as the “eye” of the public. Media channels become windows through which people seek accurate information, scientific and sensational facts, government decisions, as well as reactions from the general public.⁴⁸

The COVID epidemic broke out in December in Wuhan, China. Shortly after spreading across China, health authorities around the world confirmed cases from Southeast Asia, America, Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, Africa, and the western Pacific. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared on March 11, 2020 that the viral disease had become a pandemic. In countries around the world, measures were taken that our generation had never seen before. Schools and workplaces went into a lockdown, borders between countries were closed, and travel restricted, and these were just some of the precautions to limit the spread of the virus. In such difficult circumstances, the public

46 Nick Milton, “Why Knowledge Transfer through Discussion Is 14 Times More Effective than Writing,” <http://www.nickmilton.com/2014/10/why-knowledge-transfer-through.html> (last accessed on October 10, 2020).

47 Gough Aisling et al., “Tweet for Behavior Change: Using Social Media for the Dissemination of Public Health Messages,” *JMIR Public Health Surveillance* 3 (1/2017), e14.

48 Nour Mheidly and Jawad Fares, “Leveraging Media and Health Communication Strategies to Overcome the COVID-19 Infodemic,” *Journal of Public Health Policy* 41 (2020), pp. 410-420.

sought information and evidence-based guidance to help them respond in a system that worked to limit viral transmission. The media, in various forms, became the primary source of information. Top scientists were addressing the public more frequently than ever before. In addition to positive attitudes, there were also negative ones. Information about health systems that cannot respond adequately, a large number of deaths, and the lack of vaccines provoked a number of unwanted reactions, such as fear and associated disorders. Bad news kept coming. They were followed by conspiracy theories. Certain groups set out to find information they wanted to accept as “true” on various social networks.

What can be noticed is the striking peculiarity of this crisis in the coincidence of virology and virality. Not only did the virus itself spread very quickly, but also information – and misinformation – about the outbreak, and thus the panic it created in the public. This resulted in an “infodemic”, with waves of misinformation and rumours on the pandemic that prevented its alleviation.

Addressing the audience at the Munich Security Conference on February 15, 2020, Director-General of WHO, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said:

“We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic.”

The ease with which inaccuracies and conspiracies can be perpetuated and eternalized through the social media and other common outlets, puts public health at a disadvantage. The most popular global web searches related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) have been rated as “high” or “extreme” on the scale of infodemic and the related events.⁴⁹

Scientifically based evidence is vital to ensure that the public is well informed and can respond effectively to a pandemic. An infodemic clearly interferes with such action as it delivers misleading messages about the disease and promotes ineffective precaution measures.

Infodemic and its impact on health

“Measure what is measurable and make measurable what is not so.”

... said Galileo Galilei. In order to be able to talk about a problem, it is necessary to quantify it. Our overview of the magnitude of this problem, the impact of infodemic on human health, includes insights from research conducted by Md. Saiful Islam and his colleagues.⁵⁰ Their research included Facebook, Twitter, and online newspaper editions because these were considered the most representative platforms for monitoring misinformation in the general populace. In the period from December 31, 2019 until April 5, 2020, they analysed 2,311 reports in 87 countries published in 25 languages. Most reports (almost 90%) were classified as rumours, about 8% were conspiracy

49 Alessandro Rovetta and Akshaya Srikanth Bhagavathula, “Global Infodemiology of COVID-19: Analysis of Google Web Searches and Instagram Hashtags,” *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 22 (8/2020), e20673.

50 Md. Saiful Islam et al., “COVID-19-Related Infodemic and Its Impact on Public Health: A Global Social Media Analysis,” *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 103 (4/2020), pp. 1621-1629.

theories, and about 4% stigma. The rumours were dominated by news about COVID-19: the disease, transmission, and treatment. There were allegations that you could cure yourself by gargling saltwater or even by drinking bleach. The latter seems to be very popular, and just as dangerous, as it has sadly also been used to treat autism, likewise popularized through various media. Also, there was information that the virus had escaped from a laboratory, as well as conspiracy theories about 5G networks that cause and/or contribute to the spread of COVID-19. The consequences were serious, to the point that some transmitters were set on fire in Birmingham and Merseyside, including one at the Nightingale Hospital in Birmingham.⁵¹ It was a particularly unfortunate damage at a time when hospitals needed to have maximum efficiency.

In addition, rumours, stigma, and conspiracy theories have the potential to reduce the community confidence in governments and international health agencies. Rumours can be disguised as credible infection prevention and control strategies, and potentially have serious implications if given priority over proven guidelines. For example, the popular myth of consuming highly concentrated alcohol to disinfect the body and thus kill the virus circulated in different parts of the world.⁵² Following this misinformation, approximately 800 persons died, while 5,876 were hospitalized. 60 persons developed complete blindness after drinking methanol as an anti-coronavirus drug.⁵³ In addition to individuals following misinformation, cases have been documented where some religious organizations give inappropriate and erroneous advice. Thus, a church in South Korea used a spray bottle to spray consecrated water among believers, which resulted in more than 100 infections among those present.⁵⁴ Similar practices have been observed in some other churches around the world, and even in Croatia Masses have been held despite bans on gatherings.⁵⁵

Stigma and fear of discrimination have also contributed to healthcare-related infections, as observed in some South Asian countries where certain healthcare workers have used deficient protective equipment.⁵⁶

51 Ahmed Siddiqui MY et al., “Social Media Mis-Information: An Epidemic within the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 103 (2020), pp. 920-921.

52 World Health Organization, 2020. Alcohol Does Not Protect against COVID-19; Access Should Be Restricted during Lock-down. Alcohol Use. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO, Regional Office for Europe.

53 Aljazeera, 2020. Iran: Over 700 Dead after Drinking Alcohol to Cure Coronavirus. Aljazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/iran-700-dead-drinking-alcohol-cure-coronavirus-200427163529629.html> (last accessed on June 4, 2020).

54 Chan-Kyong P, 2020. Coronavirus: Saltwater Spray Infects 46 Church-Goers in South Korea. South China Morning Post. Causeway Bay, Hong Kong: South China Morning Post.

55 Goran Borković, “Napadačima na novinarke kraj crkve u Splitu prijeti do pet godina zatvora” [Attackers on Journalists near church in Split risk up to five years in prison], *Novosti. Vijesti/Hrvatska* (April 12, 2020), <https://www.portalnovosti.com/unatoc-zabrani-u-splitu-odrzana-misa-vjernici-napali-novinarke-i-snimateljicu> (last accessed on August 31, 2020).

56 Tawsia Tajmim, “Coronavirus: 41 Doctors, 10 Nurses Infected,” <https://tbsnews.net/coronavirus-chronicle/covid-19-bangladesh/coronavirus-41-doctors-10-nurses-infected-68689> (last accessed on September 1, 2020).

Because of the fear of stigma, people may avoid screening/testing and further spread the deadly disease.⁵⁷ Additional reasons may be financial, e.g. if they receive insufficient salary compensation.⁵⁸ During this pandemic, there have been repeated reports of verbal and physical abuse aimed at persons of Asian descent.⁵⁹ Other stigmatized persons include those suffering from COVID, which is primarily associated with fear of infection. In African countries, such situations culminate to the point that they lead to denials of hospital admission.⁶⁰

Rumours, stigma, and conspiracy theories in health crisis situations are not a novelty. During the onset of the HIV epidemic, rumours that HIV did not exist (similar to those in present-day media that COVID does not exist)⁶¹ and that its treatment was harmful to humans resulted in the rejection of antiretroviral therapy in South Africa. Furthermore, their government promoted traditional medicines that encouraged vertical HIV transmission in the community and unfortunately took more than 300,000 lives.⁶²

The spread of rumours, stigma, and conspiracy theories not only affect the health of individuals, but can also have consequences at the societal level, including the healthcare system. After the lockdown, rumours that spread across several countries caused panicked purchases. This in turn led to the rise in prices and a shortage of basic goods such as protective masks, hand sanitizers, and toilet paper, which were out of reach for many. It has been described how the extreme deficiency of some of these items has contributed to the transmission of COVID-19 in hospitals and homes in several cases in some countries.⁶³

Should the media be allowed to inform about health without checks or pass on “fake news” in the domain of disease and health, or even manipulate information?” Why are they doing that?

False news, misinformation, and conspiracy theories have been a known fact in human history, but in the age of social media they have become extremely important due to the exponential growth of information dissemination, and since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic they have

57 National Herald, “Social Stigma Forcing Corona Patients to Avoid Screening in India,” <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/national/social-stigma-forcing-corona-patients-to-avoid-screening-in-india> (last accessed on October 27, 2020).

58 HZZO, “Obavijest osiguranicima – koronavirus (COVID-19)” [Information for healthcare users – Coronavirus (COVID-19)], <https://www.hzzo.hr/obavijest-osiguranicima-koronavirus/> (last accessed on September 15, 2020).

59 Editorial, “Stop the Coronavirus Stigma Now,” *Nature* 580 (2020), pp. 165, <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01009-0> (last accessed on August 25, 2020).

60 Barry S. Hewlett and Richard P. Amola, “Cultural Contexts of Ebola in Northern Uganda,” *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 9 (10/2003), pp. 1242-1248.

61 Teklic.hr.svaki dan (September 5, 2020), “Anti-korona prosvjed u Zagrebu: ‘Covid je laž, nismo svi covidioti’” [Anti-corona protests in Zagreb: “COVID is a lie, not all of us are covidioti”], <https://www.teklic.hr/lifestyle/anti-korona-prosvjed-u-zagrebu-covid-je-laz-nismo-svi-covidioti/172506/> (last accessed on October 10, 2020).

62 Chris Bateman, “Paying the Price for AIDS Denialism,” *South African Medical Journal* 97 (10/2007), pp. 912-914.

63 World Health Organization, “Home Care for Patients with COVID-19 Presenting with Mild Symptoms and Management of Their Contacts,” [https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/home-care-for-patients-with-suspected-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-presenting-with-mild-symptoms-and-management-of-contacts](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/home-care-for-patients-with-suspected-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-presenting-with-mild-symptoms-and-management-of-contacts) (last accessed on April 17, 2020).

skyrocketed. This situation is extremely worrying, because it undermines trust in health institutions and programmes. The pandemic has raised many questions to which the scientific community is still seeking answers. But the authorities rarely make decisions based on empirical evidence alone: the political interest is key. Governments want to point out that the situation is under control and are too quickly providing false beliefs. Consequently, disagreement between government messages and reversals in recommendations based on emerging evidence (e.g. on the use of masks and their usefulness in protecting against infection) can be misinterpreted as incompetence. Such miscommunication is further given a negative note by the mass media because they often favour fast, sensationalist reporting rather than carefully worded scientific messages with a balanced interpretation. The outcome is an erosion of public trust and a sense of helplessness, which are the perfect preconditions for spreading harmful misinformation that makes up a vicious circle.⁶⁴

There is another crucial question: “Who benefits from this information?” According to Claire Wardle, co-founder and director of *First Draft*, there are three aspects of benefit: financial gain, political gain, and experimental manipulation. An example of financial gain is companies that have direct profits from anti-vaccination campaigns. The anti-vaxxer movement has 58 million Internet followers, and the giants of social networks are deliberately keeping them as they generate cumulative revenue of one billion US dollars from advertising. Political gain from launching untruths in order to affirm or challenge a certain policy has long been a proven method. It includes control of words and their meanings, and control of people who have to use those words, especially in times of uncertainty and anxiety, and especially if such times last longer.

How can one solve/mitigate the problem?

In addition to personal, professional and moral responsibility, immediate, coordinated action by the global political, corporate, and scientific community is certainly needed to maintain the integrity and credibility of professional expertise and to restore public confidence.

An example could be the efforts of the WHO platform EPI-WIN to reduce misinformation. Its goal is to share verified information, because it is not only about informing people, but also about making sure that they are properly informed.⁶⁵

Undoubtedly, social media can and should be used to support the public healthcare response with the development of increasingly adequate tools. In addition, digital technologies can overcome the limitations of social distancing during quarantine and be a resource to support mental health and solidarity with people in isolation.

64 The Lancet, August 2020: “The COVID-19 Infodemic,” <https://www.thelancet.com/infection> (last accessed on September 1, 2020).

65 John Zarocostas, “How to Fight an Infodemic,” [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30461-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30461-X/fulltext) (last accessed on September 1, 2020).

It must not be forgotten that, at times like this, the literacy of end users is indispensable. In this case, it is especially health literacy, i.e. e-health literacy. From a public healthcare perspective, health literacy is considered a personal skill that develops over a lifetime and promotes empowerment in health-related decision-making,⁶⁶ while e-health literacy is based on the concepts of both healthcare and media literacy, and refers to an individual's ability to search, understand, and evaluate health data from electronic sources, and to make informed health decisions to address a health-related problem in daily activities.⁶⁷ In the context of COVID-19, an individual's health literacy supports his or her decisions about washing hands, maintaining physical distance, adopting protective behaviours, visiting a physician, and adhering to quarantine policies, thus contributing to a more likely successful public healthcare strategy.⁶⁸ Health literacy is even more challenging when knowledge of the topic is incomplete, changing, and context-dependent. Yet, at times like this, e-health literacy is needed around the world to resist the infodemic and to empower individuals to believe and act based on reliable information, recommendations, and advice. This includes people who apply a range of skills to understand health information and the available services even in rapidly changing situations and contexts. Reliable sources must provide accurate and timely information that is relevant to the context, easy to access, easy to understand, easy to implement, and easy to use. Providing reliable, easy-to-understand information in response to these basic, urgent inquiries is crucial.

Crises such as the current COVID-19 pandemic remind us that investing in education and health literacy throughout our lives is a global resource and an asset of any community.

Concluding remarks

The media play an important role in promoting health. But in addition to their positive effects, there are also negative ones (infodemic). In order to minimize these negative impacts, there should be mutual responsibility of experts and the media in presenting health-related topics and in disseminating useful and credible information, whereby the media literacy of the end users is indispensable.

66 Okan Orkan, "The Importance of Early Childhood in Addressing Equity and Health Literacy Development in the Life-Course," *Public Health Panorama* 5 (2019), pp. 170-176.

67 Norman D Cameron and Harvey A Skinner, "e-Health Literacy: Essential Skills for Consumer Health in a Networked World," *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 8 (2006/2), e9.

68 Tetine Sentell et al., "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Health Literacy Research Around the World: More Important Than Ever in a Time of COVID-19," *Internet Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17 (9/2020), p. 3010.

Mediji i zdravlje „Anđeo i vrag“

Sažetak

Sve medije preplavile su vijesti vezane za COVID-19 pandemiju. Kao nikada do sada javnosti su se obratili vrhunski znanstvenici. Uz pozitivne stavove javili su se i negativni. Informacije o zdravstvenim sustavima koji ne mogu dati odgovarajući odgovor, veliki broj umrlih, nepostojanje cjepiva pobudili su niz neželjenih odgovora, kao što je strah i posljedični poremećaji. Loše vijesti su se nizale. Pratile su ih teorije zavjere. Određene grupe na društvenim mrežama krenule su za pronalaženjem informacija koje žele prihvatiti istinitima.

Smiju li mediji prezentirati o zdravlju bez provjera, smiju li propustiti „lažne vijesti“ u području bolesti i zdravlja, smiju li manipulirati informacijama?

Ne bi smjeli?! No, kako bi minimalizirali negativne utjecaje, obostrana je odgovornost stručnjaka i medija u iznošenju tema vezanih uz zdravlje, praćena neizostavnom medijskom pismenosti krajnjih korisnika.

Ključne riječi: mediji, zdravlje, pandemija, infodemija, COVID-19.



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Media Framing of the Coronavirus in Croatia

Abstract

Media framing is a method through which the media frame news into familiar narratives which correspond to the unconscious layers of our psyche. The media tend to overemphasize certain aspects of events, all the while in a Procrustean fashion ignoring those aspects that do not fit into the selected narrative frame (Kunczik and Zipfel, 1998: 103). Media framing relies on storytelling, and theorists note that master narratives selected from myths, fairy tales and dreams, largely reinforce the manipulative effects of media framing (Kent, 2015). This paper examines how Croatian print media framed the news on the coronavirus in the period between the first introduction of social distancing measures (19 March 2020) and relaxation of the measures (27 April 2020). Preliminary research points to the use of the following master narratives: overcoming the monster, rags to riches, the quest, tragedy as punishment for egoism and arrogance, rebirth. In addition, prominent members of the National Crisis Headquarters were framed within the hero archetype. The use of these master narratives in media framing of the corona crisis during the so-called first wave of the epidemic, clearly indicates the intention of propaganda and manipulation.

Key words: media framing, storytelling, master narrative, corona crisis, propaganda.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2020 the world was for the most part affected by the pandemic caused by a new virus in the coronavirus family, known officially as SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), shortened in everyday communication to COVID-19. Scientific research so far reveals that SARS-CoV-2 relates to a zoonosis, i.e. an infectious disease common to humans and certain animal species, that can be transferred from animals to humans and vice versa. Both domestic and wild animals may be sources for the spread of zoonoses. The phenomenon known as a “spillover event” is the transmission of a virus from one species of host to another, and it is believed that this transfer may have been the starting point for the new SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.⁶⁹ Scientists believe that the new virus is similar to coronaviruses present in some species of bats in the *Rhinolophus* family which act as possible natural reservoirs of infection. These bats are common in South China and all over Asia, in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Bats are often viral reservoirs since they tend to gather in great numbers in one place to rest or hibernate. However, due to the different receptors the viruses use to enter cells, scientists note there is a possibility that before it “spilled over” to humans, the virus was transferred to bats through another intermediary, perhaps, it is supposed, through a wild animal traded on the Wuhan wet markets. This practice increases the risk of pandemics with health, social and economic effects on all the communities involved.⁷⁰ The possibility that the source of the new virus is a bat, an animal which has quite negative cultural and religious connotations in the western cultural sphere (unlike the eastern sphere)⁷¹ has caused a media hysteria which spilled over to real life, that is, into the mass killing of bats. Given the fact that bats are quite useful animals, extremely important for the preservation of biodiversity (they help in the natural regeneration of tropical forests, pollinate a range of night blooming plants, control the number of insects active during the night and serve as indicators for the health of the environment), and that many bat species are included on the lists of endangered species,⁷² after a couple of months governments of numerous countries did react and launched awareness-raising campaigns with the aim of stopping various misconceptions about bats. Even before this pandemic that drastically changed people’s lives, bats were among the animals that were often hounded which is why the shifting of responsibility onto someone else through propaganda, in this case, onto another animal species, found fertile ground. This efficiently turned the attention away from the real problems related to this crisis, in other words, the systematic destruction of the environment perpetrated by humans. Bats were not the cause of this crisis, but rather the destruction of ecosystems by the human race. Natural ecosystems play a fundamental role in regulating the transmission and spread of infectious diseases such as

69 Barney Jeffries, “The Loss of Nature and the Rise of Pandemics”, https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/the_loss_of_nature_and_rise_of_pandemics___protecting_human_and_planetary_health.pdf; Accessed: 9 December 2020.

70 Ibid.

71 Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *Rječnik simbola* (Dictionary of Symbols), Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, Zagreb 1989, pp. 677-679

72 State Institute for Nature Protection, Bats, <http://www.haop.hr/hr/tematska-podrucja/prirodne-vrijednosti-stanje-i-ocuvanje/bioraznolikost/sismisi>; Accessed: 9 December 2020.

zoonoses, which means they are vital in maintaining and nurturing life on Earth, including the life of the human species. Scientists are aware that important factors such as the loss of habitat, creation of artificial environments, wildlife trade and the destruction of biodiversity in general, contribute to the spread of viral diseases.⁷³ People however, rarely like to change their habits and way of life, so it is much easier to put the responsibility on someone else. This is a very effective propaganda method of *labelling* the enemy which aims to stimulate prejudice of the general public towards a group or individual, exploiting fear, hatred, contempt or any other negative feeling. In the labelling technique, the compliance of the public to a certain idea is implemented through exploiting the appeal of fear. The devastating effects of exploiting this propaganda technique are familiar from Nazi propaganda which identified the Jews as enemies and sources of all problems in 1930s Germany.⁷⁴ This propaganda technique successfully turns the attention of the public away from important social problems and issues, so that those in charge do not have to deal with addressing them. Propagandists find it much easier to wipe out a whole species than to change the types of behaviour that led to the crisis. In addition to labelling bats as the main enemy, a quite common narrative in the media (new media in particular) during the first half of 2020 and the first wave of the pandemic, was the narrative of the “dirty Chinese” as enemies who would “eat anything that flies, crawls, walks, slithers or swims”, and this narrative was also sometimes communicated by Donald Trump, the U.S. president during this period⁷⁵. In the first wave of the pandemic as he failed to manage the crisis, he found it politically opportune to turn the attention of the American public away from the inadequacy of the administration to the “real culprit” – the Chinese enemy.

However, labelling, also known as *name-calling*⁷⁶, is not the only propaganda method used in foreign and local media by representatives of the government in order to shift the attention of the public and use the crisis for gaining political points. A great number of propaganda techniques dating to the period before World War II has also been used, such as *glittering generalities* through which individuals (for e.g., representatives of the National Crisis Headquarters) were linked to universal human values thus creating the framework for the acceptance and support for their statements without examination of the evidence. The so-called *transfer* technique was also often used, in which positive attributes of some universal and national symbols are transferred to individuals, as well as *testimonials*, where statements by individuals holding a position of authority in the public or even by innocent children, are purposefully shared with the public, in order to ensure the uncritical acceptance of all ideas, measures and attitudes by representatives of the Crisis Headquarters. The technique known as *plain folks* was also used, a method in which the speaker tries to convince the audience that his/her ideas are good because they are rooted in common sense, are self-explanatory,

73 Barney Jeffries, “The Loss of Nature and the Rise of Pandemics”.

74 Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion, Fifth Edition*, SAGE, Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC 2012, p. 240.

75 *Donald Trump Tweets Describing Coronavirus As “A Very Bad ‘Gift’ From China”*, <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/trump-tweets-describing-coronavirus-as-a-very-bad-gift-from-china-2236813>; Accessed: 9 December 2020.

76 Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion, Fifth Edition*, p. 237.

close to the common people, and the speaker is also one of the people. During the first wave of the corona crisis, the Crisis Headquarters and members of the Government made wide use of the *card stacking* technique which included offering selective information that support the proposed measures and ideas. The *bandwagon* technique was also used, manipulating the conformism of people who like to belong to socially accepted groups under the banner “everybody’s doing it!” thus convincing citizens to follow the Headquarters’ measures and hop on this “bandwagon”, so that the “parade” would not leave the station without them.⁷⁷ Given the fact that media framing entails the creation of quite a selective interpretation frame for presenting very complex information and social phenomena, it is manipulative in itself and corresponds to propaganda intentions related to hidden, often ideological, interests.

This paper deals with media framing of the coronavirus in Croatia, and the work consists of four parts: Introduction, The theory of media framing and propaganda, Analysis of media framing of the coronavirus in Croatia and finally, the Conclusion. Following the introductory section in which the subject matter is placed within a situational frame, the second part presents the media framing phenomenon and how it relates to propaganda. Given the fact that media framing largely relies on stories and storytelling, the first section also presents manipulation with so-called master myths in media framing and research results on media manipulation of the pandemic theme from other countries. The third part presents a case study of media framing of the coronavirus in Croatia using examples of master narratives used for presenting this subject in Croatian media. This paper explores the way in which Croatian print media have framed the news on the coronavirus in the period from first introducing social distancing measures (19 March 2020) to relaxing the measures (27 April 2020). The unit of analysis are thematically selected media articles which illustrate master narratives (overcoming the monster, rags to riches, the quest, tragedy as punishment for egoism and arrogance, rebirth, the hero archetype) used for media framing of the coronavirus. The articles have been analysed using the qualitative research method of narrative analysis according to the matrix created by Gillespie and Toynbee. The final part of the paper offers research conclusions and recommendations.

2. THE THEORY OF MEDIA FRAMING AND PROPAGANDA

According to Sproule, propaganda “represents the work of large organizations or groups to win over the public for special interests through a massive orchestration of attractive conclusions packaged to conceal both their persuasive purpose and lack of sound supporting reasons”.⁷⁸ Jowett and O’Donnell emphasize that the use of propaganda includes purposefulness, which is why it is related to control and considered to be an intentional effort to change or maintain the balance of power useful to the propagandist. In their view, the purposeful effort by propagandists is usually related to a clear

⁷⁷ Alfred M. Lee and Elizabeth B. Lee, *The fine art of propaganda*. International Society for General Semantics, San Francisco 1979.

⁷⁸ J. Michael Sproule, *Channels of Propaganda*. Edinfo, Bloomington 1994, p. 8.

institutional ideology and goal since the purpose of propaganda is to share a particular ideology with the public.⁷⁹ The aim of using propaganda methods through mass media is the “systematic and conscious promotion of a set of ideas and actions developed by those advocating for such a doctrine and having use of it”.⁸⁰ Although propaganda from opposing groups is perceived as negative and is easily identified as propaganda, the ideology of one’s own group is not perceived as either good or bad.⁸¹ Propagandists promote the manufacture of consent in the public through “appealing to feelings, using insecurities, capitalizing on the ambiguities of language and inverting the rules of logic”.⁸² Herman and Chomsky see a strong link between propaganda and media framing since the purpose of media is to serve the needs and interests of the elite which to a large extent benefits from policies related to neoliberal economy. According to Herman and Chomsky, the media fulfil this purpose precisely by framing the news.⁸³ Car emphasizes the particular importance of how journalists select their information because “if the media do not report about it – it might as well not have happened”, and “what they do report about – continues to be retold and shared in relation to the media discourse which has imposed an appropriate perspective onto this event or issue, as well as the frame within which we as the general public should understand the event or issue, continue discussing it, or merely accept it as fact”, which happens, “regardless of whether this is relevant, verified or true”.⁸⁴

Tankard warns that the media frame may eliminate certain voices or weaken arguments because the media may frame some questions and phenomena in a way that is beneficial only to one side, without explicitly showing bias. According to Tankard, the process of defining rules of debate to a large extent supports the manufacture of consent for a chosen ideological position.⁸⁵ Hackett noted that analysing media framing may reveal background interests which impact the way in which the media address a certain topic or phenomenon. Framing is a more sophisticated concept than the concept of media bias, it goes beyond the “for or against” approach or the distinction between positive and negative, as it enables much more complex emotional as well as cognitive responses by determining the horizon of a particular media debate. Media framing is an important instrument of propaganda because it can influence the media public, even to the point of completely turning public

79 Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion, Fifth Edition*, p. 3.

80 Eileen Gambrill and Amanda Reiman, “A Propaganda Index for Reviewing Problem Framing in Articles and Manuscripts: An Exploratory Study”, *Plus One* 6 (5/2011), p. 7.

81 Deepa Kumar, “Media, War, and Propaganda: Strategies of Information Management during the 2003 Iraq War”, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3 (1/2012), pp. 48-69.

82 Eileen Gambrill and Amanda Reiman, “A Propaganda Index for Reviewing Problem Framing in Articles and Manuscripts: An Exploratory Study”, p. 8.

83 Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Pantheon Books. New York 1988.

84 Viktorija Car, *Mi i oni kroz medijske naočale. (Us and Them Through the Media Lens)* ACT Printlab. Zagreb-Belgrade-Sarajevo 2015, p. 7.

85 James W. Tankard, “The Empirical Approach to the Study of Media Framing”, in: Stephen D. Reese, O. Gandy, and A. E. Grant, *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World*, Routledge, New York 2001, p. 95.

opinion by changing the media frame within which a certain phenomenon is presented.⁸⁶ The theory of media framing approaches the media text through its interpretative frame as “the central idea that organizes news content by providing it with context” through shaping, editing and presenting news that consciously or unconsciously put information within a certain interpretation frame.⁸⁷ According to media framing theory, the journalistic choice of news items uses an interpretation frame in order to select and process information, anchoring it in already memorized data/experiences and in interpretations of new events on the basis of these categorized, organized and interpreted life experiences with additional meaning. Framing selects, processes and interprets in such a way that it emphasizes certain aspects of reality, while ignoring or neglecting other aspects. This process may happen consciously or unconsciously, and does not relate only to the way journalists choose the news, but also how they impact the public, since the public uses existing interpretation frames and develops new ones. In framing, journalists emphasize those aspects of a phenomenon that support the crucial building blocks of interpretation frames.⁸⁸ Early developments of media framing theory were mainly influenced by Goffman’s metaphorical concept of frame as a part of the picture (*strip*) which means narrowing down an event or phenomenon to one strip around which a framework can then be built, i.e., the dominant narrative which largely impacts the way in which the phenomenon is to be interpreted as a whole. This concept is followed by the concept of *setting the tone* which guides the total impression of a phenomenon, while the third frame concept emphasizes the frame as the main idea around which the media narrative is built as a whole.⁸⁹ Within media framing, Gamson and Modigliani developed the theory of media packaging. A media package can be recognized through key words and the use of phrases that point to a particular media frame. In addition to this approach, the media framing theory also developed the idea of framing as a multidimensional concept according to which a media frame is impacted by a whole range of factors including the journalist’s gender, the publication source, the choice of words in presenting opposing views etc.⁹⁰ Shoemaker and Reese note that the dominant, elite and journalistic ideology may all influence how the news is framed. The dominant ideology is the one that takes for granted the majority worldview of a particular society. Elite ideology is the ideology of the ruling political elite and it usually corresponds to the dominant ideology. Shoemaker and Reese emphasize that elite ideology is the main factor in media framing. Journalistic ideology is related to media routine and values of professional journalism.⁹¹

86 Ibid, p. 96.

87 Viktorija Car, *Mi i oni kroz medijske naočale*. ACT Printlab. Zagreb-Beograd-Sarajevo 2015, p. 7.

88 Michael Kunczik and Astrid Zipfel, *Uvod u znanost o medijima i komunikologiju* (Introduction to Media Science and Communicology), Zaklada Friedrich Ebert, Zagreb 2006, pp. 147-149.

89 James W. Tankard, “The Empirical Approach to the Study of Media Framing”, p. 98.

90 Ibid, p. 99.

91 Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, S. *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Media Content*. Longman. New York 1996, p. 234.

It should be noted that there is no agreement in communication theory on media framing theory/theories. Some theorists do not see media framing theories as empirically confirmed⁹² but it is extremely difficult to implement principles of empirical evidence within social sciences in the same way they are implemented in natural and technical sciences. The media frame theory developed through observation and analyses of a corpus of media texts as well as through searching for certain correspondences and rules, that is, more or less stable patterns within existing media narratives. It should also be noted that according to some theorists, media frames are not eternal or universal, but change in line with changes in ideologies and value systems. Brosius and Eps for instance believe that new frameworks are used for extraordinary situations or new topics, thus replacing the old ones. This is particularly evident in reports on crises. After the initial information on a new crisis, the media pile up data on similar crises although this information needn't have the same level of gravity or complexity. In this way the media influence how we perceive the gravity of the crisis even though reality and facts are largely different from the reality presented in the media.⁹³

Research in communication trends shows that storytelling is one of the most important skills for anyone working in communications professionally.⁹⁴ Storytelling is defined as the normative, discursive and political process of creating a story, through which a problem or source of difficulties is articulated, as well as possible solutions and way of convincing the public to agree, unite and join the process of collective action.⁹⁵ It entails creating a situation in a planned and selective manner so that the audience may be prepared for the future. This process takes into account the existence of multiple and potentially opposed perspectives of reality, depending on the different ambitions, interests and opinions of the general public. Storytelling is here then considered to be a promising tool in designing meaning and encouraging collective action towards a specific direction.⁹⁶ Media framing relies on the skill of storytelling, and theorists like Goffmann,⁹⁷ Tobias,⁹⁸ Booker,⁹⁹ Burke,¹⁰⁰

92 Michael Kunczik and Astrid Zipfel, *Uvod u znanost o medijima i komunikologiju*, Zaklada Friedrich Ebert, Zagreb 2006, pp. 147-148.

93 Hans-Bernd Brosius and Peter Eps, "Verändern Schlüsselereignisse journalistische Selektionskriterien? Framing am Beispiel der Berichterstattung über Anschläge gegen Ausländer und Asylanten", in: *Rundfunk und Fernsehen* (41/1993), pp. 512-530.

94 "USC Annenberg's 2017 Global Communications Report predicts convergence of marketing and public relations", <https://annenberg.usc.edu/research/center-public-relations/news/usc-annengergs-2017-global-communications-report-predicts>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

95 Teun A. Van Dijk, "Imagining future places: How designs co-constitute what is, and thus influence what will be". *Planning Theory* 10 (2/2011), pp. 124-143.

96 Stefan Hartman, Constanza Parra i Gert de Roo, "Framing strategic storytelling in the context of transition management to stimulate tourism destination development", *Tourism Management* 75 (2019), p. 90.

97 Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, Northeastern University Press, Boston 1986.

98 Ronald Tobias, *20 Master Plots (And How to Build Them)*. Writer's Digest Books, Cincinnati 1993.

99 Christopher Booker, *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, Continuum, London New York 2006.

100 Kenneth Burke, *Counter-statement*. University of California Press. Berkeley 1968.

Kent¹⁰¹ and Lule¹⁰² emphasize that master narratives (or master myths as they are called by some theorists), selected from myths, fairy tales and dreams, to a large extent strengthen the manipulative effects of media framing. Lule defines a master myth as a role model or pattern, the total invisible root of consciousness.¹⁰³ According to Bordwell and Thompson, a narrative is any selection of causally linked events happening within a certain time and space.¹⁰⁴ Media framing is therefore a technique through which the media frames the news into narratives that correspond to universally recognizable patterns at the deepest, unconscious levels of the psyche, which can influence how the public reacts, as can be evidenced by examples of Nazi, Soviet and other totalitarian propaganda, but also modern democratic propaganda. The manipulation of such narratives however, is not guaranteed or absolute. In spite of the growing domination of global media conglomerates in the modern global media ecosystem, which has been facilitated by the increasing deregulation of rules on media monopolies,¹⁰⁵ media literacy of the public as well as the existence of different media interpretations and views in different media, to a large extent limits the propaganda effect of manipulating master narratives in media framing. The qualitative research method for analysing narratives by Gillespie and Toynbee includes the descriptive phase identifying parts of the narrative in order to examine the way in which the media text is organized, and the interpretative phase in which the meaning of narrative elements is interpreted. The focus is on analysing the ways of providing information (Information with the aim of garnering support; Positive appraisal of us; Negative appraisal of them; Emphasizing community/common participation in the topic of the statement; Emphasizing a certain perspective and/or concept of the statement (problem, solution, guilt etc.)).¹⁰⁶

The corona crisis which has been the main theme of this year, definitely constitutes a large global crisis, and according to Brosius and Eps¹⁰⁷, it is precisely new extraordinary situations like these that use new media frames to change the old ones. Researchers of manipulative communication styles have meticulously analysed the way in which the topic of the corona crisis has been presented in the media, as well as the way in which it corresponds to previous media presentations of epidemics. For example, Ali Haif Abbas uses Van Dijk's discourse analysis in his research to show how *The New York Times* in the U.S. and the *Global Times* in China have framed the news on the coronavirus pandemic for political and ideological purposes. The *New York Times* focused on propaganda of the Chinese Communist Party, its inability to control the spread of the epidemic, weaknesses

101 Michael L. Kent, The Power of Storytelling in Public Relations: Understanding the 20 Master Plots. *Public Relations Review* 41 (2015), pp. 480–489.

102 Jack Lule, *Daily News, Eternal Stories. The Mythological Role of Journalism*, The Guilford Press, New York 2001.

103 Ibid.

104 David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Minding Movies: Observations on the Art, Craft, and Business of Filmmaking*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago London 2011.

105 Joseph Turow, *Mediji danas: Uvod u masovne komunikacije* (Media Today: Mass Communication in a Converging World), Clio, Belgrade 2013, pp. 346-347.

106 Marie Gillespie and Jason Toynbee, *Analysing media texts*, Open University Press / Open University, Maidenhead New York 2006.

107 Hans-Bernd Brosius and Peter Eps, "Verändern Schlüsselereignisse journalistische Selektionskriterien? Framing am Beispiel der Berichterstattung über Anschläge gegen Ausländer und Asylanten".

in controlling the virus and providing medical equipment as well as the totalitarian treatment of people and healthcare workers. The Chinese *Global Times* also focused on negative stories relating to COVID-19 in the U.S., particularly the inability of the American administration led by President Trump in fighting the new virus.¹⁰⁸ It is significant that neither of these media questioned the way in which the pandemic was managed within one's own country which confirms the thesis that framing news is mainly influenced by ideology of the elite, which is usually in line with dominant ideology. Tiffany Karalis Noel is one of the rare researchers to focus on analysing the way in which American media have encouraged xenophobia through media framing of people of Asian descent during the global COVID-19 pandemic. She notes it is necessary to question the different aspects of intercultural communication regarding public health issues.¹⁰⁹ This approach unfortunately is not the dominant model in narratives of research articles addressing the subject of media manipulation during the corona crisis, so it seems that variants of elite and dominant ideologies can be seen not only in articles for the general public but also in scientific articles dealing with this subject.

Jacob for example researched how the COVID-19 pandemic damaged the image of China as an efficient one-party Communist state due to obfuscation and late reporting on the viral epidemic. He says that China failed to adjust its communication to new circumstances, i.e. it followed traditional interests of foreign affairs and security, focusing on its power struggle with the U.S. The author believes that the Chinese Communist Party reacted with such authoritarian and restrictive responses to the pandemic in order to confirm its legitimacy.¹¹⁰ At the same time, Jacob fails to notice the manipulative media communication on the pandemic shared by the U.S. administration. Similar conclusions are offered by Vanessa Molter and Renee DiResta who analysed English language posts on Facebook by Chinese state media regarding the coronavirus pandemic in order to gain insight into the way Chinese authorities communicate this topic to the rest of the world through using state media. They noticed these repeating frames: sharing positive stories and promoting responses to the pandemic by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), rewriting recent history in a way beneficial for the CCP during the progress of the coronavirus pandemic and using targeted adverts for sharing intended messages. They concluded this was problematic propaganda content containing misinformation and conspiracy theories. Therefore they suggest social networks should not publish paid advertisements of such harmful content.¹¹¹ It is a pity that this type of analysis has a clear ideological bias.

108 Ali Haif Abbas, "Politicizing the Pandemic: A Schemata Analysis of COVID-19 News in Two Selected Newspapers", *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law - Revue internationale de Sémiotique juridique*, 2020, DOI: 10.1007/s11196-020-09745-2.

109 Tiffany Karalis Noel, "Conflating culture with COVID-19: Xenophobic repercussions of a global pandemic", *Social Sciences & Humanities Open 2* (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100044>.

110 Jabin T. Jacob, "'To Tell China's Story Well': China's International Messaging during the COVID-19 Pandemic", *China Report 56*, (3/2020), pp. 374-392.

111 Vanessa Molter and Renee DiResta, "Pandemics & Propaganda: How Chinese State Media Creates and Propagates CCP Coronavirus Narratives", *The Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review 1* (1/2020), Special Issue on Covid-19 and Misinformation.

Other researchers used a somewhat more objective analytical perspective to focus on communication on social networks, with particular focus on Twitter, since traditional media often report information precisely from this social network which has been confirmed as the most common source of fake news.¹¹² They concluded that sharing misinformation on social media spreads faster than the spread of COVID-19 and that misinformation can have extremely harmful consequences for people's health.¹¹³

This short review of some scientific articles examining the manipulative media communication on the pandemic, reveals the existence of very selective, ideologically biased media frameworks not only in news articles, but also in scientific texts. The use of the analytical matrix suggested by Gillespie and Toynebee reveals all the crucial elements of manipulating master narratives within the framing process:

- Providing information with the aim of gaining support;
- Positive appraisal of us;
- Negative appraisal of them;
- Emphasizing community/common participation in the pandemic theme; and
- Emphasizing a certain perspective and/or thematic concept (problem, solution, guilt etc.).

3. ANALYSIS OF MEDIA FRAMING OF THE CORONAVIRUS IN CROATIA

Ever since the beginning of the corona crisis, the media in Croatia have closely followed this topic. Most mainstream media in Croatia put it on their agenda (*agenda setting*) and this already makes clear how largely they influenced what the citizens of Croatia should think about, or even in what manner.¹¹⁴ In terms of agenda setting i.e. the media agenda, this topic combines several characteristic agendas:¹¹⁵ the media, public and political agenda, and in the autumn wave of the pandemic and the increased communication on COVID-19 vaccines, a corporate agenda also came to the fore. This intermingling of interests by different stakeholders who hold the power to set the media agenda, make this topic particularly interesting for media analysis. However, agenda setting in the context of combined interests by different stakeholders who hold the power to set an agenda (the

112 Robinson Meyer, "The Grim Conclusions of the Largest-Ever Study of Fake News", *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/03/largest-study-ever-fake-news-mit-twitter/555104/> Accessed: 20 December 2020.

113 Zapan Barua, Sajib Barua, Salma Aktar, Najma Kabir and Mingze Li, "Effects of misinformation on COVID-19 individual responses and recommendations for resilience of disastrous consequences of misinformation", *Progress in Disaster Science* 8 (2020), pp. 100-119.

Kris Hartley and Vu Minh Khuong, "Fighting fake news in the COVID-19 era: policy insights from an equilibrium model", *Policy Sciences* (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-020-09405-z>.

114 M. McCombs and D. Shaw, The agenda-setting function of the mass media, *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2/1976), pp. 176-187.

115 Everett M. Rogers and James W. Dearing, "Agenda-setting research: Where has it been, where is it going?", *Annals of the International Communication Association* 11 (1/1988), pp. 555-594.

media, public interest, politics, corporations), merely provide the first manipulative layer in media presentation. Given the fact that this topic dominated the media agenda during the whole period since social distancing measures were introduced (19 March 2020) up to when they were relaxed (27 April 2020), and that it was strongly contextualized with the coming parliamentary elections, the way in which the media framed the topic in this period, points to their strong ambition to convince the citizens of Croatia how they should be thinking about this crisis, i.e. that the Government of Croatia and the National Crisis Headquarters appointed by the Government (hereinafter referred to as: Crisis Headquarters) are extremely successful in managing this extremely difficult crisis which makes Croatia one of the most successful countries in managing the pandemic – due to heroic efforts and capabilities of the Government and its satellite as represented by the Crisis Headquarters. From the beginning of the crisis, the Croatian Government was particularly aware of the fact that the way in which managing of the corona crisis is perceived in the public will be the crucial factor determining the winner of the parliamentary election. In March 2020, and without a public competition, the Government employed the company Media Val, a PR agency. In March this agency bought the domain Koronavirus.hr and started with the provision of its services to the Government. Asked by Faktograf, the only fact checking portal in Croatia, how this cooperation worth several hundred thousands kunas was actually organized, the Government stated: “The Ministry of Health organized the emergency establishment of the official website koronavirus.hr and related webpages and accounts on social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, as well as corresponding topics on forum.hr, in order to provide regularly updated and correct information related to the COVID-19 epidemic, with the aim of protecting the lives and health of citizens of the Republic of Croatia and other persons as well as to provide them with timely information, which is considered to be among the security interests of the Republic of Croatia”.¹¹⁶ Given this extraordinary short response by the Government, it was impossible to conclude whether these services included sharing information based on which the media framed the Government during the lockdown period, and especially select members of the Crisis Headquarters by the mentioned agency, or whether this was a consequence of activities by the Government’s i.e. institutional public relations which also points to the use of state resources for party interests. However, the fact that these were created and not spontaneous narratives is clear from the great similarity of various content published in different media during this period.

In accordance with the thesis by Brosius and Eps that emergency situations use new frameworks which supplant the old ones, it should be noted that in the beginning of the corona crisis, the media in Croatia made comparisons to previous crises caused by viruses. The webpage telegram.hr for example explains in an article dated 20 April,¹¹⁷ why the world had to stop due to COVID-19,

116 Ana Brakus, “Vlada skriva tko je odlučio zaobići javnu nabavu i platiti PR agenciji pola milijuna kuna za stranicu Koronavirus.hr” (The Government is hiding who bypassed public procurement procedures and paid half a million kuna for the Koronavirus.hr webpage) , <https://faktograf.hr/2020/05/19/media-val-vlada-koronavirus-stranica/>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

117 Eva Benedik, “Zašto je svijet morao stati zbog COVIDA-19, ali zbog SARS-a, MERS-a i Ebole nije?” (Why the world

and not in the case of SARS, MERS or Ebola virus. The author of the article finds the explanation in epidemiological reasons because “SARS and MERS did not cause the same level of harm like COVID-19 as they do not spread so easily. SARS and MERS spread through much closer contact, among members of families or healthcare workers and their patients. Most importantly, those infected do not spread the disease while they don’t have the symptoms. After they are taken ill, people usually remain at home or are hospitalized which makes it harder for the virus to spread”. The author goes on to explain that although swine flu spreads easily, it is not as deadly, because in 2009 it killed more than half a million people and it is estimated that more than a billion people were infected by the end of 2010, while Ebola which is much deadlier than Covid-19, can be isolated more easily. According to Lule’s master myth matrix, this article frames the coronavirus within the flood narrative which in newspaper articles as a rule relates to large natural disaster events, dangers related to inexplicable and wild forces of nature faced with which man is often helpless. This narrative of the coronavirus was present in almost all media content during the lockdown period, the purpose of which was to convince the public that suspension of human rights guaranteed under the Constitution is justified, even though this was not the case in similar situations from previous crises. A new narrative was created which strongly took hold in the media reality even after the lockdown period, and according to this frame, human rights to the freedom of movement, socializing and work were less important than the necessary fight against an invisible enemy through which a change in ideology and value systems is created. During the lockdown period, media content often demanded that the public accept the narrative of a victimized hero. The “victim” adds a human element to the tragedy in most news items, and the victim master myth offers examples of bravery and heroics in directly facing death: plans, careers, dreams and lives shatter in an instant due to the virus as a force of nature, the message being that life should be lived alongside the constant presence of death. On 26 March 2020 in an article and segment “These are the heroes fighting the invisible enemy: You find it difficult to stay at home? Look at them and think again”¹¹⁸ RTL Television celebrates doctors, salesclerks, delivery workers and others who bravely work every day and endanger their own lives so that citizens for whom the epidemic has limited the right to move, socialize and work, would find life in isolation more pleasant. The victim narrative is in the frame. A similar framework is obvious in the messages: *Be responsible, stay at home*, appealing to the public to accept the role of the victimized hero in order to overcome an invisible, powerful enemy. Media discourse perpetuates victory narratives like David vs. Goliath, or the common man against the unrelenting forces of nature, salvation, the fall and sacrifice that leads to victory and a painful transformation promising a new, better world. In opposition to the responsible heroes, the media space was in this period also filled with punishment narratives on irresponsible individuals

had to stand still for COVID-19, but not for SARS, MERS or Ebola?”), <https://www.telegram.hr/zivot/zasto-je-svijet-morao-stati-zbog-covida-19-ali-zbog-sars-a-mers-a-i-bole-nije/>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

118 Danka Derifaj, “Dok ste vi doma, oni rade za vas! Direkt donosi priču o herojima u doba koronavirusa” (While you stay in, they work for you! Direkt presents the story on heroes during the corona crisis), <https://www.rtl.hr/vijesti-hr/korona/3671445/dok-ste-vi-doma-oni-rade-za-vas-direkt-donosi-pricu-o-herojima-u-doba-koronavirusa/>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

who do not listen to epidemiologists due to their stupidity or arrogance. For example, an article on Net.hr published on 21 March 2020 under the title “Incredible arrogance: Man from the Virovitica area in self-isolation invited his friends and had a party, now he is facing a hefty fine”¹¹⁹ warns of an arrogant individual fined with 8000 HRK. In line with this narrative, the Croatian media also reported on the American basketball player who joked about the virus and was later infected,¹²⁰ and an American youth who went to a corona party where he caught the virus and died a horrible death.¹²¹ Punishments vary from financial ones, to public shaming and deaths. At the same time, individuals from the Crisis Headquarters, primarily Davor Božinović, Krunoslav Capak and Alemka Markotić, were transformed almost overnight into media heroes during the analysed period and the media worked hard to build their personality cults. Ranging from panegyrics to Alemka Markotić¹²² and Minister Vili Beroš¹²³ in lifestyle magazines such as Gloria, to media inflating the news on children drawing corona heroes,¹²⁴ or their accessibility and everyday qualities,¹²⁵ in addition to the constant tension of press conferences held every day, when these archetypal heroes present to the public their successful heroic fight against the powerful enemy. Their characteristics during the lockdown period were bravery, professionalism, wisdom, empathy, strictness, a serious approach, unquestionable authority, and they were often compared to epidemiologists from other countries in order to stress their superiority in finding the most appropriate response to the crisis, which confirms the quest narrative.

Analysing the previously mentioned articles through using the analytical matrix suggested by Gillespie and Toynbee, all key elements for manipulating master narratives in the media framing process are visible here:

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- 119 “Nevjerojatna bahatost: Muškarac s područja Virovitice u samoizolaciji pozvao ekipu i napravio tulum, platit će masnu kaznu”, <https://net.hr/danas/crna-kronika/nevjerojatna-bahatost-muskarac-s-podrucja-virovitice-u-samoizolaciji-pozvao-ekipu-i-napravio-tulum-platit-ce-masnu-kaznu/>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 120 “Prije dva dana sprdao se s koronavirusom, a sada je prvi zaraženi košarkaš u NBA ligi” (Two days ago he joked about the coronavirus, now he is the first infected basketball player in the NBA League), <https://gol.dnevnik.hr/clanak/rubrika/kosarka/rudy-gobert-sprdao-se-s-koronavirusom-prije-dva-dana---597205.html>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 121 “Muškarac otišao na ‘korona party’ kako bi dokazao da je virus prevara. Zarazio se i umro!” (Man goes to a ‘corona party’ to prove the virus is a hoax. He got infected and died!), <https://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/svijet/muskarac-otisao-na-korona-party-kako-bi-dokazao-da-je-virus-prevara-zarazio-se-i-umro-15007927>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 122 “Heroina nacije: prof. Alemka Markotić otkriva kada će nam biti bolje: ‘vidim svjetlo na kraju tunela’”, (National heroine: Professor Alemka Markotić reveals when things will get better: ‘I can see the light at the end of the tunnel’”) <https://www.gloria.hr/gl/magazin/heroina-nacije-prof-alemka-markotic-otkriva-kada-ce-nam-biti-bolje-vidim-svjetlo-na-kraju-tunela-10184098>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 123 “Ekskluzivno: supruga junaka nacije otkriva čime ju je ministar osvojio i što najviše kod njega voli” (Exclusive: wife of national hero reveals how the Minister swept her off her feet and what she loves most about him”), <https://www.gloria.hr/gl/magazin/ekskluzivno-supruga-junaka-nacije-otkriva-cime-ju-je-ministar-osvojio-i-sto-najvise-kod-njega-voli-10106017>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 124 Martina Petrović, “Djeca crtežima pokazuju da su članovi stožera njihovi junaci - Berošev i Božinovićev odgovor je nevjerojatno dirljiv” (Children draw members of the headquarters as their heroes and the touching response by Beroš and Božinović), <https://miss7.24sata.hr/lifestyle/djeca-crtezima-pokazuju-da-su-clanovi-stozera-njihovi-junaci-berosev-i-bozinovicev-odgovor-je-nevjerojatno-dirljiv-29839>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.
- 125 “Šimun o pozivu ministra: ‘On još stigne i mene nazvati, sad je definitivno heroj’” (Šimun on the Minister’s invitation: He can still call me, he is definitely a hero now), <https://novosti.hr/simun-o-pozivu-ministra-on-jos-stigne-i-mene-nazvati-sad-je-definitivno-heroj/>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

- Providing information with the aim of gaining public consent for suspending fundamental constitutional rights (limiting freedom,¹²⁶ freedom of movement,¹²⁷ the right to public assembly,¹²⁸ commerce freedoms,¹²⁹ etc.) which is visible in media content explaining why the world needed to stand still for COVID-19;
- Positive appraisal of us, the responsible, obedient, those aboard the acceptable train so skilfully managed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and its lobbyists in the Crisis Headquarters which is visible in media content celebrating heroes in the war against the invisible enemy;
- Negative appraisal of those not aboard the Government train and not obeying the prescribed epidemiological measures who then need to be punished with fines, public shaming, disease, and the worst among them, with death;
- Emphasizing community/shared participation in the pandemic theme visible through continued reiteration of messages “Be responsible, stay at home” appealing to the acceptance of the victimized hero role in order to together overcome the invisible, powerful enemy;
- Emphasizing a certain perspective and/or concept of the pandemic theme is visible in creating a whole new narrative that deeply took hold in the media reality even after the lockdown period, and according to this frame, human rights are not as important as the fight against the virus which paves the way to a change in ideology and value systems.

IN CONCLUSION

The presented analysis makes clear that in Croatia during the lockdown, media narratives were extremely influenced by elite ideology i.e. ideology of the ruling party, which had the consequence of creating very recognizable, mythical and even banal media frames. Research of media narratives in Croatia during the lockdown period points to an extremely frequent use of master narratives of the flood, overcoming the monster, the quest, tragedy as punishment for egoism and arrogance, rebirth, while members of the Crisis Headquarters were framed within the hero archetype.

126 The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Article 22: “No one shall be deprived of liberty, nor may such liberty be restricted, except when specified by law, upon which a court shall decide”, <https://www.sabor.hr/en/constitution-republic-croatia-consolidated-text>; Accessed: 13 May 2021.

127 The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Article 32: “Anyone lawfully within the territory of the Republic of Croatia shall enjoy freedom of movement and freedom to choose his/her residence. All citizens of the Republic shall be entitled to leave the state territory at any time and permanently or temporarily settle abroad, and to return at any time. The right to movement within the territory of the Republic of Croatia and the right to depart may be exceptionally be curtailed by law, if necessary to protect the legal order, or the health, rights and liberties of others”, <https://www.sabor.hr/en/constitution-republic-croatia-consolidated-text>; Accessed: 13 May 2021.

128 The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Article 42: “Everyone shall be guaranteed the right to public assembly and peaceful protest, in compliance with law”, <https://www.sabor.hr/en/constitution-republic-croatia-consolidated-text>; Accessed: 13 May 2021.

129 The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Article 49: “Free enterprise and free markets shall form the foundation of the economic system of the Republic of Croatia”, <https://www.sabor.hr/en/constitution-republic-croatia-consolidated-text>; Accessed: 13 May 2021.

In terms of frequently used propaganda techniques, name calling was used against all of those who did not unquestioningly give consent to the suspension of fundamental human rights without constitutionally prescribed processes. These individuals were likened to anti-vaxxers and conspiracy theory believers. The glittering generality technique was also used, by which individuals such as Alemka Markotić, Vili Beroš and Krunoslav Capak were linked to universal virtues like responsibility, bravery, wisdom, empathy, firmness, which created the frame for the acceptance and approval of their statements without examining the evidence. The technique of transfer was also frequently used, whereby positive attributes of national symbols were transferred onto individuals, like for example the telling illustration of a “children’s” drawing for an imaginary 30 kuna note bearing the image of Alemka Markotić and a whole range of testimonials by innocent children celebrating the COVID heroes Alemka Markotić and Vili Beroš, with the purpose of ensuring uncritical acceptance of all ideas, measures and views by representatives of the Crisis Headquarters.¹³⁰ The technique known as plain folks was also used, which presented to the public the accessibility of COVID heroes and heroines who regardless of their numerous responsibilities found the time to respond to children who drew pictures of them. The Crisis Headquarters and the Government often used the card stacking technique and meticulously selected information that painted suggested measures in good light even when they had no epidemiological foundation such as the ones relating to the Catholic Church and veterans as important elective bodies for the Croatian Democratic Party. The conformity of the people was continuously manipulated when the bandwagon technique was used, which is obvious in the constant pleas for responsibility and community. All of this points to the conclusion that during the spring lockdown, communication was a planned activity by the Government aimed towards rallying the public for its particular political interests, that is, winning the parliamentary election, with the help of mass orchestration of attractively packaged media messages whose actual purpose and lack of real reasons for support were hidden under the cover of the global crisis.

Unfortunately, analysis of foreign media and scientific narratives also points to similar conclusions, that is, the nonexistence of a real critical approach which would be the necessary precondition for achieving citizen media literacy. Despite frequent messages that crisis is an opportunity, and that this global crisis might pave the way to establishing a better and just world, this ambition is not visible in media or scientific frameworks. The main features are old divisions, shifting responsibilities to others and unwillingness and inability to accept one’s responsibility as a species for the climate crisis we are facing and the degraded environment which are related to the current pandemic. It is still easier to label the enemy in bats, the Chinese people, or people who don’t think like us, than to take responsibility and work at solving the real issues, instead of the ones created through political interests.

The worrying aspect is that the comparison of this crisis to previous ones reveals the ambition to establish a new, but not necessarily a better or more just ideological and value system. In this system

¹³⁰ <https://miss7.24sata.hr/lifestyle/djeca-crtezima-pokazuju-da-su-clanovi-stozera-njihovi-junaci-berosev-i-bozinov-icev-odgovor-je-nevjerojatno-dirljiv-29839>; Accessed: 20 December 2020.

it is not problematic to use media manipulation in order to manufacture consent for the suspension of fundamental human rights, by several individuals who have been purposefully framed as heroes in order to provide them with an almost godlike status. The global lockdown phenomenon can in this sense be defined as a very successful experiment of pacifying people through using media framing methods.

Medijsko uokvirivanje korona virusa u Hrvatskoj

Sažetak

Medijsko uokvirivanje je tehnika kojom mediji uokviruju vijesti u prepoznatljive narative koji korespondiraju s nesvjesnim slojevima psihe. Mediji prenaglašavaju određene aspekte događaja dok, s druge strane, po metodi Prokrustove postelje ignoriraju one aspekte koji se ne uklapaju u odabrani narativ (Kunczik i Zipfel, 1998: 103). Medijsko uokvirivanje se oslanja na vještinu pričanja priča, odnosno storytelling, a teoretičari naglašavaju kako master narativi selektirani iz mitova, bajki i snova u velikoj mjeri osnažuju manipulativne učinke medijskog uokvirivanja (Kent, 2015). Rad istražuje na koji su način hrvatski mediji uokvirivali vijesti o korona virusu u razdoblju od uvođenja mjera društvenog distanciranja (19.03.2020.) do popuštanja mjera (27.04.2020.). Preliminarno istraživanje upućuje na korištenje sljedećih master narativa: pobjeda nad čudovištem, od siromaha do bogataša, potraga, tragedija kao kazna za egoizam i oholost, prepород, a istaknuti članovi Nacionalnog stožera uokvireni su u arhetip heroja. Korištenje ovih master narativa u medijskom uokvirivanju korona krize u tzv. prvom valu epidemije, ukazuje na jasnu propagandističku, odnosno manipulativnu namjeru.

Ključne riječi: *medijsko uokvirivanje, pričanje priča, master narativ, korona kriza, propaganda.*



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Ageism in the Age of Pandemic

Abstract

Elderly persons, in addition to their health needs, also have a need for being socially perceived as persons and for considering aging as a normal life process. Throughout history, older people have been considered a social problem, resulting in a negative attitude towards the old age group. Ageism is a term denoting discrimination of a group of people because of their old age. Discrimination occurs because of the belief that aging causes negative changes that make a person less attractive, less intelligent and, most importantly, less productive. During a pandemic, the society's unethical actions towards this particularly vulnerable group become evident. These include cruelties in the triage procedure in some EU countries, giving preference to those who have a better chance of survival, and the recurring impression among the younger populations that nothing significant has changed in their lives and that, accordingly, nothing should be changed in their habits and behaviour.

Key words: pandemic, hatred, ageism, young people.

Introduction

I was inspired to give a lecture on this topic by Ante Tomić's column titled "Getting Old Ain't for Sissies," published on April 12, 2020 in *Jutarnji list*.

"Who in their right mind would decide that a seventeen-year-old schoolgirl, a beautiful budding creature, should sing about an elderly woman sitting on a park bench and watching the children play, thinking about her life fading like the sun on the horizon? What did these frivolous young men and women really know about the torment of aging, about illness, fear and loneliness, about sagging skin, withered muscles, squeaky bones, and dentures on shelves?"¹³¹

During the current pandemic, when publishing data in the media about persons who have died of COVID, it is always emphasized how old the person was and whether he or she was suffering from chronic diseases. Nearly one-quarter of the tweets analyzed in a study had ageistic or potentially offensive content concerning the elderly.¹³² This constant repetition of the fact that the majority of deaths were elderly and people with chronic diseases has created an impression in one part of the younger population that nothing significant in their lives has changed. With the advent of summer and in search for familiar summertime patterns of behavior, the numbers of diseased and the epidemiological situation have changed significantly. Patients are no longer only "old", "oncological", or "chronic". Generational differences and social changes caused by the spread of infectious diseases have long been the subject of writing. A good example is found in Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, when he describes the Florentine society during the Black Death of 1348: "Such fear filled the hearts of men and women... that a brother neglected his brother, a sister her brother... a wife her husband, and even... fathers and mothers avoided caring for their children."¹³³ Boccaccio's advice is the following: protect yourself with stories. By fleeing the city, surrounding yourself with pleasant company, and telling stories for good mood, a mixture of social isolation and entertaining activities, you can survive the worst days of the epidemic. By advising people to avoid the cities, he thus pioneered what today's public health experts call social isolation.

He also understood the importance of what we now call mental wellbeing, threatened not only by the feeling of isolation, but also by stigma. Stories cannot protect people from the virus, but they at least give them a chance when it comes to fighting the negative feelings created by the epidemics and quarantine. How much humanity have we retained through this time and do we recall the triage procedures in some EU countries and the decisions on who would be put on respirators? Community attitudes towards the elderly during a pandemic can be analyzed by focusing on three

131 Ante Tomić, "Starenje nije za curice" [Getting old ain't for sissies], <https://www.jutarnji.hr/naslovnica/pise-ante-tomic-starenje-nije-za-curice-kakav-je-samo-uzas-lezati-napusten-s-krivnjom-da-ste-uzeli-postelju-i-respirator-nekom-mladem10196539> (last accessed on May 27, 2020).

132 Maria Renee Jimenez, Carolina Gomez Moreno, and Enrique Soto-Perez-de-Celis, "Coronavirus, Ageism, and Twitter: An Evaluation of Tweets about Older Adults and COVID-19," <https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.16508> (last accessed on August 20, 2019).

133 Rušev Marija, "Giovanni Boccaccio, Dekameron, PPT," 198.53.8 > rivaon > hrvatski > Boccaccio_Dekameron (last access on June 20, 2020).

important issues: the lockdown of nursing homes, recommendations of staying at home indefinitely long despite being separated from the family and suffering from increased social exclusion, and denying access to respirators during the early days of the pandemic and the exponential growth of sick persons. From “benevolent” health advice on age sensitivity to ghettoizing the elderly in order to minimize risk, ageistic rhetoric has been dominant in pandemic control.¹³⁴

We like to look for good qualities in ourselves, as well as for confirmation and gratitude in the eyes of others, and we often point out that a society is as strong as its weakest link. The World Health Organization emphasizes: “The true measure of any society is found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.” (WHO, 2019)¹³⁵

Unfortunately, there are different examples as well. The state policies of Western societies often see the elderly as a burden rather than an integral part of the population, whose members must be equally valuable. The elderly are rarely sufficiently represented in the media and the administration to have a voice in decision-making. The media play a significant role in spreading ageistic stereotypes and negative attitudes towards the elderly, especially in times of crisis.¹³⁶ The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted this exclusion and prejudice against them. The current crisis emphasizes the disturbing public speech about aging that calls into question the value of elderly lives and neglects their irreplaceable contribution to the society.

Based on the negative perception of age and aged persons, and the social attitudes towards them, we were interested in establishing how many young people without medical education could identify violence against elderly persons in their own environment.

An important dimension of the lives of older people, in addition to their health needs, is the social perception of them as persons and of aging. Throughout history, older people have been considered a social problem, resulting in a negative attitude towards the old age group. Ageism is a term denoting discrimination of a group of people because of their old age. Discrimination occurs because of the belief that aging causes negative changes that make a person less attractive, less intelligent and, most importantly, less productive. The term was coined by Maggie Kuhn, who fought discrimination against the elderly after the Vietnam War.¹³⁷ In some societies, the prevalence of ageism has led to gerontophobia, i.e. fear of aging. Four factors have contributed to the development of a negative attitude towards aging. The first is the fear of death that comes with aging. Another is the emphasis on youth culture, especially in the media. The third factor is economic, and the fourth is the way in which age was initially researched in the scientific community. Most often, the respondents would

134 Rusac Silvija, Štambuk Ana and Verić Jelena, “Dobna diskriminacija: iskustva starijih osoba” [Ageism: Experiences of elderly persons], *Hrvatska revija za rehabilitacijska istraživanja* (49/2013), pp. 96-105.

135 Renato Matic, “Odnos hrvatskoga društva prema starijim osobama: Ispit humanosti i vizije budućnosti” [Attitudes of the Croatian society towards elderly persons: A test of humanity and a vision of the future], <https://doi.org/10.31823/d.26.4.5> • UDK: 314.8-953.9:17(497.5) (last accessed on August 20, 2020).

136 Fraser Sarah, Lagace Martine, Bongue Bienvenu, et al., “Ageism and COVID-19: What Does Our Society’s Response Say about Us?” *Age and Ageing* (49/2020), pp. 692-695.

137 Formosa Marvin, “Exposing Ageism,” *BOLD* (12/2000), pp. 15-23.

be persons placed in care centers, where only a small part of the elderly population lived, moreover the part that was barely functional on its own. Ageism should be observed from two vantage points. One is that the elderly are a group within a population, and the other that this group is made up of people of different social, economic, racial, and gender characteristics, who contribute to an overall picture of a particular individual from an older population. Sexism within ageism should be mentioned as well. Elderly women have a far worse experience of aging in the society than men. They are more often marginalized by the community, often ridiculed in popular culture, and more likely to have trouble finding care towards the end of their lives. One of the ways to fight ageism is education, propaganda, and struggle against the spread of ageism in the media and the society.

Our goal

The aim has been to point out the inequality of elderly people in the society, with a special emphasis on the ability of young people to identify violence against the elderly, which is also increasingly covered by the media during the COVID pandemic.

Sources and methods

In this cross-sectional survey, we interviewed 102 young persons attending the first year of Health Studies at the University of Split with a questionnaire on identifying violence against the elderly in families within the framework of the Reference Centre of the Croatian Ministry of Health for Protection the Health of Elderly Persons. The questionnaire consisted of ten statements to which the respondents answered with “True” or “False”.¹³⁸ The authors and source of the questionnaire were: doc. dr. sc. Silvia Rusac, Faculty of Law, Study Center for Social Work, Department of Social Gerontology, and Office for Public-Health Gerontology NZJZ “Dr. Andrija Štampar” – Reference Centre of the Croatian Ministry of Health for Protection the Health of Elderly Persons: www.stampar.hr/gerontologija.

Results

In this study, differences in responses that are due to sociodemographic differences were not significant. All respondents were of the same age, with few men among them.

138 Silvia Rusac, “Nasilje nad starijim osobama u obitelji na području grada Zagreba” [Domestic violence against elderly persons in the Zagreb area], *Ljetopis socijalnog rada* (16/2009), pp. 573-594.

Table 1. The respondents' answers to the questions of the *Test for Identifying Domestic Violence against Elderly Persons*.

Age	<20	>20	
	100	0	
Sex	M	F	
	13	87	
Statement	False (F)	True (T)	Correct answer

Question No.

1. Elderly persons are mostly abused by strangers.
2. Abuse of elderly persons occurs only in poorer social strata.
3. Elderly persons always despise their abusers and report abuse.
4. Violence against elderly persons is a serious social problem.
5. Older and younger people react similarly to abuse.
6. Children who abuse elderly parents were most likely abused themselves.
7. Models of prevention and intervention in cases of child abuse cannot be applied to cases of abuse of elderly persons.
8. Causing feelings of fear or restricting the freedom of movement or communication with third parties does not constitute violence against the elderly.
9. The number of abused elderly persons increases with the growing number of elderly persons in the society.
10. Caregivers may neglect care for the elderly due to excessive alcohol consumption.

Table 1 shows the ten statements to which the respondents were to give a correct answer by responding with "True" or "False". The respondents offered the most correct answer to the statement "Abuse of elderly persons occurs only in poorer social strata," where only one person gave an incorrect answer.

Discussion

From the results shown in Table 1, we see that most respondents showed good knowledge of the given problem. In this study, the respondents were students of Health Studies, so it is to be expected that we have obtained more promising data than we would have in the general population, as they have chosen a profession that requires empathy for others. Differences in relation to the respondents' sex are not significant because the share of male respondents was small. Most of the wrong answers referred to violence against the elderly and its difference in relation to other forms of domestic violence. Distinguishing the specifics of domestic violence with regard to specific age groups is not yet sufficiently recognized in our society. Thus, when asked whether violence against elderly persons was a serious social problem, only three respondents gave the right answer. A large number of incorrect answers was also given to the questions regarding the identity of the persons who abuse the elderly, whether children who abused the elderly had themselves been abused by their parents or relatives, and whether measures and models applied to violence against children could also be applied in the prevention of violence against this social group.

Domestic violence is a set of behaviors aimed at controlling family members through the use of force, intimidation, and manipulation. Healthcare professionals can play a key role in the early detection and prevention of domestic violence, because they are the only professionals that all people come in contact with throughout their lives and can therefore create a confidential conversation environment. The victims tend to minimize and cover up domestic violence for fear that their safety will be further compromised if they confide in someone, because of shame they feel because of living in such a family, and because of the specific dynamics of violent relationships that makes the victim helpless and loyal to their abuser. It is a legal obligation of healthcare professionals to report domestic violence to the police and the state attorney's office. This is in accordance with the ethical principles of the profession, because they need to identify the causes behind the patients' problems even when they are of a non-medical nature. Through their intervention, healthcare professionals help the victim to avoid and reduce his or her exposure to violence, which helps reduce harmful health consequences and can save the victim's life and health as domestic violence tends to recur and escalate.¹³⁹

Socially, elderly persons also experience discrimination even in healthcare. Numerous studies have shown how healthcare professionals, such as nurses, physicians, and healthcare students, treat the elderly according to their personal attitudes toward aging and the elderly population.

Although research is heterogeneous, negative standpoints are generally associated with poorer healthcare for the elderly, which results in poorer treatment outcomes. Discrimination against the elderly is associated with treatment decisions. An example from England speaks of the treatment of breast cancer in younger and older women. Although breast cancer is more common in the

¹³⁹ Dean Ajduković and Marina Ajduković, "Nasilje u obitelji: što zdravstveni djelatnici mogu učiniti" [Domestic violence: What healthcare workers can do], *Medicina fluminensis* (46/2010), pp. 292-299.

elderly female population, doctors are less likely to recommend an early screening test for breast cancer to elderly women than to younger ones. Only a small number of physicians perform physical examination of breasts in elderly women. Also, elderly women are more likely to be recommended a more radical form of surgery as opposed to younger women, who are suggested less radical surgeries. Another form of discrimination against the elderly in the healthcare system is the way in which medical staff communicates with the elderly population. Older people are less involved in the treatment process. Medical staff shows less patience and respect towards them than towards the younger population. Communication is considered to be one of the factors contributing to the treatment outcome. Systematic research on health education programmes has shown that the efforts invested in combating discrimination against the elderly are insufficient and that gerontology is poorly promoted in education. Medical students have expressed the need for better education in geriatrics. In recent years, there has been a positive shift in solving this deficiency, and the education of healthcare staff in the field of gerontology is moving in the right direction.¹⁴⁰ One of the most obvious examples of neglecting elderly lives is the inefficiency of the French state authorities to report data on the deaths of elderly persons in nursing homes. This fact can lead the public to conclude that their deaths are insignificant and expected.¹⁴¹

The pandemic was not taken seriously at first, either in France or elsewhere, and it was presented to the public as dangerous only for the elderly. This approach may partly explain the resistance to following public health guidelines. It has been found that younger adults who died from COVID-19 complications often generated lengthy and thorough media reports worldwide, while the deaths of thousands of elderly persons were simply counted and added, if at all documented.

Social and/or cultural norms are responsible for a certain level of consensus, while the diversity of individual experiences significantly contributes to the diversity of attitudes towards the same object.

Attitudes towards an object can be shaped by behavioural or direct experience of an individual with the object of his or her attitude, but also indirectly, without behavioral experience. When it comes to a tangible, physical object, such an experience means manipulating that object or interacting with it. When the object of an attitude exists only in the person's psychological world or social reality, then direct experience refers to all previous behaviours related to the object. At the other end of the continuum are attitudes shaped by information that is not related to the individual's direct experience (e.g. information from books, newspaper articles, television, listening to the experiences of parents, friends, etc.). For an attitude thus formed, one says that it was shaped by indirect experience with the object of the attitude. When an attitude arises from such direct experience, there is a greater consistency between attitude and behaviour, greater sustainability of such an attitude over time,

140 Wyman Mary, Shiovitz–Ezra Sharon, and Bengel Juergen, “Ageism in the Health Care System: Providers, Patients, and Systems,” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325289340_Ageism_in_the_Health_Care_System_Providers_Patient_and_Systems (last accessed on August 20, 2020).

141 S. Fraser, M. Lagace, and B. Bongue, “Ageism and COVID-19,” pp. 692-695.

and its resistance to change, as compared to the attitude shaped by indirect experience with the object of the attitude.

The formation of attitudes begins with the birth of an individual and is based on a variety of experiences that are mutually reinforcing and result in a certain reaction in another, similar stimulating situation. Attitudes are a result of socialization and are acquired through social learning.¹⁴² In addition to knowledge, their development is influenced by three other factors: motivation and reinforcement, personality traits, and social environment. The motivation and reinforcement factor refers to the development of a reaction in which personal motives, based on personal experience, influence the features of the attitude to be developed. Personality traits are also partly conditioned by cognition, which in turn affects the features of the attitude that the person will eventually adopt.¹⁴³

Social environment limits the learning of experiences to those to which we are exposed in that particular environment, and thus influences the shaping of attitudes. Taking an attitude depends on its instrumental value for achieving certain goals of the individual. We usually have a positive attitude towards objects that contribute to the satisfaction of our motives, and a negative attitude towards objects that hinder the achievement of our goals. One of the processes that can affect the shaping of attitudes is social comparison.

Social comparison is defined as a process in which other persons, i.e. their attitudes, abilities, and modes of reaction, become the basis for assessing personal insights, attitudes, abilities, emotions, and other states.¹⁴⁴ According to L. Festinger's theory of social comparison, there is a need to evaluate personal insights, attitudes, abilities, modes of behaving and experiencing, and to assess their correctness and suitability.

In the absence of information from the "objective reality", a person will evaluate himself or herself by comparison with other people, whose behavior is the "social reality". Social comparison can result in empathy, which is immersion in the mental state of another person and understanding that person's position, such as suffering or being threatened, based on an experienced or imagined situation in which that person may be. Entering the mental framework of another person requires recognizing and identifying with the current feelings, thoughts, and reactions of the suffering person, and simultaneously understanding these reactions in terms of their importance, i.e. relevance for the future of that person.¹⁴⁵

142 Jerončić Tomić Iris, "Stigma – mitovi i predrasude depresivnog poremećaja – uloga videa kao medija u psihoedukaciji (Boli me – video za promociju mentalnog zdravlja)" [Stigma: Myths and prejudices of depressive disorder – The role of video as a medium in psychoeducation (It hurts – A video for fostering mental health)], https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=toc&id_broj=15082 (last accessed on May 28, 2020).

143 Petz Boris, *Psihologijski rječnik* [A dictionary of psychology], Prosvjeta, Zagreb 1992.

144 Kolesarić Vladimir, Krizmanić Marija, and Petz Boris, *Uvod u psihologiju – suvremena, znanstvena i primijenjena psihologija* [Introduction to psychology: Contemporary, scientific, and applied psychology], Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1991, pp. 175-213.

145 B. Petz, *Psihologijski rječnik*, 1992.

The sum of social attitudes towards the elderly outlines the level of humanity as well as care and awareness of one's own future. A sustainable, humane society implies an awareness of the irreplaceability of each and every person involved in social life. In the first place, there is the idea of the value of a person per se. Every human society is directed to some goal and uses certain means of living and acting to achieve it, which means that it has a structure and direction of action, while the real beginning, subject, and purpose of every form of human community is the person.¹⁴⁶

This implies a community based on the principles of life, because a free person is driven by the knowledge in which life is the beginning, the goal, and the greatest value. If the community members recognize it as such, understanding it as the fundamental value and choosing it as the principle of the community's existence, the person remains the beginning, content, and goal of the community, and thus the society.

For the future of a society, this is the basic level of awareness, which should be present among all its members, especially in those social groups whose task is to plan and make long-term development decisions. Integration and economic involvement of all members of the society is a strategic commitment, not just an individual exception.

"Getting old ain't for sissies," Bette Davis once said. You need to have the guts to do it even if you live in comfort and wealth, if someone loves you and takes care of you, and then imagine what a horror it is to lie abandoned, without anyone you can call your own, with the feeling of guilt for having taken a bed and a respirator that could have saved someone younger, while an esteemed MP explains on TV in the corner that it is not such a pity if you die. It is a horror worse than the corona virus: cruelty, selfishness, emptiness of hearts and minds, the defeat of civilization. If that doesn't make you cry, you'd better cry for yourself, for your stupid, scared, and despicable existence that you, completely wrongly, call life.¹⁴⁷

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¹⁴⁶ R. Matić, "Odnos hrvatskoga društva prema starijim osobama."

¹⁴⁷ A. Tomić, "Starenje nije za curice."

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Staromrštvo u doba pandemije

Sažetak

Stariji ljudi, osim zdravstvenih potreba, imaju i potrebu za društvenom percepcijom njih kao osoba i starenja kao normalnog životnog procesa. Kroz povijest, starije osobe su se smatrale socijalnim problemom i razvilo se negativno stajalište prema starijoj dobnoj skupini **Ageism** je pojam koji označava diskriminaciju određene skupine ljudi zbog njihove starije dobi. Do diskriminacije dolazi zbog uvjerenja kako starenjem dolazi do negativnih promjena koje čovjeka čine manje atraktivnim, manje inteligentnim i, najbitnije, manje produktivnim. Za vrijeme pandemije očituju se neetički postupci društva prema ovoj posebno ugroženoj skupini. Od onih početnih okrutnosti u trijažnom postupku prema velikom broju bolesnika u nekim europskim društvima da se prednost dodijeli onom koji ima veću šansu za preživljavanjem do svakodnevno ponavljanje činjenice kako je većina umrlih starije životne dobi i osoba s nekom kroničnom bolešću u jednog dijela mlađe populacije stvorilo se dojam kako se njima ništa značajno u životu ne mijenja u današnje vrijeme te da sukladno rečenom ne treba mijenjati ništa u svojim navikama i ponašanju.

Ključne riječi: pandemija, staromrštvo ili ageism, mladi ljudi.



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School for a Hollow Life or The Pedagogical Poem 2.0

Abstract

In addition to medical and public health issues, the 2020 coronavirus pandemic raised some serious philosophical, (bio)ethical, social, political and legal questions that are essentially not new, although they appear under a new light. Among them is also the issue of education, because the coronavirus pandemic has accentuated the digitalisation and alienation trends in the field of education, urging us to consider not only the problems of education during the pandemic, but also the systemic problems in education, science and knowledge in the era of technoscience and neoliberal economy and politics.

Key words: *pandemic, corona, education, digitization, alienation, technoscience.*

As is the case with the field of labour, the field of education has also been strongly hit by the coronavirus pandemic. As it the case in the field of labour, including the economic and political context of labour, workers' rights and workers' struggle, the problems in the field of education are not new and are systemic. The crisis caused by the pandemic has only made them more explicit and more pronounced. Both in the field of labour and in the field of education, form has continued to overpower content and the system has continued to overpower people, the same as in this set-up, the interests of the powerful overpower the interest of the oppressed and personal interests overpower the general good. In the field of labour as in the field of education, old hierarchies, discriminations, exploitations, automatisations, bureaucratisations and alienations did not disappear, but have been upgraded by digitalisation, leading us to the dystopia of a dehumanised world, seemingly closer and more unavoidable today than ever before because today resistance to new and essentially negative trends is weaker than ever.

The similarities between the field of labour and the field of education are not random because labour and education are connected in their essence. Moreover, they are closely intertwined, especially in capitalist systems. This is why we can notice negative trends from the field of labour, both the old and the new, in the field of education, and vice versa. I will discuss two trends here: first *alienation*, which is not new, and its new driving force – *digitalisation*.

A classic and to date, the most in-depth discussion on alienation (estrangement) is to be found in Karl Marx's *Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, more precisely in the chapter Estranged labour.¹⁴⁸ We can tackle the issue of alienation in education simply by reading Marx's deliberations on estranged labour so as to replace the word *labour* with the word *education*, replace the word *worker* (producer) with the word *student*, the word *production* with the word *learning* and the word *product* (product of labour) with the word *knowledge*. Let us then see how this modified Marx would read:

‘The student becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his learning increases in power and size. The student becomes an ever-cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. [...] Education produces not only commodities; and the student as a *commodity*, and this at the same rate at which it produces commodities in general. This fact expresses merely that the object which education produces, its product, confronts it as something *alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of education is education which has been embodied in an object, which has become material: it is the *objectification* of education. The realization [*Verwirklichung*] of education is its objectification. Under these economic conditions this realization of education appears as *loss of realization* (*Entwirklichung*) for the students; objectification as *loss of the object and bondage to it*; appropriation as *estrangement*, as *alienation*. [...]

148 Marx, Karl, *Ekonomsko-filozofski rukopisi iz 1844* [*Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*], in: Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich, *Rani radovi* [*Early works*], Zagreb: Naprijed, 1989, pp. 187–343, chapter: Otudeni rad, pp. 244–258, (citation in English from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/preface.htm>).

Indeed, education itself becomes an object which the student can obtain only with the greatest effort and with the most irregular interruptions. So much does the appropriation of the object appear as estrangement that the more objects the student produces the less he can possess and the more he falls under the sway of his product, capital. All these consequences are implied in the statement that the student is related *to the product of his education, knowledge*, as to an *alien* object. For on this premise it is clear that the more the student spends himself, the more powerful becomes the alien world of objects which he creates over and against himself, the poorer he himself, his inner world, becomes, the less belongs to him as his own. [...] The student puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object. Hence, the greater this activity, the more the student lacks objects. Whatever the product of his education, knowledge is, he is not. Therefore, the greater this product, knowledge, the less is he himself. The *alienation* of the student in his product, knowledge, means not only that his education becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists *outside* him, independently, as something *alien* to him, and that it becomes a power *on its own* confronting him. It means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien. [...]

Education produces beauty, but for the student, stupidity, cretinism. *The direct relationship of education to its products, knowledge, is the relationship of the student to the objects of his learning.* The relationship of the man of means to the objects of learning and to learning itself is only a *consequence* of this first relationship – and confirms it. [...]

But the estrangement is manifested not only in the result but in the *act of learning*, within the *learning activity*, itself. How could the student come to face the product of his activity as a stranger, were it not that in the very act of learning he was estranging himself from himself? Knowledge is after all but the *summary* of the activity, of learning. If then knowledge is alienation, learning itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation. In the estrangement of the object of learning is merely summarized the estrangement, the alienation, in the activity of education itself. What, then, constitutes the alienation of education? First, the fact that education is *external* to the student, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his education, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The student therefore only feels himself outside education, and in education feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not learning, and when he is learning he does not feel at home. His education is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is *forced education*. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, education is shunned like the plague. External education, education in which man alienates himself, is an education of self-sacrifice, of mortification. Lastly, the external character of education for the student appears in the fact that it is not his own, but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself, but to another. [...]

We have considered the act of estranging practical human activity, education, in two of its aspects. (1) The relation of the student to the *product of education, knowledge*, as an alien object exercising power over him. [...] (2) The relation of education to the *act of learning* within the *education process*. This relation is the relation of the student to his own activity as an alien activity not belonging to him; [...]. [...]

In estranging from man (1) nature, and (2) himself, his own active functions, his life activity, estranged education estranges the *species* from man. It changes for him the *life of the species* into a means of individual life. First it estranges the life of the species and individual life, and secondly it makes individual life in its abstract form the purpose of the life of the species, likewise in its abstract and estranged form. [...] Life itself appears only as a means to life. [...]

Estranged education turns thus: (3) *Man's species-being*, both nature and his spiritual species-property, into a being *alien to him*, into a *means* of his *individual existence*. It estranges from man his own body, as well as external nature and his spiritual aspect, his human aspect. (4) An immediate consequence of the fact that man is estranged from the product of his education, knowledge, from his life activity, from his species-being, is the *estrangement of man from man*. When man confronts himself, he confronts the *other* man. What applies to a man's relation to his education, to the product of his education, to his knowledge and to himself, also holds of a man's relation to the other man, and to the other man's education and object of education. [...] Hence within the relationship of estranged education each man views the other in accordance with the standard and the relationship in which he finds himself as a student. [...]

If knowledge is alien to me, if it confronts me as an alien power, to whom, then, does it belong? If my own activity does not belong to me, if it is an extorted activity, to whom, then does it belong?'

It is with this Marx's question, to which any one of us, with Marx's help or without it, could find the answers, that I end this long, transposing quotation. Why at all did I endeavour such a translation of Marx's deliberations on *labour* to the language of *education* and why do I force the reader to read Marx's passages interchangeably, as they were originally written and as they might be understood? The first answer is: because of the key word, which is *alienation*, an occurrence found equally often both in labour and in education. The second answer is: because alienation in education, as we may conclude by reading the 'translated Marx', progresses rapidly in the era of digitalisation, while digitalisation progresses rapidly in the era of a pandemic.

The total reorganisation of life in the era of a pandemic may also be viewed as a laboratory examination of alienation, in education and elsewhere: alienation from own activity, alienation from products of own labour, alienation from other people and alienation from oneself. What is, in the context of such alienation, the role of students in education? What is the relationship of students towards their own education, towards learning and knowledge, towards themselves? What are the relationships among students as living beings and persons like? And what are the relationships between students and teachers as living beings and persons (not to mention the alienation and

self-alienation of teachers, which is a separate issue, although the context is the same) like? – All this became secondary. Efficiency and effectiveness are sought after at all costs and regardless of everything that should actually result from education.

This is known or at least felt by all those who were in the spring of 2020 thrust into the black box of the so-called distance learning or online-classes: teachers at schools and universities, parents who watched their children be de-educated (deformed), while being educated (formed), without being able to do anything about it, and last but not least, students in schools and at universities who are more than ever engaged in their education and reap less results than ever from it. If the first, the second and the third group knows it, i.e., if all of them became aware of this, then they can voice criticism, although there is still not much they can change. If they are not even aware of it, as is the case for most, then their unconscious insight is rummaging through their consciousness and, in the words of Sigmund Freud, ‘it comes to discontent, displeasure for which other motives are sought’¹⁴⁹. Which is a Freudian introduction to neurosis.

Nevertheless, it would be naïve to think that it was the pandemic that led to this. A long process of ‘modernisation’ of education in the form of ‘informatisation’ and ‘digitalisation’ of teaching and learning lies in the roots of this phenomenon, and this is in turn based on the never overpowered model of repressive and manipulative education, for which digitalisation represents only a new means to an old end.

The instrumentalisation of education by the ruling elites and structures, in accordance with their ideology is not new. Ever since it became clear that public (mass and compulsory) education is a much more effective means of ideological indoctrination, manipulation and oppression than restrictive education, that is, the education of upper, wealthier and more powerful social classes as paired with keeping the lower, poorer and disempowered social classes uneducated – a sophistication of education methods has been undertaken, without forgetting about the objectives, purposes and values of education that have been continuously reinterpreted to serve the maintenance and advancement of the ruling regimes. Automatisation, informatisation and digitalisation of education only bring the old educational malice to a higher level and make it less noticeable, thus weakening resistance. This is not only because manipulative elements are becoming ever harder to notice but also because the system remembered in time to make use of human weakness for its benefits, be it ignorance (because knowledge, as we can clearly see today, need not necessarily be the result of education and schooling), laziness or shyness.¹⁵⁰

149 Freud, Sigmund: *Nelagodnost u kulturi [The Discomfort in Culture]*, in: Freud, Sigmund: *Iz kulture i umetnosti [From Culture and Art]*, translated by Đorđe Bogičević, Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1984, p. 346.

150 For instance, it is only when ‘distance learning’ was no longer just one of the teaching methods and a matter of choice, that I realised that among my fellow colleagues and teachers there were some who like this ‘virtualisation’ because the ‘classic method’, ‘the face-to-face’, is too strenuous and they do not enjoy it, be it due to laziness or certain psycho-emotional aversion from social contacts. So, it could be said that they are not only the advocates of ‘distance learning’ (teaching/learning from a distance), but that they are advocates of ‘distanced learning’ (distanced and thus alienated teaching/learning), thereby repressing the obvious negative implications of this model of teaching/learning.

The reorientation of education towards outcomes, outputs and impacts (all 'key' and 'buzz' words) only confirms the theory by the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, on the 'banking concept' in contemporary education as an instrument of disempowerment and oppression.¹⁵¹

Sociological and pedagogical criticism of the 'banking concept' of education is undoubtedly useful, but deeper layers are at play here, that only deeper philosophical analysis may tackle. In other words, a phenomenology of technicised education is necessary. but without essential questions into the nature of education and the nature of the technique we are not going to reach the core of the problem. A discussion on this topic would lead me to far astray from the points I would like to stress here. Nevertheless, I would like this, if only exemplary, to be mentioned in this review. In this context, I find illustrative a passage from the book *The Technical Society* by a French thinker Jacques Ellul:

"The milieu into which a technique penetrates becomes completely, and often at a stroke, a technical milieu. If a desired result is stipulated, there is no choice possible between technical means and nontechnical means based on imagination, individual qualities, or tradition. Nothing can compete with the technical means. The choice is made a priori. It is not in the power of the individual or of the group to decide to follow some method other than the technical. The individual is in a dilemma: either he decides to safeguard his freedom of choice, chooses to use traditional, personal, moral, or empirical means, thereby entering into competition with a power against which there is no efficacious defense and before which he must suffer defeat; or he decides to accept technical necessity, in which case he will himself be the victor, but only by submitting irreparably to technical slavery. In effect he has no freedom of choice."¹⁵²

The unwilling or disillusioned participants of the educational process in the era of digitalisation and during a pandemic should have their minds tickled at least a little, but even if this does happen, the question is: what to do with these realisations? What kind of 'pedagogical poem' (after discussing and dissecting the socialist *Pedagogical poem* by Anton Semyonovich Makarenko¹⁵³ and other pedagogical theories and practices, from anarchist to capitalists, for example from William Godwin to Benjamin Bloom) could be written in these digital and pandemic times? I still have not determined its kind, but I know it should be written because there are still no comprehensive deliberations regarding the recent educational situation, with answers to old and unsolved problems which have been digitally and pandemically distorted these days. Although now, in accordance with the spirit of the times, they are not called problems. Other, more endearing terms are employed, such as 'challenges.

151 Cf. Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogija obespravljenih [Pedagogy of the Oppressed]*, translated by Sanja Bingula, Zagreb: ODRAZ, 2002, (citation in English from: <https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf>).

152 Ellul, Jacques, *Tehnika ili Ulog veka [The Technological Society]*, translated by Nenad iz Erevona, Beograd: Anarhija/ Blok 45, Bratstvo iz Erevona, 2010, pp. 101–102, (citation in English from: <https://ia803209.us.archive.org/2/items/JacquesEllulTheTechnologicalSociety/Jacques%20Ellul%20-%20The%20Technological%20Society.pdf>).

153 Makarenko, Anton Semjonovič, *Pedagoška poema [The Pedagogical Poem]*, Beograd: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika SR Srbije, 1965.

We fought problems called ‘challenges’ even before the pandemic, so we should not cover them in a pile of new problems. We should rather try to unearth both piles and review them together at one glance. My reference here is, of course, to the Croatian ‘comprehensive curricular reform’ and its avantgarde, the experimental programme called School for Life [*Škola za život*], which promises that students will ‘learn how to think critically and how to solve problems and not just cram facts’, that is, that ‘each student will get his or her own tablet to learn and thus prepare for the digital era’.¹⁵⁴ Whether and (how exactly) ‘critical thinking’ will be reconciled with the ‘use of a tablet’ and ‘navigating the digital world’ remains completely unclear, especially if we read these statements parallelly with warnings, such as those by Ellul, and especially when, in accordance with the pandemic and police measures, the entire teaching and learning process has overnight become virtual.

The answer to the ‘challenges’ of the pandemic digitalisation should at the same time be the answer to the problem of digitalisation in general, and thus to problems in education in general. Some thoughts, written down *ad hoc*, might help:

– The tabletisation of education through tablets (computers) is equally as dangerous as the tabletisation of children through psychotropic drugs (as used increasingly more often in the ‘developed world’ as a shortcut to treating misunderstood psycho-emotional and psycho-social problems, such as ADHD). Oftentimes, tablets (as in computers) are the cause of the problem that is tried to be solved by tablets (as in pills).

– Digitalisation (in education and in general) does not contribute to acceleration or simplification, in line with the slogan used every time new technical and digital tools and procedures are introduced. Truth be told, it does contribute to acceleration, but not to simplification, because acceleration, which is entangled, without necessary reflection, in all of the old issues, even if in fact it aims to solve them, only causes additional and all the more difficult complications to be eliminated later. If digitalisation simplifies anything, then it simplifies, bordering on banality and stupidity, reflection and criticism.

– The key failure of the recent educational reform in Croatia is that it relies on ‘informatisation’ or ‘digitalisation’ as its core element, while the key problem of the pandemic reorganisation of the school system in Croatia is that digitalisation of teaching and learning is embraced uncritically and superficially, as if it had no implications on teaching and learning.

Against the backdrop of such (lack of) deliberation and (lack of) criticism, one should carefully monitor, both at school and at home, the devastating impact of digitalisation on the minds of children and youth. Should special attention be drawn to this? Obviously, it should, because the deconstruction of the mind (ratio, identity, autonomy, freedom, etc.) under the influence of information and communication technology is noticed even in those who spent most of their lives without the information and communication devices now available, let alone those who never came to know life outside the ruling matrix.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. promotional video *Škola za život* at: <https://skolazazivot.hr/promotivni-video-skola-za-zivot/>.

Therefore, in the field of education, we should strive to save as much of children's souls and as many of children's souls from the virtual techno-Moloch, rather than plugging the last remaining cracks in the wall that keeps the children from reaching to digitally unmediated world with gadgets. The world in which love and hate, acceptance and unacceptance, gentleness and cruelty and other important traits of humanity live a different life from that lived among cold and calculated bits.

This advice could have counted with understanding and acceptance until recently, while informatisation/digitalisation was only one of the options (although preferred) for 'modernising' and 'reforming' education. Now, in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, it seems that this advice has no foothold in anything from the 'real world', that it is completely 'unrealistic' because: if there is no 'distance learning' and 'digital education', then there will be no classes or education at all!

However, I still think that we should not fall for arguments that apply in 2020, but perhaps will no longer apply in 2021 or 2121. Moreover, I think that no flaws that we found in education and education systems in the pre-pandemic and the pre-digital era should be disregarded under the pandemisation and digitalisation pressures, because these are, as I tried to show, only symptoms of very old maladies which will continue to plague us for a long time to come.

If we address problems on this primary level, by giving them a historic dimension and removing the euphoria that currently surrounds them from the equation, we will see that both the 'pandemisation' and the 'digitalisation' of education stem from what has been well-established much earlier. Specifically, education in a certain social, political and economic system is always the education for that system. What a system is, is reflected in education, while education helps to maintain the system such as it is. Bluntly speaking, education today, regardless of standard rhetorical euphemisms, is merely a reproduction of an oppressive society in the form of school. Ideological, curricular and, finally, financial underscoring of the importance of STEM¹⁵⁵ at the expense of humanistic and social sciences is not only promoting a certain vision of science and education. It also shows only a certain vision of society, which is, as it seems, more dystopic than utopic because it is mechanistic and technical, devoid of wider social and deeper humanistic reflection.

Nevertheless, this is the situation, this is the hand that has been dealt to us and that we must play. Do we have an ace to pull out of our sleeve? Probably not much else than analysis and criticism, whose meaning and dignity we have to defend from the hegemonistic attacks of the system. Sometimes this means invoking 'common sense', because even 'common sense' tells us that the system is cheating at this game, that the cards are fixed. For instance, there is the earlier mentioned 'School for Life' which will, as it is being promised, finally meet the needs and interests of students through, for example, tabletisation. Some (more superficial) critics of this educational reform have complained that this is cosyng up to children who are already completely digitalised because it attempts to make education more fun and more memorable, but not better. This type of criticism misses an important point: it is not the case of cosyng up to autonomous children's wants and needs, but a

¹⁵⁵ STEM = science, technology, engineering, mathematics.

case of deceptive cosying up to children's wants and needs manufactured by those who now promise to fulfil them. The key manipulation is hidden in the fact that methods of discipline and control are now presented in the form of something children like and that goes in their favour, as if children themselves chose or created this manipulative system they have been planted into, as is often deducted from their capability to quickly master technical procedures and skilfully use technical gadgets.¹⁵⁶ Information and telecommunication technologies (cunningly programmed to create addiction) and mass media (cunningly programmed to anesthetise and stupefy) are a much more efficient means of control and manipulation than military or police repression, as was understood long before the internet, mobile phones or social media.

Since this medialised, virtual world, the world of information and communication still does not meet all human wants and needs, human life still cannot, luckily, be reduced to direct inputs and outputs, so the 'School for Life', which aims to reduce education to inputs and outputs and reproduce this medialised virtual world in the field of education, is not a school for life but rather a school for a hollow life. As one, but an important one, segment of manipulation with life – in which, in Marx's words 'Life itself appears only as a means to life.'¹⁵⁷ – 'School for Life' is in its essence contrary to life, antibiological. And, if freedom is written in the essence of the human, and if liberation is written in the essence of human activity, then this 'school for a hollow life' also serves to enslave, no matter how happy the slaves are to participate.

In short, Croatian reformist 'School for Life' and all other schools for a hollow life offered at today's market of pedagogical and political ideas get further and further removed from life, unless human life is irretrievably made equal to controlled execution of functions in complex technical systems. Being removed from life also means being removed from the purpose and the sense of education, upbringing and knowledge, of which today we get to read only in the works of critically and radically minded theorist – not in various documents of educational politicians, which serve as an unsatisfactory compensation for deep and far-reaching contemplation of education, while we find less and less meaningful contributions to such deliberations in pedagogical, psychological, sociological and philosophical tractates dedicated to education, because they mostly recycle and thus confirm that what has already gained prevalence in the social and historical as well as in economic and political sense.

¹⁵⁶ Interesting in this context and even very relevant today is an article by the German theologian, teacher and 'the father of European bioethics', Fritz Jahr, *Children and technology*, from 1933, in which Jahr contemplates 'two characteristics of today's youth', 'one is the propensity for technology and a gift for it' (Jahr Fritz, *Dijete i tehnika [Children and technology]*, in: Rinčić, Iva and Muzur, Amir, *Fritz Jahr i rađanje europske bioetike [Fritz Jahr and the Emergence of European Bioethics]*, Zagreb: Pergamena, 2012, p. 239). Jahr examines this in the context of the then technological wonder, a camera, while in the context of recent gadgets his conclusions seem even more true. He states: 'It is most significant that children do not see these things as miraculous at all. [...] The young use the advantages of apparatus without knowledge of its technical or biological assumptions. [...] When all this is cleared, one comes to realise that the young are in extreme danger of the greatest superficiality in technical matters and, in my opinion, one might say that not only a few succumb to this danger. [...] Simply stated: the change in the relationship between children and adults as a result of their seemingly independently acquired greater technical knowledge seems, in my opinion, wrong, as well as educational measures (or neglect thereof) that are based on this misconception.' (Ibid., pp. 240–241).

¹⁵⁷ K. Marx, *Ekonomsko-filozofski rukopisi iz 1844 [Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844]*, p. 251, (citation in English from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/preface.htm>).

If we only focus on the fate of knowledge in contemporary education, we witness an accelerated reduction of the term *knowledge* to the term *information*, which is extended to the reduction of the term *information* to the term *data*. The volume and the greatness of human knowledge – as a historic project in which each man, without exception, participated – has been ironically reduced to ‘big data’, collected and processed by machines.

Knowledge is further and further away, and wisdom – as lived knowledge and as the purpose of knowledge in the entirety of a fulfilled human life, both individual and joint – has already become a completely archaic idea. This process is also not new. But, while until a few decades ago it brewed beneath the surface, chipping away at the roots of thousand years-old trees, it is now happening on the surface, where heavy machinery is felling weakened trees.

Thomas Stearns Eliot, in *Choruses from ‘The Rock’*,¹⁵⁸ in verses that are more than ninety years old already vailed:

O world of spring and autumn, birth and dying!
The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless invention, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;
Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.
All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,
But nearness to death no nearer to God.
Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

However, far from it that reducing wisdom to knowledge, knowledge to information and information to data is not ‘useful’. Of course, it is useful (if it were not, it would not be done systematically), but the question is: to whom? I would like to repeat Marx’s question that can be applied here as

158 Eliot, Thomas Stearns, *Choruses from ‘The Rock’*, in: Eliot, Thomas Stearns, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1963, p. 147. (citation in English from: https://www.arak29.am/PDF_PPT/6-Literature/Eliot/Chtherock_eng.pdf).

well: ‘If my own activity does not belong to me, if it is an extorted activity, to whom, then does it belong?’¹⁵⁹

Knowledge has always been manipulated; it has always been both the subject and the means of manipulation. The same goes for information, while in the case of data, there are virtually no obstacles to manipulation. Those that are economically, politically and socially the most powerful manipulate the most and most successfully, and the primary ground for manipulation is education, that is, the system of education. Various authors in various fields wrote about the usurping and manipulation of education by the ruling classes and associated structures and ideologies – which was always combined with the (re)defining of the term knowledge and its purposes – among them were also those of the anarchist persuasion.¹⁶⁰

So, in addition to internal restrictions of knowledge – which I previously mentioned, and for which I used T. S. Eliot – also important are the external restrictions of knowledge, that I underlined as well, and that the American poet William Carlos Williams wandered about in his legendary poem *Paterson*:¹⁶¹

*Who restricts knowledge? Some say
it is the decay of the middle class
making an impossible moat between the high
and the low where
the life once flourished ... knowledge
of the avenues of information –
So that we do not know (in time)
where the stasis lodges* And if it is not
the knowledgeable idiots, the university,
they at least are the non-purveyors*

159 Marx, Karl, *Ekonomsko-filozofski rukopisi iz 1844* [*Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*], p. 258, (citation in English from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/preface.htm>).

160 A provisional list includes contemporary authors such as Paul Goodman, Paulo Freire, Colin Ward, Ivan Illich, Noam Chomsky, Joel Spring and Judith Suissa, then authors from the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, such as Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Leo Tolstoy, Francisco Ferrer and Emma Goldmann, but also older (e.g. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft and Max Stirner), whose criticism of educational models and systems, with a certain degree of recontextualization, are relevant even today. For a relevant concise overview of the anarchist and/or libertarian approach to the problem of education cf. Kranjec, Jelena and Jurić, Hrvoje, *Anarhija u školi* [*Anarchy at school*], *Ispod pločnika*, No. 7, Year 3 (2009), April/May 2009, pp. 5–10; also in: Jurić, Hrvoje, *Iskušnja humanizma* [*Temptations of humanism*], Zagreb: Hrvatsko filozofsko društvo, 2018, pp. 139–156.

161 Williams, William Carlos, *Paterson*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983, p. 34. (citation in English from: <http://www.patersonproject.com/Paterson-Poem.html>).

*should be devising means
to leap the gap. Inlets? The outward
masks of the special interests
that perpetuate the stasis and make it
profitable.*

*They block the release
that should cleanse and assume
prerogatives as a private recompense.
Others are also at fault because
they do nothing.*

But what could be done? If we speak about education, the first answer is – a reform of the education system. If we are unhappy with the situation in education and if we find the existing model, organisation and the effects of education unacceptable, we should design and try to implement or at least support reform. This was, as it seems, also claimed by the Spanish anarchist and pedagogue Francisco Ferrer when he said that the method of ‘changing school’:

‘[...] offers great advantages, and is in harmony with the evolutionary conception which men of science regard as the only effective way of attaining the end. They are right in theory, as we fully admit. It is evident that the progress of psychology and physiology must lead to important changes in educational methods; that the teachers, being now in a better position to understand the child, will make their teaching more in conformity with natural laws. I further grant that this evolution will proceed in the direction of greater liberty, as I am convinced that violence is the method of ignorance, and that the educator who is really worthy of the name will gain everything by spontaneity; he will know the child’s needs, and will be able to promote its development by giving it the greatest possible satisfaction’¹⁶².

However, Ferrer immediately voices his doubt in the reformist endeavours, thus really rejecting them as an option:

¹⁶² Ferrer, Francisco, *Moderna škola: poreklo i ideali* [*The Origin and Ideals of the Modern School*], translated by Bratislav Srećković and Milenko Srećković, Beograd: Centar za liberterne studije [Center for Libertarian Studies (CLS)], 2010, p. 65, (citation in English from: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/francisco-ferrer-the-origin-and-ideals-of-the-modern-school>).

‘In point of fact, however, I do not think that those who are working for the regeneration of humanity have much to hope from this side. Rulers have always taken care to control the education of the people; they know better than any that their power is based entirely on the school, and they therefore insist on retaining their monopoly of it.’¹⁶³

And he is right. All those who have participated in educational reforms – and only a few of us who work in the system could afford the luxury of not collaborating in reform processes – know how little can be changed and how many frustrations arise out of every attempt at change.

So since those in power ‘organised the school in accord with the new scientific ideas in such a way that nothing should endanger their supremacy’, ‘the hope of reformers has been void because the organisation of the school, instead of serving an ideal purpose, has become one of the most powerful instruments of servitude in the hands of the ruling class. The teachers are merely conscious or unconscious organs of their will, and have been trained on their principles. (...) ‘Education’ means in practice domination or domestication.’¹⁶⁴

As a result, there is no other way for radical pedagogist but to found – new schools ‘in which principles may be directly applied in the service of that ideal which is formed by all who reject the conventions, the cruelty, the trickery, and the untruth which enter into the bases of modern society.’¹⁶⁵

However, since ‘education’ has, step by step, been made equal with ‘schooling’, and schooling became entangled in social life to such an extent that it has become as necessary for survival as breathing and eating, today it is even hard to imagine the possibility of a socially efficient education outside the system and outside institutionalised education. In Ferrer’s era, when state repression was much more explicit than today, the possibility for this, was paradoxically, much greater because society was not as ‘schooled’ as today, so the request for ‘deschooling’ of society could appear only decades later.¹⁶⁶

Ferrer and other 19th century anarchists managed to create autonomous educational enclaves outside the system, which were not only against the system but were really undermining it. That is why they could go frontally against the system of public and compulsory education that serves to uphold and advance an oppressive social and political system. Radical, free-thinking educational theorists of the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century (e.g. Paulo Freire, Colin Ward, Noam Chomsky and Joel Spring) are mostly academically established, so they have been corrupted from the very start, untrustworthy to a degree, and in the end inefficient, while the

163 Ibid., pp. 65–66.

164 Ibid., pp. 69–70.

165 Ibid., p. 65 – Ferrer did it too, by establishing Modern school [Escuela moderna] in 1901 in Barcelona and in several others Spanish cities. He paid for his free spirit with his life: he was sentenced to death and executed in 1907 and his schools were closed. However, schools modelled after Ferrer’s Modern school were established elsewhere as well, for example in the USA, thanks to anarchists such as Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman.

166 Here I refer to analyses and criticism by Ivan Illich, expressed in the book *Deschooling Society* from 1971 – cf. Ivan Illich, *Dole škole*, Beograd: Duga, 1972.

projects of 'alternative' or 'free schools', such as Summerhill, were in one way or another incorporated in the system and, what is even worse, they were private schools attended only by students whose parents could afford them.

What then is the alternative? An unsatisfactory but accurate answer would be: acting in small, almost invisible liberated territories within the system, i.e., subversions undertaken with a slim hope that they will lead to more substantial changes. However, in neither of the cases as well as in the existing, extremely unfavourable circumstances, may great objectives be forgotten, although we know that they will not be attained, either soon or easily. Ferrer knew how to express such grand objectives concisely and simply:

'We do not hesitate to say that we want men who will continue unceasingly to develop; men who are capable of constantly destroying and renewing their surroundings and renewing themselves; men whose intellectual independence is their supreme power, which they will yield to none; men always disposed for things that are better, eager for the triumph of new ideas, anxious to crowd many lives into the one life they have.'¹⁶⁷

Can this be achieved within the ruling system, regardless of whether we describe it in the narrow sense, as a capitalist system, or in the broad sense, as a technical system? The answer has, in a sense, already been given. It is quite simple and almost surely accurate: no way!¹⁶⁸ It is much harder to provide an answer to the question whether we even still have the capacity to act outside this system, the capacity that is not deeply infected by the maladies of the system? This paradox was also pointed out by Jacques Ellul when he said:

'There is no place for an individual today unless he is a technician. No social group is able to resist the pressures of the environment unless it utilizes technique. To be in possession of the lightning thrust of technique is a matter of life or death for individuals and groups alike; no power on earth can withstand its pressures.'¹⁶⁹

What we can do and how – remains unanswered here. However, being satisfied by asking a question, even without finding an answer, need not necessarily be a sign of defeat, especially if circumstances are such that even asking question has become scarcer and scarcer. All in all, if sudden exaltation about anything transcends into euphoria and quiets or eliminates criticism, it is our duty to fuel scepticism. If digitalisation (pre-pandemic or pandemic) is a trend praised from all sides with diminishing resistance, if digitalisation is considered an 'ultimate solution' for many of our

167 Ferrer, Francisco, *Moderna škola [The Origin and Ideals of the Modern School]*, pp. 72–73, (citation in English from: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/francisco-ferrer-the-origin-and-ideals-of-the-modern-school>).

168 Ferrer says that the ruling elites 'have resolved to use education for their purposes, and they will take advantage of every improvement of it', because 'there is question only of imposing ready-made ideas on it [the child], of preventing it [the child] from ever thinking otherwise than is required for the maintenance of existing social institutions — of making it, in a word, an individual rigorously adapted to the social mechanism.' – Ibid., p. 71.

169 Ellul, Jacques: *Tehnika ili Ulog veka [The Technological Society]*, p. 102, (citation in English from: <https://ia803209.us.archive.org/2/items/JacquesEllulTheTechnologicalSociety/Jacques%20Ellul%20-%20The%20Technological%20Society.pdf>).

educational issues, and often even a ‘magic wand’ which will make certain problems disappear, we must remember Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his work *Emile, or On Education*, where he provided advice as helpful today as it was in 1762:

‘Reverse the usual practice and you will almost always do right.’¹⁷⁰

Škola za životarenje ili Pedagoška poema 2.0

Sažetak

Uz medicinska i javnozdravstvena pitanja, pandemija koronavirusa 2020. godine izazvala je neka ozbiljna filozofijska, (bio)etička, socijalna, politička i pravna pitanja koja nisu u bitnome nova, premda se pojavljuju u novome svjetlu. Među njima su i pitanja obrazovanja jer je pandemija koronavirusa potencirala trendove digitalizacije i alijenacije u sferi obrazovanja, što nas upućuje ne samo na razmatranje problematike obrazovanja u doba pandemije nego i sistemskih problema obrazovanja, znanosti i znanja u epohi tehnoznanosti te neoliberalne ekonomije i politike.

Ključne riječi: *pandemija, korona, obrazovanje, digitalizacija, alijenacija, tehnoznanost.*



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¹⁷⁰ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*, translated by Allan Bloom, New York: Basic Books, 1979, p. 94 (source of translation into English: <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/rousseau-emile-or-education>).

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Koronavirus - kraj jedne epohe? Za filozofski preporod.

Sažetak

Virusi koji prate čovječanstvo od njegove pojave na planeti djeluju prema uzrocima svojstvenim zakonima biologije, a ne posredstvom natprirodnih logika ili skrivenih svrha, i ne poznaju granice. To znači da nema nikakve, više ili manje pogubne, sklonosti ili idiosinkrazije, proizvedene onim osnovnim strastima koje Spinoza identificira kao pokretač (loše) politike: strah i nada. Rasvjetljivanje motiva i suštine ovih strasti trebao bi biti glavni cilj dijaloga i filozofsko-znanstvenoga rasuđivanja u suvremenome globalnom društvu koje se definira kao stvarno otvoreno i demokratsko. Stoga će se ovdje pokušati odgovoriti na osnovno pitanje: sada, kada su mahniti životni ritmovi na koje smo navikli izbljedjeli, hoćemo li moći dobro iskoristiti stanku razmišljanja koja nam je dana? Odnosno, hoćemo li uspjeti biti evolucijski inteligentniji od koronavirusa?

Ključne riječi: *koronavirus, pandemija, Spinoza, socijalni darvinizam, globalizacija.*

Uvod

Pandemija je dio ljudske povijesti. Virus neizbježno prate čovjeka i to od svoga pojavljivanja na planetu. Logično je stoga u vrijeme koronavirusa zapitati se kakve posljedice nosi sa sobom ova pandemija. I to ne samo na zdravlje, na ekonomiju, na okoliš ili na socijalnu psihologiju već uistinu i na samu filozofiju - jer mi danas djelujemo u vremenu interneta, i posredstvom *Forex Exchangea*, pa čak i kriptovalute. Kao djeca 21. stoljeća i pripadnici hiper-tehnološke civilizacije razložno je pitati se kakvu se tipologiju bolesti moglo očekivati. Običnu kugu zasigurno ne. Ili ne samo. Tom vremenu više priliče raznorazne teorije zavjere.

Naime, totalna kontrola ljudskoga života posredstvom medija i 'nanotehnologija', bez da je čovjek toga svjestan, kod običnoga čovjeka izvor je panike da se u njega posredstvom, zašto ne, i cjepiva unese bilo što ga može kontrolirati i uništiti. Dovodeći čovječanstvo do neke vrste kompletne zombizacije – kao što dobro prikazuje američki apokaliptični akcijski horor film iz 2013., **Svjetski rat Z** (*World War Z*) režisera Marca Forstera¹⁷¹.

Nitko nije mogao zamisliti, iako je bilo dovoljno imati na umu činjenicu da unutar postojeće biodruštvene kompleksnosti, diversifikacije i globalnosti virus(i) koji će se prije ili poslije pojaviti, kao što je to, na primjer, COVID-19, imat će jednaku postojanost kao i lukavi *Pacific Trash Vortex*: neizmjerni konglomerat plastike koji, daleko od toga da bude hrpa smeća, ima sve osobine podmukle kaše nevidljive čak i od satelita, s obzirom na to da 'lebdi' na samoj površini mora i, baš kao i deklarirani virus, pokazuje promjenjivu, nestabilnu, mutogenu, kriптиčnu konzistenciju¹⁷².

No, to nije sve.

Spomenuta nezamislivost nečega naizgled apokaliptičkoga, kao suvremena pandemijska kriza, u očima čovjeka svakodnevnice, dovelo je i do rođenja i širenja teorija zavjere koje povezuju koronavirus i 5G.

Sve započinje krajem siječnja 2020. suludim glasinama čije je širenje rezultat pandemijskoga zatočenja više od 3 milijarde ljudi širom svijeta, što nije moglo izbjeći zavjereničku pošast¹⁷³. Svoju pojavu, povezanu s traženjem krivca, svoj prvi trag nalazi u regionalnome izdanju belgijskih virtualnih novina *Het Laatste Nieuws* koji sadržava naizgled bezazleni intervju s liječnikom opće

171 O filmu: „Svjetski rat Z (2013) = World War Z“, <http://www.moj-film.hr/film/info/world-war-z/> Pristup: 17.09.2020.

172 Captain Charles Moore, „Discoverer of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch“. In an article for Natural History magazine in 2003. In National Geographic Society, <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/great-pacific-garbage-patch/> Pristup: 17.9.2020.

173 Već u veljači Svjetska zdravstvena organizacija (WHO) objasnila je da se borba protiv ove pošasti mora voditi frontalno i protiv Fake News - Lažnih vijesti. Sylvie Briand, direktorica te svjetske organizacije, za globalnu spremnost na zarazni rizik tom je prigodom istaknula da (citiram): „Uz epidemiju bolesti, postoji i ono što nazivamo „infodemijom“: širenje, cirkulacija glasina i lažnih informacija.“ Izraz, „infodemija“, koji je od tada je 27. ožujka 2020. prihvatio i Antonio Guterres, glavni tajnik Ujedinjenih naroda, pozivajući se na Lažne vijesti o globalnoj krizi s koronavirusom. Benjamin Terrasson, „5G et coronavirus : propagation d'un infodémi“, <https://siecedigital.fr/2020/04/17/5g-et-coronavirus-propagation-dune-infodemie/> Preuzeto: 17.07.2020.

prakse sa sjedištem u belgijskome gradu Putteu, liječnikom Krisom Van Kerckhovenom, koji je želio upozoriti na zdravstvene rizike prouzročene 5G-om, iako ne znanstveno potkrijepljene. Upitan o novonastaloj pandemiji u Wuhanu i aktivaciji antena 5G, liječnik je s oprezom izjavio “Nisam provjeravao činjenice”, dodajući “Možda postoji poveznica s vijestima.”¹⁷⁴ Dakle, samo obično nesmotreno glasno razmišljanje. Ni više ni manje.

Međutim, iako je taj, za mene bezazleni, članak nakon nekoliko sati povučen s mreže, a urednik *Het Laatste Nieuws*¹⁷⁵ se ispričao zbog objavljivanja ovih neutemeljenih iskaza, to nije spriječilo procvat teorija zavjere na internetu.

Prilikom objektivizacije iskaza, njegovo očitovanje učinile su nekoliko nizozemske anti 5G skupina, kada je ono prešlo na engleski teritoriji slične skupine uhvatile su se članka kako bi proširile početnu sumnju na uzročno- posljedičnu vezu između 5G i koronavirusa. Trenutak je to kada je infodemija mutirala promijenivši svoj smjer. Odjednom se 5G-u deklarativno pripisuje da pospješuje širenju koronavirusa i to slabljenjem imunološkoga sustava. Dakle, 5G izaziva simptome slične onima koronavirusa, *ergo*: virus su stvorili ljudi uspostavljanjem stanice 5G u Wuhanu, a totalno zatvaranje regije samo je dokaz skrivanja činjenica, tj. instaliranja antena, jer taj virus u super-tehnološko doba ne može imati svoj prirodni izvor, te je u svemu tomu uključena i zaklada Bill Gates, a mogli bi biti i iluminati ili neko treći. To je dovelo do toga da se 30. siječnja 2020. pokrene i krajnje desničarsko orijentirana američka zavjera *InfoWars*, koja 5G neposredno povezuje s epidemijom. Odmah potom još jedna zavjerenička internetska stranica, *ZeroHedge*, govori o koronavirusu kao umjetno stvorenom biološkom oružju. Od sredine veljače 2020. te se teorije zavjere postupno počinju probijati i na društvenim mrežama, počevši od *Facebooka*, s nekoliko stotina tisuća pretplatnika. Ekshalacija svoj vrhunac dostiže u trenutku kada se videozapisi pojavljuju na *YouTubeu* i njegovi ‘korisnici’ počinju paničariti, što je dovelo do toga da se infodemija mrežno proširi u beskraj.

Očito je da COVID-19, kao i buduće pandemije ali i infovirusi koji, kao prateći paraziti, čekaju njihovo pojavljivanje da bi se na njih nadovezali, prisiljava da se redizajnira i način poimanja prostora u svim varijacijama toga izraza: kako realnoga tako i virtualnoga jer pred ovim raslojenim, trodimenzionalnim, sveobuhvatnim scenarijima, sam pojam ‘globalni’ poprima osobine nesretnoga eufemizma.

Uz to treba reći da, naročito unutar medijskoga konteksta, ovaj virus suvremenomu čovjeku zapadne garniture postavlja jedno jednostavno i temeljno (filozofsko) pitanje: potiče da se više nego ikada do danas zapitamo je li u vremenu hipertehnologije još potrebno filozofsko kritičko promišljanje stvarnosti. Ako da, je li i u tom novopečenom virtualnom prostoru moguće izgraditi jedno adekvatno mjesto koji će imati sve osobine ‘letećega’ filozofskog trga – filozofske agore – oblikovane u vidu polazne točke za kritičko promišljanje, u vidu rasprave i razmišljanja o sebi, o drugima i o svijetu?

¹⁷⁴ James Temperton, „How the 5G coronavirus conspiracy theory tore through the Internet“. In: WIRED Consulting, <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/5g-coronavirus-conspiracy-theory> Pristup: 17. 9. 2020.

¹⁷⁵ Za podrobnije informacije vidi: *Het Laatste Nieuws*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Het_Laatste_Nieuws Pristup: 17.09.2020.

Jesu li ponuđene koncepcije razmišljanja brojnih filozofa, od Heraklita, Platona do Spinoze, i od Nāgārjune¹⁷⁶ do Kanta i Hegela, samo prividna ili posjeduju i neko dublje značenje, neki smisao za koji se dosad nije toliko marilo, ali je naveliko potrebno danas da bi održali svoju ljudskost?

Upit: kako prebroditi ovu krizu (u realnome i infodemijskome obliku).

Zasigurno ne samo obuzdajući i eventualno dokrajčujući pandemiju već i povećavajući svijest o tome kako se ponašati da bi se izbjegle slične pandemije i infodemije, ako ne i gore, situacije. To neminovno vodi do, za čovjeka važno, pitanje: vodi li 'očekivana pobjeda' nad virusom i nad njegovim 'parazitima' čovjeka do novoga prosvjetljenja ili do povratka u normalnost? Radi se naime o upitu koji je izvor mnogih filozofskih *flashmoba* koji bi, svojom 'nepredvidljivošću', poput *zen koana*, trebali čovjeka poticati da iskoristi taj vakuum normalnosti kako bi sebi posvetio neka (zaboravljena ili zataškana) razmišljanja¹⁷⁷.

Kao na primjer: je li problem samo u virusima koji nesmetano i slobodno haraju svijetom od prije ljudskoga postojanja ili i u shvaćanjima i ponašanjima nas '*sapiensa*' koji zemlju već poduže vrijeme pretvaramo iz životne okoline u noćnu moru za sve veći broj živih bića, i to počevši naravno od onih najslabijih i najsiromašnijih, bili oni ljudska bića ili životinje?

Razumno je pomisliti da će na ta i slična razmišljanja svatko od nas odgovoriti na filozofski, etičko-politički, religiozni način, tj. na način koji njemu najviše odgovara. Ali, zasigurno i ovi filozofski *flashmobovi* imaju zadaću da uz svoju društvenu komponentu potiču svakoga od nas, osobno i građanski, poboljšati i svoj odnos sa sobom, s drugima i sa svijetom uopće. I, možda, u tome pronalaženju samoga sebe, u dodirivanju vlastite izvornosti, mnogi bi čak mogli doći i do najzanimljivijega otkrića, koje je najprisnije povezano s izvornom filozofijom, kao potrage za znanjem-mudrošću kojoj čovjek, kao svjesno biće neminovno i legitimno teži: otkriće da postoji prirodna stvarnost – izvorno *phyisis* (grčki) kao cjelina svega što jest od koje smo i mi, posljedično toga dio, sa svojim pojedinačnim naracijama i s cijelom poviješću naše vrste. Točnije mi, kao ljudska bića, samo smo dio, 'mali dio' svega, kao što nas je uostalom i Spinoza svojevremeno upozorio; a ne vlasnici, vladari, grabežljivci i tako dalje. Dakle, *flashmob* kao svojevrsni '*carpe diem*' djece 21. stoljeća.

176 Nagarjuna, budistički filozof koji je živio u Južnoj Indiji približno u II. st. pr. n. e., bez sumnje je najutjecajni i najproučavaniji filozof *mahayana* budizma (veliki prijenosnik; proširila se sjeverozapadnom Indijom, središnjom Azijom, Tibetom, Kinom, Japanom itd. Karakteristika mahayane je *ideal bodhisattvi*, samilosnih prosvjetljenih bića koja iz milosrđa pomažu čovječanstvu na teškom putu spoznaje svoje istinske prirode). Nagarjuna je osnivač škole *madhyamika* (Srednjega puta). Proučavatelji njegove filozofije nailaze na nedoumice i različita tumačenja njegova učenja čak i unutar budističke tradicije. Prigovori koje često upućuju njegovoj *madhyamiki* ostavljaju dojam da je ona potpuno negativna, nihilistična, skeptična.

Donald S. Lopez, „*Nagarjuna, Buddhist philosopher*“. In: Encyclopædia Britannica. English language reference work - Philosophy & Religion, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nagarjuna> Pristup: 17.07.2020.

177 Orlando Franceschelli, „VIRUS, madre natura e stoltezza umana: che significa vincere la guerra contro l'attuale pandemia? Per un flashmob filosofico.“ In: Centro per la Filosofia Italiana, <http://www.centroperlafilosofiaitaliana.it/2020/03/18/orlando-franceschelli-virus-madre-natura-e-stoltezza-umana-che-significa-vincere-la-guerra-contro-lattuale-pandemia-per-un-flashmob-filosofico/> Pristup: 17.07.2020.

Dakle, kao opomena da se izbjegniju one odluke koje pripadaju onim pred- pandemijskim koncepcijama i ponašanjima koja su čovjeka doveli do ove kritične situacije. Da bismo dostigli to (novo) stanje svijesti, čak nam i neki skromni filozofski *flashmob* može donekle pomoći kako bismo izišli poboljšani i spremni suočiti se sa sobom i s izazovima hipertehnološke sveobuhvatnosti. To je moguće samo njegujući onu svijest koju filozofija od svojega začeca nosi u sebi: da je ljudsko biće dio, mali dio, prirode i ako se na to 'zaboravi', priroda će to potvrditi svom žestinom svojega pojavljivanja. Pokazujući svu svoju ravnodušnost prema ljudskoj sudbini i ljudskome dobru i zlu; svu svoju nadljudsku i neljudsku snagu, kako u beskrajno malom, tako i u beskrajno velikom: u obliku virusa, potresa, zagađene vode i zraka, kao dezertifikacija, izumiranje vrsta, ekološke krize, koju nije pretjerano definirati epohalno. Ali, i, zašto ne, može se pojaviti, uz uporabu medija kao produžetak očiju i kao prilika, ali samo ako se, kao što nas upozorava Heraklit, prestaje „raditi i govoriti kao oni koji spavaju“¹⁷⁸ i shvati da imamo samo „jedan i zajednički svijet“¹⁷⁹, koji, ako ljudsko biće želi opstati kao takav, 'tjera' da se on poboljša. Za štovatelje prirode, za izvorne filozofe i, mogli bismo dodati za postpandemijskoga čovjeka, Herodot upotrebljava ove riječi: „Blažen onaj koji je dostigao znanje iz ove istrage. Taj ne nanosi ni patnju svojim sugrađanima ni nepravedne postupke, već istražuje vječni poredak besmrtno prirode i pita: s kojom je svrhom nastao, na koji način, kada? Takav nikad ne postaje žrtvom zlih misli i djela od kojih bi se trebao sramiti“.¹⁸⁰ Sličnu pohvalu, autentičnomu filozofskom istraživanju, nalazi se i kod znanstvenika i popularizatora Davida Quammena koji godinama upozorava na rizik od prelaska virusa s jedne vrste na drugu, i koji, na pitanje može li se koronavirus definirati kao osveta prirode nad čovjekom, odgovara: „Ne vjerujem u metaforu 'osvete prirode' koja teži personificirati Prirodu kao mudrog entiteta, sa svojom svrhom i voljom. Nisam toliko romantičan. Zamišljam prirodu onako kako ju je zamišljao Darwin. [...] Ono što drugi vide kao osvetu prirode, ja bih opisao ovako: složeni ekosustavi u sebi ugošćuju životinje, biljke, gljive, bakterije i druge stanične organizme; i svi ti stanični organizmi ugošćuju viruse. Ako se odlučimo kompromitirati ih, to činimo na vlastiti rizik“.¹⁸¹ No, već Horacije napominje da se ne

178 „*Non bisogna agire e parlare come dormenti*“ (frammento 73). Giuseppe Genna, Eraclito: frammenti, <https://giu-genna.com/2011/08/28/eraclito-frammenti/> Pristup: 17.09.2020.

Na hrvatskom glasi (Fr. 73). „*Ne valja raditi ni govoriti onako kao oni, koji spavaju. Jer i u tom stanju mislimo, da radimo i govorimo.*“ Preuzeto iz Skripte: dr. Niko Majnarić (Preveo i objasnio), *Heraklit, svjedočanstva i fragmenti*, Filozofski fakultet Zagreb, 1972., str. 40.

179 „*Unico e comune è il mondo per coloro che sono desti*“ (frammento 89) Ibid, Pristup: 17.09.2020.

Na hrvatskom glasi: „*Budni imaju jedan jedini i zajednički svijet, a oni, koji spavaju, okreću se svaki k svome vlastitoj tome*“ Ibid, str. 41.

180 ὄλβιος ὅστις τῆς ἱστορίας

ἔσχε μάθησιν

μήτε πολιτῶν ἐπὶ πημοσύνη

μήτ' εἰς ἀδίκους πράξεις ὁρμῶν,

ἀλλ' ἀθανάτου καθορῶν φύσεως

κόσμον ἀγήρων, πῆ τε συνέστη

καὶ ὅπη καὶ ὅπως,

τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις οὐδέποτε αἰσχυρῶν

ἔργων μελέδημα προσίξει.

181 Dan Drollette Jr, „How it feels to predict a pandemic: Interview with David Quammen, author of Spillover“ In: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 75 years and counting, <https://thebulletin.org/2020/06/how-it-feels-to-predict-a-pandemic-interview-with-david-quammen-author-of-spillover/> Pristup: 17.07.2020.

bismo trebali iznenaditi drastičnim ‘povratcima’ majke prirode: „Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret“.¹⁸² To još više vrijedi danas kada posjedujemo i znanstveno znanje koje samo budale mogu podcijeniti i pretežito iskoristiti u ratnim i potrošačkim svrhama. Spoznaja te jednostavne istine trebao bi biti pokretač filozofskih *flashmoba*. Držeći pritom na umu da nije namjera ovih razmatranja izdati duh spontane pokretljivosti i otvorenosti koji uvijek animiraju svaki autentični *flashmob* koji je itekako važan za one koji, naročito ispred aktualne pandemije, osjećaju težinu i šarm obrazovne otpornosti, i to neovisno o bilo kojoj znanstvenoj naredbi.

Postojati nije živjeti: život kao svetost

Mogao bi to biti novi svjetovni ‘prag’ svetoga, koji ne bi bilo moguće nekažnjeno kršiti zbog svojih dalekosežnih posljedica. Radi se dakle o situaciji koja od čovjeka traži da realno (ponovno) počinje poštivati ono što stvarno vrijedi, kako u fiziološkome, tako i egzistencijalnome smislu. To, filozofskim rječnikom, znači nazvati stvari pravim imenom, svjesni da nije više egzistencijalno korisno zamjenjivati odnos čovjeka naspram odnosa čovjeka – životinje – biljke – okoliša, pribjegavajući shizoidnim apstrakcijama koje tehnokratsko-ekonomska paradigma nameće kao ponuda, i koja se nalazi u osnovi tautološkoga konzumerizma koji ne poznaje kraj. Trebao bi to biti ‘alarm’ koji u vrijeme pandemije dobiva aktualnost, kao na primjer, da je ljudski odnos *vis-à-vis* nezamjenjiv tehnologijom komunikacije na daljinu. To nikako ne znači da ova potonja, kao pomoćni alat prvoj, u vidu *Agorà* diskusije, u kriznim situacijama poput ove, nije korisna. Treba, međutim, uvijek imati na umu da ono nikako ne dopušta istovrsnu izmjenu energije: meso, tijelo, dah, izrazi lica, miris, prisutnost, prisutnost, prisutnost, i to naročito kod djece. Zato treba, ako se zalažemo u tome da ćemo, kada cijela ova pandemijska situacija završi, svi imati još jedan razlog da pokušamo ne sličiti uobičajenim zombijima s tijelom u prostoru, bilo to kod kuće, u razredu ili negdje drugdje, a dušu, posredstvom očiju zalijepljenima za pametne telefone itd., zarobljenu u neku konstruiranu dimenziju, već i medijsku dimenziju prilagoditi razvoju i promicanju ljudskosti. No, da bismo razvili drugačiji oblik svijesti ili obnovili izgubljenu, potisnutu ‘izvornu’ svijest, važno je preoblikovati svoja stajališta posredstvom filozofskoga promišljanja svega. To uči filozofska praksa koja svojim kritičkim mišljenjem ne skamenjuje stvarnost unutar predimenzioniranoga prostora već snažno zna zalupiti vrata u lice, i stoga je učinkovitija od dosadnoga kvantificiranoga, udžbeničkoga i mrežnoga ili on line znanja koji se koncentrira na tehniku a ne na onoga koji djeluje. Naime, šokantnost događaja obrnuto je proporcionalna tome koliko je netko, pojedinačno i grupno, spreman na usredotočeno promatranje stvarnosti. Nestabilnost, provizornost jesu konstitutivne činjenice stvari kakve jesu. Trebalo bi to biti upozorenje pripravnosti da se ne uzima zdravo za gotovo uvjerenje da je znanost svemoguća i da može riješiti bilo koji problem, u vidu onoga što je svima medijski dostupno ovdje i sada, da bi se vratili na kvalitativno obogaćujuće relacijske mogućnosti koje nam život svakodnevno pruža a da mi toga nismo svjesni i koje čovjeka čine i održavaju kao čovjeka.

182 Quinto Orazio Flacco, „Epistole I, 10, 24“. In: Tutte le opere, Sansoni Editore, Firenze 1988., str. 448. „Ako prirodu isteraš vilama, ona će se opet vratiti“. Vidi: Horacije, „Citati i izreke“, <https://edukacija.rs/izreke-i-citati/horacije>. Pristup: 17.09.2020.

Trebamo li dodatne dokaze? Vjerojatno da. Naime, svaka neiskorištena prilika izgubljena je prilika. Uхватiti sretan trenutak, kairòs, da se izrazimo filozofskim žargonom, umjetnost je, više nego li umijeće, koja bi se trebala podučavati u školama svih razina u vidu neke nove realno-virtualne agore.

Uvažavanje važnih filozofskih termina

Relacijske mogućnosti transponirane, na Platonov način, iz ontološke u političko-antropološku sferu prevode se i u neke pojmove kojima se svakodnevno koristimo, ali čiji se smisao postupno zaboravilo deklinirati na efektivno-egzistencijalnoj razini. Tu se naročito misli o filozofskome poimanju zajednice i solidarnosti, koje, budući da smo se navikli mjeriti sve u individualistički i autoreferencijalni način, eksperimentiramo na paradoksalan način.

Zajednica za kojom se, posredstvom nostalgicne i prevrnute uporabe društvenih mreža, čezne i žali, kao da se radi o nečemu što pripada prošlosti i što se pretvara u 'imunitet'. A solidarnost se pretvara u održavanju distance, u preuzimanju odgovornosti prema drugome, čije lice, maskirano, u najavi svijesti o opasnosti od zaraze izražava krajnje simpatetično razmatranje prema nama. Na taj se način i strah pretvara u empatiju. Naime, u lice Drugoga odražavam sebe, što mi omogućava razumijevanje i drugih strahota, i drugih bježanja prema sigurnosnoj imunizaciji: od rata, od bijede, od očaja, što svakome počinje biti spoznatljivo. Najednom, i to kroz iluzorne zidove moje 'imunizacije', koji su čarolijom postali porozni, s virusom provaljuje i okus ljudske stvarnosti desetaka, stotina milijuna bližnjih; a iskustvo koje iz toga proizlazi je kao gledanje u zrcalo, koji odražava ono što se do jučer nije htjelo vidjeti: da se barijere podignute kako bi nas zaštitile od vanjskih neprijatelja, stvarnih ili pretpostavljenih, lako pretvaraju u zidove našega zatvora, u četiri zida naše kuće, koji nas više ne štite: oni se naziru. Što vodi do ekshalacije međugraničnoga straha od nacionalnoga drugačijeg: Talijana, Slovenca, Austrijanca itd. i obrnuto.

S druge strane, slično tomu, nakon prekida čarolije, nakon trideset godina individualno-privatne opijenosti, virus nas uči vrijednosti javne i virtualne trgovine misli (*agorà*). Čiji se prostor – koji je postao sve suženiji napretkom nebodera, trgovačkih centara, grabežljivih sajmova i marginaliziran bubnjem medija – iznenada, postaje glavni adut mnogih tematika – kao bolnica, škola, civilna zaštita, javne službe – pokazujući se sve užu, ograničeniji i vječno na rubu ponora.

Virus je također na sebe preuzeo i metaforički zadatak da sruši neoliberalne dogme o '*privatizaciji pod svaku cijenu*', o '*uštedi na javnim računima*' na škole, na zdravstvu i na znanstvenim istraživanjima; za koje su nas u proteklih tridesetak godina uvjerovali da od toga ima korist gospodarstvo zemlje, i posljedično svi mi! I to neovisno od činjenice da je zbog toga, zbog takve socijalne politike, dolazilo do neizbježnoga neodarvinističkoga krvarenja ljudskosti u rasulu, pogađajući najslabije i bespomoćne, kao i uvijek: *Nihil novi sub sole*.¹⁸³

183 „*Nihil (nil) novi sub sole*“ [ni:'hil no'vi: ~ so:'le] (lat.). „*Ničega novoga pod suncem*“ je izreka koja se navodi kada se

Svatko tko je imao nesreću da potrebuje hitnu pomoć javne bolnice proteklih godina zna dobro da sustav je već tada bio u kolapsu. Ipak, u ovim se satima opire i to ne zahvaljujući sustavu već odgovornim građanima koji ponizno obavljaju svoju dužnost i puno više od toga. Radi se o istima koji svakoga dana prolaze neopaženo ili, još gore, sakupljaju uvrede razočaranih i bijesnih korisnika. Radi se o ljudima koji ljudskost nose u sebi, jer, nadovezujući se na Spinozinu misao: „za to traži se vještina i budnost. Jer su ljudi promjenjivi (rijetki su, uistinu, oni koji žive prema onome što razum propisuje), a opet uglavnom su zavidni i skloni više osvete nego milosti.“¹⁸⁴

Zaključno...

... postavljam (si) nekoliko upita koja većini mogu donekle i izgledati retoričkim jer (ta) većina smatra da većina, kojoj se obraćam, neće doseći tu točku razmišljanja, ili će zaključiti, po tko zna koji put, da je bavljenje filozofijom beskorisno ili itd. Usprkos tom iskazanom pesimizmu, nadam se da se ipak mogu pokazati od značajne važnosti i zbog toga ih želim postaviti sebi, tj. vama.

Hoće li ova pandemija, sa svojim puzajućim nihilizmom konzumerizma, jednom zauvijek pokazati da su granice, počevši od međudržavnih granica (mislim tu naročito na EU), različite etničke pripadnosti, mentaliteti, socijalni statusi; *Bitcoin* i burzovni indeks, samo apstrakcija, prikaz instrumentalno određen etičkim ponašanjem i prazan izgovor politika, vlada i kapitala a ne prirodno neizbježna činjeničnost? Da značajan dio ne samo ljudske već i životinjske kao i, zašto ne, biljne patnje ovisi o nepoznavanju naših primarnih osjećaja, o lošoj brizi o sebi, o zlouporabi naše inteligencije?

Da se načelo '*jedan je svijet je, jedno je čovječanstvo*' ne može primjenjivati samo na promet robe i kapitala (globalizacija) ili na širenje koronavirusa (pandemija) već i na empatiju, solidarnost i odgovornost?

Sada kada je frenetični ritam života na koji smo navikli izbljedio, kada nas promet ili trgovački centri više ne sputavaju i ograničavaju, kada se pozadinska buka smanjila a gradski smog prorijedio, hoćemo li znati dobro iskoristiti ovu dodijeljenu pauzu za kvalitetnije razmišljanje o smislu života? Hoćemo li iskoristiti priliku da naučimo živjeti ovo novo, izvorno, poimanje vremena, seriozno dovodeći u pitanje sve naše egzistencijalne prioritete?

Izazov s kojim se suočavamo je globalan, a koronavirus je samo vrh ledene sante naše prošlosti i pogled na ono što nas očekuje u budućnosti. Da bi se izbjegao brodolom, bilo bi hitno započeti međugeneracijsko, međuljudsko i međuvrсно savezništvo: neka vrsta neviđenoga oblika etičkoga ekumenizma. Hoćemo li mi suvremenici uspjeti biti 'evolucijski' inteligentniji od koronavirusa: RNA

dogadaji predvidljivo ponavljaju. Potječe iz biblijske knjige *Propovjednik*, a pripisuje se kralju Salamunu. In: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*. Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2020. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=43747> Pristup: 23.09.2020.

184 Spinoza, „Etica. Parte IV. Appendice con commento“. (Etika, Dio IV, Dodatak). In: Scorrubande Filosofiche, <https://francescodipalo.wordpress.com/2019/08/17/spinoza-etica-parte-iv-appendice-con-commento/> Pristup: 17.09.2020.

paket okružen proteinskom kapsulom veličine deset milijunskih dijelova metra, ali s biološkom inteligencijom od tri milijarde godina ili ne – pitanje je to?

Zadatak kao odgovor: prebroditi krizu i poboljšati sebe: za novi gnōthi sautón / temet nosce.

Svako ljudsko biće bilo kojega društva, društvene grupacije i razdoblja, od samoga je djetinjstva podvrgnut procesima oponašanja. Da bi počela upoznavati svijet, djeca, prema prirodnom zakonu (*imprinting*¹⁸⁵) prvo oponašaju svoje roditelje; počinju razmišljati pamteći ime neke stvari memorizirajući njezine osobine; da bi naknadno prešli na sljedeće stanje, to jest na sjećanje razmišljajući. Radi se tu o prvim pristupima s vanjskim svijetom koje svi imaju od rane dobi. Ti pristupi, kao što i sama definicija *imprintinga* kazuje, naveliko utječu na velik dio našega života. Tu započinje možda i najteži put s kojim se *homo sapiens* suočava: upoznavanje ne (samo) okolnog okruženja već onoga što nesvjesno i svjesno gradi u sebi.

Na ruševinama drevnih Apolonovih hramova pisalo je ‘Gnōthi seautón’ (‘upoznaj sebe’)¹⁸⁶. Međutim, taj vid spoznaje iziskuje jedan relevantni skok kvalitete jer traži da se prestane oponašati, kao što je to bilo u ranoj dobi, da bi se postalo ono što zapravo svako ljudsko biće jest u svojoj izvornosti i posebnosti. Kao što smo naveli, ne radi se o lakoj zadaći koja se, između ostaloga, nalazi u osnovi rađanja filozofije kao svjesnoga promišljanja svijeta i sebe u svijetu.

Pripisivati istinu nekome drugomu i slijediti ga nedvojbeno je lako i sigurno, ali i neodgovoran postupak nasuprot neprestanome razmišljanju o sebi i koji odgovara Descartesovu: *Cogito ergo sum*. Zadaća koja postaje još odgovornija kada je posrijedi odgovoran društveni angažman koji je implicitan samoj politici i kojoj Platon pripisuje attribute sluškinje filozofije.

Protiv standardizacije kojoj je suvremeni čovjek, naročito zapadne garniture, podložan, protiv nedostatka alternativa, protiv politike koja se sve više otuđuje od naroda i od filozofije, postati ono što zapravo jesmo, jest ono što ekonomistu nedostaje u društvu koje se sve više zalaže u mahanju tuđih politika, raznoraznih praznih politika, srameći se, ili gore, plašeći se svojih misli i to, u većini slučajeva, skrivajući se pod maskom indiferentnosti, ne provodeći nikad autentičnu viziju stvarnosti ili vlastito razmišljanje.

Srž svih filozofskih inicijativa, a to znači i onih koje stoje iza svakoga *fleshmoba*, mora potjeći iz *gnōthi seautón* (γνῶθι σεαυτόν). Naime, to je ono što bi suvremeni filozofski *fleshmobi* trebali iskazati

185 Imprinting [impri'ntiŋ] (engl. utiskivanje), vrsta učenja koje je moguće tijekom vremenski ograničenoga, tzv. kritičnog ili osjetljivoga razdoblja u ranoj fazi života životinje, a očituje se u reakciji slijeđenja u mlade životinje, koja slijedi prvi pomični objekt ili živo biće (najčešće majku) što ga je ugledala nakon rođenja. Reakcija nije podložna promjenama i trajno utječe na socijalno ponašanje životinja. Najizraženija je u ptica, osobito u gusaka i pataka. Termin je u etologiju uveo K. Lorenz. In: Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje. Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2020. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=27226> Pristup:22.09.2020.

186 Valerio Malvezzi, „Conosci te stesso“. In: L'evoluzione della Radio, <https://www.radioradio.it/2020/09/conosci-te-stesso-%E2%96%BA-la-riflessione-del-prof-malvezzi-che-tutti-dovrebbero-ascoltare/> Pristup: 20.11.2020.

onima koji se dokumentiraju o aktualnim pitanjima, kao što su: Tko smo? Odakle dolazimo? Kuda idemo? Jer, kao što smatra njemački filozof Martin Seel, profesor na frankfurtskome sveučilištu, „Filozofija je razmišljanje i razumijevanje o nama samima i o takvom svijetu, bez kojega mi kao ljudi ili kao suvremenici određene kulture i povijesnih prilika, ne možemo.”¹⁸⁷

U grčkome gradu Delfi u antičko doba nalazio se Apolonov hram na čijim je ulazu sa svake strane bila po jedna mudra rečenica. Prva je glasila: ‘Upoznaj samoga sebe’, a druga: ‘Ničeg previše’. Za objašnjenje su bile nadležne delfske Sibile, proročice posvećene bogu Apolonu. To su i upozorenja koja se nalaze i u temelju izvorne Heraklitove filozofije, čije je promišljanje rezultat uranjanja i upoznavanja samoga sebe, dakle udaljavanja od prijašnje spoznaje, što je istovjetno sa Sokratovim ‘znam da ništa ne znam’ kao temelj upoznavanja sebe. To je za Rimljane bilo ‘*nosce te ipsum*’. Izmijenjeni oblik istoga načela nalazimo i u kršćanstvu, i to je kod svetoga Augustina u pojmu ‘*quaerere Deum*’, to jest tražiti Boga u sebi. U moderna vremena jednaka se razmišljanja mogu naći i kod Hermanna Hessea.¹⁸⁸

Pojmovi koje bi filozofski *fleshmob* trebao ‘prikazati’ građaninu odnose se na to da se ne smije misliti da nam put daje neki izborni izabrani političar. Ne radi se tu o stvaranju neke nove političke koalicije ili stranke već o shvaćanju da se put može pronaći ako se shvati da je svatko od nas put. Da se shvati ovu Jungovu misao „Razmišljati je teško, zato ljudi i prosuđuju. Zbog toga većina ljudi prosuđuje. Za razmišljanje je potrebno vrijeme, pa oni koji već razmišljaju baš zato ne mogu kontinuirano izražavati predrasude”¹⁸⁹. Naime, u *fleshmob*, pa čak ni u onome filozofskome, ne traži se nekakav sud već (spontano) razmišljanje, umjesto unaprijed preusmjerenoga kritiziranja drugačijega pristupa; filozofski *fleshmob* ne traži raspravu o tome ‘kako biti dobar čovjek’, jer, kako nas uči Marko Aurelije: ‘Budi dobar čovjek, ne raspravljaj o tome kako biti dobar čovjek.’ Dok će Schopenhauer govoriti da svatko od nas troši 3/4 svojega života pokušavajući biti netko drugi, a u filozofsko-političkome smislu pokušava oponašati razmišljanje ovoga ili onoga za kojega se misli da je u pravu, da posjeduje istinu.

Početna je, dakle, zadaća svakoga od nas postati svjestan vlastite nesigurnosti u vidu stanja konstantne budnosti ili sumnje. I to počevši od vlastitih uvjerenja. Naime, za filozofiju razmatranje, promišljanje, istraživanje (*skepsis* = sumnja) ili „*Cogito ergo sum*“ – „mislim dakle jesam“ predstavlja temelj, osnovicu probuđenoga pojedinca koji je, gledajući oko sebe, postigao sposobnost djelovanja u svijetu nesigurnih vrijednosti. A da bi se to postiglo, potrebno je stvoriti vlastitu filozofiju života koja se prvenstveno mora pridržavati ovoga imperativa „čini da moja riječ za mene bude zakon“. Što opet znači „biti budan je sve“. Naime, važno je biti uvijek pažljiv i oprezan.¹⁹⁰

187 Alf Haubitz; Marina Martinović, „Tko smo? Odakle dolazimo? Kuda idemo?“. In: Panorama, <https://www.dw.com/bs/tko-smo-odakle-dolazimo-kuda-idemo/a-4906743> Pristup: 17.07.2020.

188 Hermann Hesse, *Il Mio credo*, Rizzoli, Milano 2009.

189 Serena Di Sisto, „Carl Gustav Jung: ‘Pensare è difficile. Per questo la maggior parte della gente giudica’“, <https://oggi-giorno.com/carl-gustav-jung-pensare-e-difficile-per-questo-la-maggior-parte-della-gente-giudica/> Pristup: 21.09.2020.

190 F. Šuran, *Etica della professione docente*, Università degli studi “Juraj Dobrila” di Pola, Pula-Pola 2015.

Najveća vrijednost koju čovjek, kao svjesno biće prakse, zasigurno posjeduje nije i ne smije postati kopiranje drugih već taj (vražji) *gnōthi seautón*, kao stanje budnosti koji se ostvaruje u neprestanome pokušaju upoznavanja sebe prije bilo koje odluke koja ne obuhvaća samo pojedinca već i šire društveno okruženje u kojemu se djeluje, i to počevši od onoga, za neke 'bezazlenoga', križa ili kruga kojega stavljamo na glasački listić prije negoli ga uguramo u glasačku kutiju.

U uvjerenju da dopustiti si nekoliko minuta na dan za reaktiviranje našega filozofskoga promišljanja, neovisno da li posredstvom medija ili klasične meditacije, ako budno upotrijebljen, zasigurno nije dezertstvo od većine uspavanih. A još manje označuje želju za kontroverze koje dijele ili za uzaludne prazne spekulacije.

I dobro znajući da kvaliteta čitanja i medijske mogućnosti za neophodne pojedinačne i kolektivne uvide zasigurno neće nedostajati, poziv je to da se eksplicitno postavi reflektirajuća komponenta koja animira većinu *flashmobova* protiv ove pandemije. To nas podsjeća da upravo iz aktualne, planetarne 'hitnosti povijesti', kako bi se izrazio K. Löwith¹⁹¹, moramo uvježbati sebe kako reagirati, imajući na umu i svrhu življenja a ne samo materijalnu korist, poboljšavajući sebe i sve komponente društva.

Zar nije to poruka mudrosti i otpornosti za koju su filozofi u konačnici zaduženi da, svojim primjerom otvorenoga i kritičnoga mišljenja, prenesu čitavo ovo vrijeme? Jučer na javnim trgovima, a danas, zašto ne, na virtualnim AGORAMA i posredstvom filozofskih *flashmobova*.

Nije li moguće da u pokušaju poboljšanja sebe i svijeta, na svjetlost izvire i najistaknutije i najcjenjenije značenje svakoga poticaja u traženju boljega razumijevanja stvari, prilike i ograničenja, koja nas se tiču kao ljudi i kao privremenih stanovnika/građana ovoga krhkog planeta?

U svakome se nalazi iskra, koju je Prometej probudio, da se bude svjesniji i nikad zaboravljiv: iako to sadržava i bolne trenutke na koje treba gledati kao poticaj rasta. Da bismo to shvatili, trebali bismo prihvatiti japansko geslo 'neke pute pobjeđuješ, sve druge pute učiš'.

191 K. Löwith, *Significato e fine della storia: i presupposti teologici della filosofia della storia*, Net, Milano 2004.

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Coronavirus, the end of an Age? For a Philosophical Flash Mob.

Abstract

The viruses that have accompanied humanity since its appearance on the planet act according to causes stemming from the laws of biology, not according to supernatural logic nor for further purposes, and they know no boundaries. For this reason, they present no preferences or idiosyncrasies of any sort, more or less pernicious, produced by those basic passions that Spinoza identifies as the engine of (bad) politics: fear and hope. Shedding light on the motives and the essence of these passions should be the primary objective of dialogue and philosophical-scientific reasoning in a global society that defines itself as truly open and democratic. So here we will try to answer a basic question: Now that the frenetic rhythms of life we are used to have weakened, will we know how to make good use of the pause for reflection that is granted to us? That is, will we be more evolutionarily intelligent than coronavirus?

Key words: coronavirus, pandemic, Spinoza, social Darwinism, globalization.



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Hipermedijska sfera i virtualne učionice

Sažetak

*U hipermedijskom društvu najprepoznatljiviji medij je - tehnologija. Nove tehnologije i nepovratna digitalizacija društva dovode do sve veće posredovanosti unutar svih društvenih odnosa. U kulturi stvarne virtualnosti upravo je tehnologija omogućila postojanje virtualnih učionica (ili učionica bez zidova kako primjećuje Giddens), isposredovanost u prijenosu znanja tehnologijom, digitalne platforme kao mjesto susretanja, napokon, i postojanje elektronskih univerziteta. Inovativne tehnologije već su uvelike utjecale i na obrazovne procese, što govori o jednom drugačijem iskušavanju prijenosa znanja i samog obrazovanja. Obrazovanje je djelovanje, proces i rezultat; pa se postavlja pitanje koje promjene unose nove tehnologije koje odnose neposrednost, u situaciji kada je online komunikacija, posredovana komunikacija - jedina komunikacija. Prve konture ovoga teksta i poticaj za promišljanje dao je esej Giorgija Agambena *Rekvijem za studente (2020)* koji se pojavio u jeku pandemije, opominjući tekst koji ukazuje na neke nove procese ne samo u obrazovanju, nego u ukupnom društvu našeg doba.*

Ključne riječi: tehnologija, hipermedijsko društvo, mediji, obrazovanje, znanje, virtualne učionice.

U multiverzumu medija, kao u svojevrsnom najzačudnijem nestvarno/stvarnom kaleidoskopu, sveprisutni mediji su oni koji stvaraju novo okružje života, hipermedijsko okružje. Potpuno smo uronjeni u hipermedijsku sferu, gdje se na sasvim specifičan način prepoznaje okružje *unutar kojeg* se gleda, spoznaje, komunicira, djeluje, izvode razne tehničke operacije, jer naprosto kako ukazuje Galović, “jedva da danas ima ičeg značajnog što nije posredovano medijima, što nije njima zahvaćeno, u njima obrađeno (prerađeno) i ‘realizirano’, kroz njih emitirano, intervenirano u ‘realitet’” (Galović, 2017:323). U okviru podnaslova *Znanstvena vizualizacija*, isti autor će govoriti o tehničkoj okolini, koja ujedno postupno postaje jedino okružje ljudskog života i u društvenoj svakodnevnici, “ono tehničko već odavno nije oruđe ili sredstvo – kao što mediji nisu neutralni posrednici, – postalo je okolinom u koju je ljudstvo uronjeno, u kojoj spoznaje, tehnički operira, ‘živi’” (Galović, 2017:325). Upravo ova uronjenost u svijet tehnosfere, gdje je ukupno društvo došlo u čvrsti zagrljaj tehnike i tehnologije, govori o tome da se suvremeni čovjek našao u jednom drugačijem iskušavanju svijeta kakvo ne poznaju prethodne epohe. Živimo u hipermedijskom društvu gdje je najprepoznatljiviji medij – tehnologija. Tehnologija je medij u doslovnom smislu; upravo je ona omogućila internet kao najprepoznatljiviji komunikacijski medij čiji je utjecaj na društvo nemjerljiv i koji stvara “novu komunikacijsku okolinu” gdje se sva područja društvenosti i društvenog života mijenjaju na specifičan način njegovom sveprožimajućom primjenom. Manuel Castells suvremenu kulturu naziva *kulturom stvarne virtualnosti*¹⁹² unutar koje danas postoje i virtualni posjeti muzejima, virtualne turističke ture, virtualne učionice. Naime, tehnologija je već u učionicama, govori se o “revoluciji u učionici” i nepovratnom ulasku “virtualne stvarnosti u učionice bez zidova” (Giddens, 2003:512). Nema sumnje da je pandemija intenzivirala uspostavljanje online nastave i virtualnih učionica tamo gdje ih donedavno nije bilo.

Kako je pandemija neobičnog virusa corona covid 19 posve iznenada obavila svijet, tako se preko noći ostvarilo jedno proročanstvo/izjava nad tekstom koji je prije godinu dana naslovljen “Doći će dan i svijet će se preokrenuti”, promišljajući perspektive mogućih komunikacijskih trendova kao društveno-tehničkih koji se nadvijaju nad životom čovjeka koji je još uvijek realan, živ, i postojeći subjekt svekolikih društvenih procesa, na tragu stavova Ortege y Gasseta da je samo “ljudski život uistinu rijetka zbilja o kojoj ponajprije valja kazati da jest temeljnom zbiljom utoliko se sve druge zbilje odnose na njega” i da ovaj samorazumljivi pojam života postaje upitan.¹⁹³ Ortega je svjestan da, kako sam to definira, mišljenje o tehnici nastaje u suočenju s njezinim opasnostima. Kako moderna tehnologija izjednačuje prostor i vrijeme, svodi svijet na fabrikaciju proizvoda, čovjeka na samofabrikaciju a savršena figura tog dehumaniziranog svijeta postaje inženjer.¹⁹⁴

192 Castells o *kulturi stvarne virtualnosti* govori u nekoliko svojih djela; u *Usponu umreženog društva* tome posvećuje cijelo poglavlje (Castells, 2000:356), kao što će o tome govoriti i u *Internet Galaksiji* (2003).

193 Pogledati šire u pododjeljku *Tehnika I duša: izazovi pred mišljenjem*, autora Žarka Paića u trećem tomu obimnog djela ‘Tehnosfera III’ (2029) Izdavač Sandof Mizantrop, Zagreb.

194 Ibidem, str. 166, u nastavku Ortega kaže da inženjeri ne misle, ali I to mišljenje koje bi moglo biti alternativa inženjerstvu

Kraj univerziteta kakvi postoje oko tisuću godina

Tehnizacija i tehnopolizacija svijeta odavno traje. Nešto kraće je prisutna tehnizacija i tehnopolizacija svijesti no sve oko nas, ako se izuzmu marketinške kampanje, moguće prijevare i trikovi mednadžera ove sfere djelatnosti, ukazuje na zahuktali pritisak korporacija i njihova kapitala koji se bave novim tehnologijama, medijskim aplikacijama kako bi njihovi snovi i zamisli izašli na svjetlo dana. Inovativne tehnologije već su uvelike utjecale na obrazovne procese, kako ukazuje Anthony Giddens, koji cijelo jedno poglavlje u svojoj obimnoj *Sociologiji* (Giddens, 2003:512) posvećuje pitanju obrazovanja, dodirujući veliki broj ključnih tema. Sjajni talijanski filozof **Giorgio Agamben** u tekstu *Rekvijem za studente – iskustvo koje je trajalo gotovo deset stoljeća zauvijek se gasi*¹⁹⁵ dobro primjećuje kako pažljiviji promatrači već uviđaju, da je tzv. Pandemija iskorištena kao dobar povod za sveobuhvatnu difuziju i širenje digitalne tehnologije koja se poslušno provodi u djelo. Naime, ovaj filozof je posve svjestan da će obrazovanje biti otrgnuto iz neposrednosti, nestat će susreta učitelja i učenika, profesora i studenta i izokrenuti se u posredovanu, tehniciziranu i zatvorenu formu. Snažnim zaključkom u pomalo rezigniranom tekstu kojim u stvari najavljuje nestanak univerziteta kao mjesta života, druženja, govora, razgovora i prijateljavanja među mladima i starijima, konstatira kako je to nemjerljiva šteta te zaključuje: “Profesori koji *en masse* pristaju na potčinjavanje novoj diktaturi telematike i prihvataju da predavanja drže isključivo online nimalo se ne razlikuju od univerzitetskih profesora koji su 1931. godine potvrđivali odanost fašističkom režimu. Kao i onda, možda će samo 15 od hiljadu njih odbiti da to učini, ali imena onih koji odbiju ostat će upisana uz imena nastavnika koji se nisu poklonili fašizmu”. Potrebno je samo redefiniranje kategorije znanja, nastave, obrazovanja, reći će Agamben, i neko novo okupljanje oko znanja, “jer jedino na takvim mjestima riječ prošlosti može preživjeti navalu tehnološkog barbarstva i jedino bi se tu mogla roditi neka nova kultura – ako je to još moguće”.¹⁹⁶ No, nije li nama ova tzv. pandemija već općim pristankom jedinki, građana, da su svi potencijalno zaraženi pokazala kako su ljudi s velikom lakoćom prihvatili ukidanje svog dotadašnjeg načina života. “Odbačene su veze, prijateljstva, ljubavi, rad, pa čak su i vjerske zajednice i politička ubjeđenja zgasnula.”¹⁹⁷ Za Agambena moderne religijske se institucije nisu u stanju nositi s ljudskom potrebom vjerovanja, i stoga je mjesto religije zauzela znanost, zbog čega on znanost naziva religijom našeg doba. “Dakle”, nastavlja ovaj filozof, “znanost kao i svaka religija proizvodi praznovjerice i strah, ili se bar može koristiti za njihovo širenje...Nikada nismo prisustvovali

kao apsolutnoj konstrukciji svijeta iz duha stroja nema više svoje tragične figure otpora poput grčkih ekscentričnih filozofa, srednjovjekovnih mistika, hidalga i bodhisattvi. Sveta ravnodušnost Don Kihota ostaje tek pobunom subjekta unutar vlastita dvorca opsjena’ (str. 70).

195 TBT portal je tekst objavio 27. svibnju 2020 godine na online platformama a poslije su ga prenijeli i drugi portali poput buka.ba, pescanik.net i postao je vrlo dostupan, <https://pescanik.net/rekvijem-za-studente/> pristupljeno 1. lipnja 2020.

196 <https://pescanik.net/rekvijem-za-studente/>, pristupljeno 2. lipnja 2020. godine u 18. sati.

197 Za trenutak su svi prestali slaviti kinesku novu godinu, uskrs, vaskrs, ali najzačudnije je reagirala islamska vlast u Saudijskoj Arabiji zabranivši tavvaf, obilazak oko Kabe u Mekki, koji nije prekinut u posljednjih tisuću godina, barem ne odlukom vlasti...čak i kad druge džamije u istoj zemlji profunkcioniraju, mekkanske i medinske ostaju zatvorene, što je uistinu presedan čije konsekvence će tek doći na uvid...

ovakvom spektaklu,¹⁹⁸ pri tome misleći na razilaženja znanstvenika o pitanjima corone i vjerodostojnosti pandemije, postupaka liječenja i zadnjih nakana, zaključivši neizmjenno točno: “Kao da ljudi više ni u šta ne vjeruju – osim u golu biološku egzistenciju koja se mora sačuvati po svaku cijenu. Ali na temelju straha od gubitka golog života ne može se graditi ništa osim tiranije”, čudovišnog Levijatana s isukanim mačem.¹⁹⁹

Na pres konferenciji u New Yorku ovim povodom korporacijski moguli su se očitovali: “Mi smo spremni, sasvim smo posvećeni”, izjavio je njujorški guverner. “Shvaćamo ne samo da je promjena neodložna, već i da ju možemo okrenuti u našu korist ako je sprovedemo na pravi način”. Bivši Googlov izvršni direktor Erick Schmidt je izjavio: “Naši prioriteti su fokusiranje na telemedicinu, učenje na daljinu i širokopojasni internet... Moramo tražiti rješenja koja se mogu primijeniti sada, ubrzati se, moramo koristiti tehnologiju da bismo stvari učinili boljima”. O ovome piše Naomi Klein, u tekstu objavljenom u *The Guardianu*. “Dvije sedmice poslije objavljivanja članka opisao je privremene programe za školovanje od kuće, koje su nastavnici i učenici bili primorani da skrpe tokom tekućeg vanrednog stanja javnog zdravlja, kao ‘masivni eksperiment u učenju na daljinu’. U toku istog video poziva u organizaciji Ekonomskog kluba New Yorka, u kome je pozivao na reforme u obrazovanju, Schmidt je također pozvao na sličnu reformu u zdravstvu, na više 5G mreže, više digitalne trgovine, kao i na ostale stvari s postojećeg spiska želja. Sve to u ime borbe protiv virusa”.²⁰⁰

Samo dan ranije, njihov suradnik Cuomo je objavio partnerstvo s Fondacijom Billa i Melinde Gates, u svrhu razvoja “pametnijeg edukativnog Sistema”. Nazivajući Gatesa vizionarom, Cuomo je dodao da je pandemija stvorila „*trenutak u istoriji kada zaista možemo da primijenimo i unaprijedimo [Gejtsove] ideje [...] čemu sve ove zgrade, sve ove učionice, kada imamo ovu tehnologiju na raspolaganju?*” zapitao se, naizgled retorički. Autorica Naomi Klein koja je na doktrinu šoka kojom se koristi neka krizna situacija za uvođenje šokantnih rješenja u društvenom biću ukazivala već skoro pa decenijama, kroz nekoliko knjiga poput ‘No logo’, ‘Doktrina šoka’, ‘Prozori i ograde’, ovaj put je novi pristup ubrzane i bezmalo nasilne digitalizacije nazvala “*Screen New Deal*”.

Anuja Sonalker, izvršna direktorica Steer Techa, kompanije iz Marylanda koja se bavi prodajom tehnologija za samostalno parkiranje, ukratko je objasnila novi pristup. «Raste zagrijanost za tehnologiju bez ljudi i kontakata», izjavila je. „Ljudska bića su biološka opasnost, strojevi to nisu». Da kojim slučajem svijet nije posve izgubio razum i um, ovakva bi se izjava mogla nazvati ne samo totalitarnom, već i fašističkom i genocidnom. No, u poremećenim okolnostima gotovo

198 Tekst objavljen na portalu Autonomies, 06. aprila 2020. godine.

199 <https://pescanik.net/rekvijem-za-studente/>, ibidem; zanimljivi podaci o ovoj temi su primjerice I ovi: Da, milijarderi iz svijeta novih tehnologija uvećali su svoja golema bogatstva. Osnivač *Amazona* **Jeff Bezos** je zaradio 34,6 milijardi, osnivač *Facebooka* **Mark Zuckerber** je zaradio 25 milijardi dolara, **Bill Gates** i **Elon Musk** po 36 milijardi dolara, prema izvoru – <https://buka.com/novosti/procurili-prvi-podaci-ko-se-najvise-obogatio.tokom.pandemije-bogatasi-zaradili.434.mi>.

200 ibidem.

da je prihvaćena kao zabavna metafora.²⁰¹ Kako bi kazao filozof Alić «tajna hijerarhijske tajne baš je u tome da se jedno govori a drugo čini, tako da je oko nas nastalo društvo u kojemu ljudi čak i ako znaju i vide šta je istina a šta laž prihvaćaju stvari onako kako se od njih traži da vide, misle, oblikuju, jer svakoj hijerarhiji trebaju smjerni ljudi».²⁰²

Life on the Screen²⁰³

Gdje smo u Bosni stigli sa svim ovim procesima i projektima? Još bolje, kamo idemo? Kojeg korporativnog mađioničara najradije slušamo i da li išta propitujemo i prilagođavamo vlastitoj sredini, iskustvima, kulturi i prilikama ili smo već uskočili u novi „*Screen New Deal*“. Tehnopol zapravo preuzima ulogu modernog mađioničara, kao svaki mađioničar dobro upravlja svojim magijskim sredstvom, a ovdje je to neosporno tehnologija. Mišljenja smo da je u ove opasne projekte poželjno što više zakasnuti, toliko su opasni i totalitarni. No, kako nas naučava Noam Chomsky, upravo su akademci i intelektualne elite prvi stroj koji pristaje na projekte koji se odnose na kontrole ljudskih misli. Virtualni prostor u kojem se ostvaruje interakcija, nova je komunikacijska sredina, novi društveni ambijent virtualne zajednice ili kako već, što je iskustvo drugačije od svakog dosadašnjeg iskustva komunikacije. Tehnologija nepovratno transformira obrazovni sistem – e-platfoma, elektronski dnevnic, pametne ploče, pametni zidovi, virtualne učionice. Online nastava na specifičan način redefinira obrazovanje unutar ekraničke kulture, gdje naš život neosporno obilježava EKTRAN; ovdje se nastava održava preko ekrana.

Ekran i ekranička kultura, što je to?

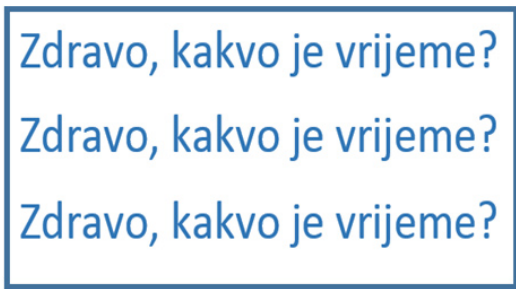
No, prije toga riječ-dvije o fenomenu ekrana kao takvog. Šta je to ekran? Ekran je novomedijsko i novodobno otkriće koje posljednjih 80-tak godina zauzima sve važniju ulogu u životu pojedinca. Ekran prinosi alijenaciju, otuđenje, jer se nalazi između živih ljudi, njihovih lica i očiju. Ekran stvara tzv. *cyber društvo* ili društvo okruženo bezbrojnim posredničkim ekranima između ljudi. Naše moderno društvo se može nazvati *društvom ekrana*. Ekran u tom društvu počinje bivati stvarni život više od uistinu stvarnog života. Uz pomoć ekrana čovjek postaje djelomična mašina. Ekran je neizbježan u našem vremenu ali ne treba smetnuti s uma da sa sobom nosi nestabilnost i na poseban način pasivizira svijet. Najšire mase ljudi, mladi, tinejdžeri ne znaju

201 U ovakvoj budućnosti naši domovi prestati će biti prije svega osobni prostor, a posredstvom brze digitalne mreže naše škole, naše doktorske kancelarije, naše teretane i, ako tako država odluči, postati će naši zatvori. Naravno, za mnoge od nas ti isti domovi su već bili pretvoreni u danonoćna radna mjesta i igraonice čak i prije pandemije, a cvjetale su i mjere nadgledanog kućnog pritvora. Međutim, u budućnosti koja se hitno nameće, svi ovi trendovi će se ubrzati do maksimuma.

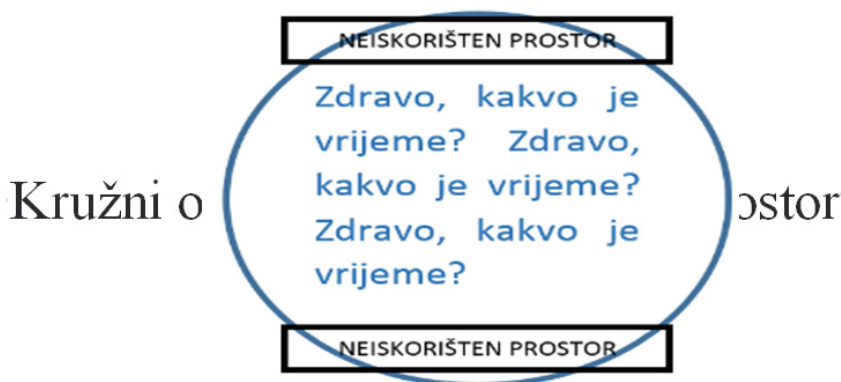
202 Pogledati šire u knjizi Seada Alića «Masovna proizvodnja narcizma», Zagreb 2019., Sveučilište Sjever I CFM Zagreb na strani 15 i dalje.

203 Ovaj poznati i toliko citirani naslov autorice Sherry Turkle, 'Identity in the Age of the Internet, Alone together: Why We Expect more from technology and less from each other', New York, Basic, Books, 2011. – postaje sve jasniji mlađim generacijama koliko se mijenja život koji se premješta na ekran.

dovoljno o posljedicama upotrebe ekrana. Sam oblik pravokutnika je specifična površina. Ima na sebi neiskorištenog prostora, jer je ljudsko vidno polje horizontalno. A pravoukutnik prikazuje više informacija no što je vidni horizontalni prostor. Dok čitamo i pišemo mi koristimo vid ili čulo vida kao svoj biološki ili prirodni horizontalni potencijal. Zato što je ekran više od horizontalnog potencijala prirodnog oka, on svakako pogoduje tome da ponudi *iluzionistički svijet*, dakle onaj nepostojeći svijet koji nije proizišao iz naše mašte i intuicije. U prirodu horizontalnog potencijala oka i čula vida nasilno ulazi iluzionistički svijet koji traži brzo djelovanje, brze pokrete zjenice i brzo mijenjanje smjera kretanja vida.



Pravokutni oblik prijema informacije – ekran prima previše sadržaja



Kružni oblik ima neiskorišten prostor



Naše vidno polje je linearno

Koje su posljedice ove novosti? Najprije da korisnici ekrana, ljudi i djeca sve više žive u slikama a ne u riječima i jeziku, i to u slikama koje su stvorili o sebi samima i o drugim ljudima, te kako bi to kazao Jorg Scheller postaju površniji. Generalno je poznato da ekran šteti dopaminskom sistemu u mozgu. Pobjeda u videoigricama na primjer djeluje na mozak kao i opojna droga. Moderna djeca prvo uče kako koristiti modernu tehnologiju pa tek potom uče govoriti, svezati pertle i slično. Od previše ekrana u našim vidnim poljima pojavljuje se sindrom ‘suhih očiju’, one se dogode zbog previše upotrebe ekrana. Poznato je da se kod mnogo gledanja u ekran do 60% manje trepće nego u drugim izvanekranskim prilikama. Previše ekrana smanjuje koncentraciju, dovodi do glavobolje, bola u vratu i kičmi, osjetljivosti vida na svjetlost općenito. Ekranički mediji su tako stvorili *globalno selo*, a u selu se gleda jedan *globalni ekran* i dodatno stvara potreba za slikom. Tu su žive *slike događaja* u realnom vremenu. Već je Rudolf Arnheim imao strah da će čovjek postati *usamljeni pustinjač* koji se poslije teškog rada druži s televizorom ili mobitelom kao najprisnijim prijateljima. U ekraničkoj kulturi uronjen, moderni čovjek postaje medij ili novi medij koji samo gleda i sluša druge bez vlastitog učešća. Sam digitalni ekran kao najnoviji medij nudi milijun boja, visoku rezoluciju i mi postajemo društvo tog ekrana. Ovaj ekran je objedinio svih pet čula, postao je otvoreni prozor u samog čovjeka. Komunikacija je ostala bez dodira, bez stvarnog ljudskog susreta i kontakta, za čim žude najbogatiji vlasnici korporacija u svijetu, kako se navodi na početku ove analize. San o *totalnom telenadzoru i kontroli svakoga* ih omamljuje, ophrvava i čini se, san im se pomalo ispunjava. Sve svoje slobodno vrijeme moderna djeca i većina odraslih daju ekranu. On nosi nestabilnost i pasivizira svijet. David Riesmanova teorija o *usamljenoj gomili* se bjelodano ostvaruje u realnom životu. Ogromni milijunski gradovi, bez imalo otpora, nastanjeni su usamljenim gomilama u zatvorenim neboderima.²⁰⁴

204 Ekran je počeo kao knjiga, kao slikarstvo, potom nastavio kao fotografija, film, televizija i danas mobitel. Knjiga je sama za sebe revolucija kao i alfabet ili pismo i nova je era ljudskoga roda. Kada je Vincent van Gogh naslikao 1889. godine ‘Zvezdanu noć’ sliku ja razigrao kao ekranski oblik. Takva mu je slika omogućila beskraj prelaženja pogledom. Zato je proslavljena. Na fotografiji je stvarnost zatočena i zaustavljena. McLuhan je fotografiju smatrao vizualnim izvještajem bez sintakse. Film kao prvi audiovizualni medij prvi stvara *optičku iluziju*. Montaža postaje ključna tehnologija te iluzije. To je *psihički šok* kako je zapisao Walter Benjamin. No, tek s ovim telenadzirućim *sveprisutnim globalnim digitalnim ekranom* svuda oko nas, ekran postaje subjekt a čovjek postaje objekt novodigitalnoga svijeta. Ovim digi ekranom sve manjim i tanjim ostvaruje se posvemašnja totalna praksa nadzora nad svakom osobom na Planeti. Stoga je u pravu Yuval Noah Harrari kad konstatira da je korona virus prekretnica za nadzor ljudi..Piše: “Znamo da vlade i korporacije godinama razvijaju sposobnosti, tehničke alate da prate sve što radimo. To im daje uvida u naše političke poglede, naše preferencije čak i naše ličnosti. Ali kad nam nadzor uđe pod kožu, može biti upotrijebljen za mnoge druge svrhe. Možda vas TV promatra, a biometrijska narukvica na vašem zglobu mjeri vam temperaturu, krvni pritisak, puls...mogu znati i kako se osjećate, šta vas ljuti, šta vas nasmijava, da li se slažete ili ne... <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/korona-virus-prekretnica-za-nadzor-ljudi>, pristup, 04.06.2020.

Praktična iskustva

Dok je trajala pandemija autorice teksta su izvodile online nastavu i u tom poeriodu su provele istraživanje stavova, razmišljanja i spoznaja studenata o ovakvom obliku nastave na više studijskih grupa. Nema sumnje da su se rezultati koje smo dobili s nekoliko odsjeka fakulteta društvenih nauka zapravo poklapali sa bitnim postavkama Agambenovog eseja već citiranog na prvim stranicama ovog teksta. Što donosi nastava online? U odgovorima studenata često se pominjala riječ *nelagoda*. Studenti su ponavljali da su imali nelagodu hoće li se konektirati, hoće li znati biti prohodni u sistemu, hoće li se snaći, hoće li nešto u tehnologiji zakazati, te se to sve iskazivalo kao izrazit oblik nelagode naspram tehnike. Nelagode svih vrsta je bilo sa svake strane, i profesorske i studentske.²⁰⁵

Obična statistička analiza studentskih odgovora pokazuje da je njih preko 90 posto imalo prigovore na online nastavu te da preferiraju offline nastavu, posebno ispite. Ali kvalitativna analiza njihovih odgovora je daleko snažniji dio ove ankete i zaslužuje citiranje: „nedostajala mi je socijalizacija, druženje općenito, ali je bilo pozitivno što sam dobila restart duše i tijela”, ...”život u doba korone bio je otežan za sve nas, svakodnevnne informacije su jako utjecale na nas, ali smo neke poslove zbog prebrzog tempa uspjeli obaviti”, ...”nisam bila ni svjesna neke jurnjave u životu prije ove pandemije”, ..”nedostajala mi je socijalizacija, prijatelji, online to ne može zamijeniti, ali je manje obaveza vani donijelo više porodice za sve”, ...”život u doba korone mi se nije dopao, nemogućnost socijalne konekcije, ali nakon mjesec dana primjećujem da mi jako neodstaju prijatelji, druženje, odlazak na posao, fakultet, sve ono što sam prije mogla slobodno raditi sada mi je uskraćeno”,...”mislim da nas je ova situacija naučila da više cijesimo život, zdravlje, porodicu, bliske prijatelje, da više cijesimo prirodu i uživamo u njoj ne zagađujući je, međutim nedostaju mi prijatelji i online komunikacija ne može zamijeniti razgovore uživo”, ...”nedostajala mi je socijalizacija in live s prijateljima, online to ne može zamijeniti”,...”nedavno sam čula jednu rečenicu koja me zaista navela na razmišljanje o cijeloj ovoj situaciji a rečenica glasi: ‘Lakše je stvoriti strah kod ljudi nego izgraditi zid’.....”svaka dramatična pojava u svakodnevicu je izazov, tako je i s ovom situacijom. Čovjek je socijalno biće, treba mu kontakt s drugim ljudima te izolacija svakako teško pada. Motivacija mi je bila slabija, osjećala sam se usamljenije”, ...”nije mi se nimalo dopalo, ipak je druženje s ljudima mnogo bolje od izolacije”,...”najkraće rečeno bilo mi je nikako. Slobodno kretanje, druženje sve mi je nedostajalo I sve je nekako izgubljeno. Ostala nam je samo forma druženja preko društvenih mreža, a to je ipak nedovoljno”,...”s prijateljima sam dnevno komunicirala online što je bilo dobro, a moja kreativna strana je patila, jer me zarobilo kao pticu u kavezu... čovjeku treba

205 Tada smo na predmetima Medijska kultura, Filozofija medija i Sociologija medija napravili anketu s pedeset tri studenta komunikologije i sociologije. Njihovi odgovori su nastajali u toku tog procesa i oslikali su nam svu dubinu problema, zamke koja se krije iza svega oko naprasnog zagovaranja boljitka, tj. online nastave svuda i stalno, npr. čak i kad pandemija ne postoji daci i studenti su u izolaciji, van učionica van univerziteta, kao na primjer krajem svibnja i početkom lipnja 2020. godine u BiH.

sloboda kretanja, da motivacija sama od sebe utihne”, “nedostajale su mi moje svakodnevne obaveze i pravi fakultet”.

Kad su u pitanju odgovori oko online nastave odgovori su gotovo isti kod svih: “nedostatak ove forme je nedostatak praktičnog rada i susreti uživo sa profesorima i kolegama koji svakako moraju pronaći svoje mjesto u svakoj formi studiranja”,...”za studente koji su svoje obrazovanje sticali tradicionalnim putem, ovakav vid učenja je nešto novo i mislim da je nastava u učionici puno kvalitetnija”, ...”forma učenja preko interneta ima svojih učinaka, ali praćenje nastave uživo i razgovor s profesorima i rad na fakultetu ima svoj daleko veći i bitniji utjecaj na sve student”, ...”imamo sve na jednom mjestu, gradivo je tu, ali nedostaje diskusije i razgovora”,...”zagovornik sam živog razgovora, razmjene mišljenja, nadam se vraćanju standardnom odvijanju životnih procesa, jer neki se administrativni procesi nastave za čim žude najbogatiji vlasnici korporacija u svijetu mogu odvijati online, kao prijava za biro, na posao, porezna prijava, ali nastava ne, radujemo se povratku prirodi da se dekontaminiramo od masovne upotrebe tehnologije, zatvorenog prostora i infodemije”,...”definitivno bih radije slušala nastavu uživo, u učionici, jer nekad nešto niste shvatili, nema razgovora s profesorima, razmjene mišljenja, dijeljenja iskustava, kako neko reče, živa riječ profesora je nezamjenjiva”,...”online nastava nam je dala priliku za učenje, ali treba ovo znati shvatiti jer mi se s ovim prvi put susrećemo i to na ovako dug period. Mislim da svi studenti mnogo ozbiljnije shvaćaju odlazak na predavanje u učionicu u odnosu na ovo online jer kad se kaže da je nešto online omladinu to više asocira na zabavu, relaksaciju i tome slično, veća je posvećenost i veća je pažnja studenata i školaraca kad se nastava odvija živim putem”,...”veliki nedostatak je interakcija, lakše mi je zapamtiti predavanja ukoliko pratim pokrete, gestikulaciju i mimiku profesora”,...”cijelo vrijeme studiranja mi smo učili od profesora i to ne mislim samo na gradivo, već generalno gledali smo kako se oni ponašaju od ulaska u kabinet, pozdrava do njihovog dress codea i sl.”

Upravo neki od odgovora studenata upućuju na ovaj bitan element o kojem je govorio Hentig u svom eseju *Što je obrazovanje*: “Jedna jedina gesta nekog drugog, dakle, u ovom slučaju predavača, učitelja, profesora pohranjena u čovjekovoj duši, može ga za cijeli život ispuniti i promijeniti, utisnuti se u njegovu povijest kao ljudskog bića. Ukoliko je to spoznavanje željeno nazivamo ga obrazovanjem”.²⁰⁶ Kvalitetno obrazovanje označava dugotrajan posvećen proces i dobar rezultat. Ovaj autor s razlogom postavlja dva temeljna pitanja u oblasti obrazovanja – koje zadaće ima obrazovna ustanova i koje alternative za to postoje.

Dijalog koji se ostvaruje *face to face* je nezamjenjiv, to potvrđuju odgovori ispitanika: “ne podržavam online nastavu”, “niti jedno predavanje me nije dojmilo kao u učionici. Mogućnost vođenja dijaloga sa profesorom, savladavanje materije licem u lice nikako se ne može uporediti sa opcijom izvođenja nastave putem platforme e nastava”,...”mislim da sve ovo treba nadoknaditi

206 Hartmut von Hentig, *Što je obrazovanje*, Educa, Zagreb, 2008. Pogledati šire: “Danas bi morali poduzeti sustavne napore za ovladavanje svijetom ekrana, uvesti pedagogiju slika koja će nas učiniti doraslim bujici slika”, str. 26.

jer znanje koje se stekne u klupama je neizbrisivo u odnosu na online učenje” ,...”suludo mi je da se putem ove aplikacije rade ispiti, prevelik je pritisak...velika mi je želja da se što prije vratimo u klupe i nastavimo s učenjem tamo gdje smo stali” ,...”vjerujem da nam je svima draga nastava u učionici” ,...”pomalo je neadekvatna ova nastava i vrsta učenja jer sam netko tko uči direktno postavljajući pitanja profesorima u toku nastave, preferiram nastavu u učionici” ,...”ne moram se opredijeliti, mogu obje varijante” ,...”kuću ne doživljam kao prostor za rad” ,...”sve se svelo na gledanje ekrana bez emocija, ...uključen ekran i mikrofona ne mogu zamijeniti profesora u stvarnosti, ...nijedna društvena mreža ne može zamijeniti kontakt licem u lice i nijedan tehnički alat nije dovoljno dobar da zamijeni ljudski kontakt” , ...”primijetila sam da je kod mojih kolega opala motivacija za učenje, studiranje” ,...”u toj virtualnosti (virtualnoj učionici i online nastavi) ljudi ne postoje u svojoj autentičnosti, ni predavači, profesori niti studenti – na ekranu su samo ispisana imena prisutnih u virtualnoj učionici, bez osobnosti, vidljivosti... obrazovni sistem se sveo na slike i vizualne sadržaje, a čovjek postaje vizualno spremište iz kojeg ne proistječe duboko znanje ni promišljanje” ...

Na kraju ovog dijela da zaključimo ponovno se vraćajući Agambenu koji kaže da je ovo iskustvo posredovanja u obrazovanju donijelo poništavanje i gubitak pogleda koji je unutar ove posredovanosti zarobljen unutar sablasnog ekrana. U teleprisutnosti, u tehnosocijalnosti, u tehnokulturi, posredovani ekranom, svatko sa svoje strane ostaju otuđeni ljudi. Što bi autor Paić rekao sve je drugačije u toj drugoj sintetičkoj prirodi. Uslijed redefiniranja obrazovanja u ovakvim specifičnim okolnostima, teleprisutnosti, posredovanosti tehnologijom i ekranima, treba uvesti kao nužno novo pojmovlje, nove termine i sklopove, naprosto jer je prepoznatljivo, I više od toga, treba naglasiti da su ljudi ovdje ponajmanje subjekti neke izvorne interakcije, a ponajviše umreženi objekti. To sve skupa ustvari ukazuje na pojavu jedne nove normalnosti za koju se postavlja pitanje jesmo li dovoljno za nju pripravnici, i kao što vidimo, odgovori studenata sugeriraju upravo suprotno. Kako bi u svojoj poznatoj knjizi *Novi svjetski poredak* rekao Henry Kissinger podsjećajući nas na stihove T. S. Eliota koji se nekoć pitao: “Gdje je znanje koje se izgubilo u informacijama”? ²⁰⁷ Da bi informacija uistinu bila korisna i da bi se pretvorila u pravo znanje, mora biti smještena u širi kontekst iskustva, jer stjecanje znanja iz knjiga neosporno nudi iskustvo drugačije od interneta. Internet se fokusira samo na područje informacija. ²⁰⁸ Tražilice se uspijevaju sve brže nositi sa sve složenijim pitanjima, ipak, prezasićenost informacijama mogla bi, paradoksalno, mogla bi omesti stjecanje znanja. A mudrost kao zgusnuto znanje mogla bi odgurnuti čak i dalje nego što je bila prije.

207 ‘Gdje je znanje koje smo izgubili u življenju

Gdje je mudrost koju smo izgubili u znanju

Gdje je znanje koje smo izgubili u informacijama, ‘ (T. S. Eliot, *Stijena*), str. 302 u knjizi H. Kissingera *Svjetski poredak* u dijelu knjige koji nosi podnaslov *Tehnologija, ravnoteža i ljudska svijest*, Školska knjiga, Zagreb 2015.

208 Vidjeti šire u istoj knjizi i istom podnaslovu počev od str. 304. pa nadalje.

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Hypermedia Sphere and Virtual Classrooms

Abstract

*The most recognizable media in hypermedia society is – technology. New technologies and irreversible digitalization of society lead to greater mediation within all social relations. In culture of real virtuality it is technology that made possible the existence of virtual classrooms (or classrooms without walls, as Giddens notices), intermediation through technology in knowledge transfer, digital platforms as meeting points, and finally, existence of electronic universities. Innovative technologies have already immensely influenced education processes, which imply different trials of knowledge transfer and the education itself. Education is action, process and result; a question therefore arises about types of changes brought by new technologies that take away directness, in the situation where online communication, which is mediated communication, is the only choice. First contours of this paper and impulses for the reflection were drawn from essay of Giorgio Agamben **Requiem for the Students** (2020) that appeared in the peak of pandemic, a warning text pointing out some new processes not only in education, but in the whole society of our time.*

Key words: *technology, hypermedia society, media, education, knowledge, virtual classrooms.*



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Ecology and Media

Abstract

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of global goals targeting all levels: from a planetary biosphere to a local community. The aim is to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people can enjoy peace and prosperity, now and in the future. The beginning of the Twenty-first century and the last fifteen years of the twentieth century have been the awakening of human consciousness when it comes to ecology and environmental protection. The man of the digital age is slowly becoming aware that a new society is a life-organization characterized by the use of modern technologies and overuse of natural resources and, in some places, already devastated and degraded environments. The modern economy survives on the use of living and inanimate natural resources. Natural resources such as air, water, soil are polluted and some animal species are exterminated in this period. For this reason, it is of great importance to force producing and broadcasting numerous environmental shows on local, regional and global media. Going deeper into the issue, we have to see that the problem should be addressed more and more, reinforcing at the same time the ethics of all people on the planet, which would lead to the adoption of binding norms that would affect people's behavior when it comes to ecology and environmental protection. The media is playing a key role in this issue. A part of the discussion on the concept of conservation, including the main scientific and ethical points of view, is presented in this paper, highlighting the

environmental, socio-ecological and ethical aspects behind the comprehensive concept of industry and economy. This paper is about the idea of being the appeal on media regarding the urgent need for socio-environmental ethical personal engagement and collective actions.

Key words: *ecology, media, environment, ethics, sustainable development.*

Introduction

Awareness of the interconnectedness of the natural and social environment in the human environment, as well as knowledge about the causes of disturbance and pollution, as well as the impact of their pollution on humans is essential. In building society's relationship to environmental problems, although man's relationship to nature is mediated by the political system, an important place belongs to environmental consciousness (Markovic, 2001: 14). The media is a very important agent that contributes to the activation of individuals and groups in environmental actions, to the proper functioning, in accordance with the acquired environmental knowledge and established environmental values. Media actions can be preventive, in terms of informing the recipients of the pollutants, the situation in the local, regional and global ecological environment, dangers of environmental pollution and damage to natural balance. It is the action of the media that is directly related to socially (un) acceptable environmental behavior. There are hardly any professional papers, or a small number of them, which play the role of the media in the development of awareness for the protection of human environment and the environment.

Social values and environmental awareness

The environment, the natural environment, and their protection and preservation are integral parts of every Constitution of a country. The impression is that the media has received insufficient attention. The value system of what is desirable, worthy of respect, less valuable, or irrelevant, right or wrong, is built through the process of socialization that every human individual goes through, no matter what time or space of the planet he lives. The value system consists of a set of general beliefs, opinions and attitudes and contains the three most important components: cognitive (value as conception), affective (value as something desirable) and connotative (value as a selection criterion for what is considered important to a community, group, environment ...). (M. Jakovljevic, 2015: 34) The transfer of ecological values to a particular social community could be called ecological orientation (Cifrić, Čulig: 1987: 22-23). This view of the value component, as an integral part

of environmental awareness, adopted through the mass media, is of particular importance for this work. It explains the specific behaviors of individuals and groups regarding preventative environmental protection against potential sources of environmental threats, in addressing local, regional and global environmental crises, but also in everyday work at the workplace and in the environment. Environmental problems can and must be addressed as cultural or civilization problems. (M.Jakovljevic, 2015: 36)

The Impact of Media on Environmental Behavior

Human behavior is in accordance with the adopted environmental values, and on the basis of knowledge that has about the environment and its importance for the individual, narrower and wider community, contributes to environmental protection , raising the quality of life. Opposite behavior is also due to an underdeveloped environmental awareness: that it is endangering the environment by irresponsible actions, classifying those people who contribute to larger and smaller scale environmental crises. Media play a special role and has importance in times of ecological crises, major natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, etc. when it is timely, accurate and meaningful broadcasting of messages of invaluable importance. When it comes to the role of the media in the development of environmental awareness, the media has, among other things, the role of a mobilizer, but also a catalyst for certain social processes regarding the environmental situation. The media must, by encouraging citizens to think critically about the ecological environment, actively participate in its evaluation, critically evaluate the degree of threat to the environment and the potential threats to their environment. In particular, the media should allow for “public debate” by confronting opinions on specific and potential environmental problems. (M. Jakovljevic, 2015: 40-41) With such editorial policy and program orientation, the media can influence the political representatives of the community in the field of environmental protection. If media has in its programs specialized broadcast dedicated to the conservation and protection of the environment, the media becomes at the same time a communication channel through which they can pressure potential or actual polluters, or corporations that destroy or exploit natural resources, especially non-renewable energy sources, or destroy wildlife. Change is possible only if one changes his consciousness and his beliefs, and brings the practice into harmony with the “reality” he wants to experience. If we want cleaner cities, we must make sure their cleanliness, in particular, contribute to our behavior, stemming from our conviction (Prodanović, 1987: 396). Or, as Hans Jonas thinks and says, “Act so that the effects of your actions are not devastating to the future possibility of your life” (Jonas, 1990: 193).

Results of the research

In order to determine the impact of mass media on the environmental awareness of the population of Montenegro, with the aim of preserving and protecting the environment, research was conducted during which the results were identified, indicating a multi-layered relationship and interactions between the media and recipients of information. The survey was conducted by means of a questionnaire, by random sampling method, on a sample of 100 respondents, 20 from 5 cities in Montenegro. The survey was conducted during January and February 2020, and the respondents answered 8 questions by submitting one of the offered answers, or giving grades from 1 to 5. The gender structure of the respondents is as follows: 54% male, 46% female.

The age stratification of the respondents is as follows: 18 to 27 years: 60%, 27 to 55 years: 32%, over 55 years: 8%.

Educational structure-status of respondents: SE- 55%, HSE: 5%, HSS: 40%. Respondents live in the following cities: Berane, Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja, Niksic, Bar

The cities with specific characteristics of potential sources of environmental threats are covered equally. These pollutants can be thermal power plants, but also high concentrations of cars, high levels of exhaust gases, unbearable noise, and other negativities that accompany urban life. During the research, the general impression was that the current ecological situation is significantly better due to the fact that many factories, pollutants, do not work due to problems, therefore do not pollute, not because a certain environmental strategy has been undertaken.

Table 1:

How do you evaluate the environmental situation in your area?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
Extremely poor	31	31
Poor	36	36
Satisfactory	16	16
Good	17	17
Extremely good	-	-
Total	100	100

As shown by the results in Table 1, citizens have a very high degree of criticality about the state of the environment in urban areas, where they live. As many as 67% of respondents rated the environmental situation in their environment as bad and extremely bad. 33% consider the condition to be satisfactory and good.

Table 2: With which media do you most inform yourself about the state of the environment and environmental issues in your environment, country and world?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
TV	42	42
Newspapers	19	19
Radio	8	8
Internet	31	31
Total	100	100

Television in Montenegro still holds high primacy (42%) (see Table 2). Expectations that the Internet would be by far the most significant mean of informing by which residents of Montenegrin cities were informed about environmental issues had not been materialized. Of these, 31% said they were mostly informed about the environmental situation in their environment via Internet. Radio as a medium had lost its significance as only 8% of respondents cited this medium as a source of environmental information. Such a low level of trust in radio shows not only the deterioration of the central radio stations in smaller environments, but also the poor listening of local radio stations, which do not profile themselves as a medium to be trusted by citizens because, more than others, they will adequately report on local problems, could label pollutants, or encourage local actions to improve the environment. There is also a decrease in readership, as can be seen in the fact that the number of citizens who trust the print media is only 19 percent.

Table 3: Your assessment of media coverage on environmental status and problems?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
Extremely poor	62	62
Poor	16	16
Satisfactory	13	13
Good	9	9
Extremely good	-	-
Total	100	100

As citizens have shown a high degree of environmental criticality (Table 1) Similarly, the results of Table 3 indicate the high criticality of citizens towards the mass media, where 62% rated the media reports on environmental status and problems as negative. From this self-image, the media could draw a conclusion in the form of taking action and in the sense of opening an interactive

communication channel in which citizens would suggest topics for making media contributions, opening channels for citizens to report on their own issues about environmental issues, initiating a public debate, during which environmental officials and environmental experts would be responsible for environmental issues and plans of the environment, not only to journalists, but also to readers, listeners or viewers.

Table 4:

How much does the media help you learn about environmental issues?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
1 Extremely poor	43	43
2 Poor	45	45
3 Satisfactory	5	5
4 Good	2	2
5 Extremely good	5	5
Total	100	100

Citizens with a high dose of criticism rate of media content on environmental issues. Table 4 shows that with the lowest score of 43%, they assess how much the media helps them learn about environmental issues. Most gave a satisfactory, good, very good and excellent grade. The results show the importance of the media in educating citizens, as the media, despite their poor assessment of the quality of their content on media issues, continue to be labeled as helping citizens to find out about environmental issues to the highest degree.

Table 5: Which areas of environmental protection are you most interested in?

The citizens of five Montenegrin cities are most concerned with air pollution. This was expected because the city of Pljevlja where the biggest problem was air pollution was covered by the survey (32%). They are almost equally interested in food protection (2%) and water protection (25%).

Respondents' answers	Number	Percentage
food safety	22	22
Water safety	25	25
Air pollution	32	32
Forest protection	8	8
Animal protection	3	3
Other areas	10	10
Total	100	100

Table 6: To what extent are environmental issues from your immediate environment represented in the local media?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
Extremely poor	66	66
Poor	23	23
Satisfactory	6	6
Good	5	5
Extremely good	-	-
Total	100	100

The poor state of the vast majority of local media is reflected in the results in Table 6, where as many as 66 respondents rated the lowest environmental representation of environmental issues in local media. If there are areas whose media coverage each local media can build trust with the recipients of messages in a short time, then those are environmental problems. The problems of the local media when it comes to environmental issues are twofold: on the one hand, the lack of specialist journalists who would handle such content with the required level of professionalism, and on the other hand, the local media are largely powerless to resist the pressure of local power centers. .

Table 7: Evaluate how much the media has an impact on the formation of citizens' opinions on environmental issues in their area and beyond?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
1 (not affected at all)	59	59
2 (not sufficiently affected)	19	19
3 (influenced)	17	17
4 (highly influenced)	5	5
5 (highly influenced)		
Total	100	100

Citizens are not satisfied with media coverage of environmental issues in their environments, and therefore have high expectations of the media when it comes to influencing the formation of citizens' opinions on environmental issues in the immediate and wider environment (Table 7). 59% think that the media does not affect the citizens' awareness, 19% think that they are not influential enough, while 5% of the respondents think that they are very influential, and 17% think that they have an influence. Too, the results also point to untapped potentials arising from the educational and informational function of the media when it comes to environmental topics.

Table 8: Evaluate how much the media can influence the Government, competent ministries, agencies, inspections and other state bodies to protect citizens from existing and potential polluters, or to protect the environment?

Answer	Number of respondents	Percentage
1 (not affected at all)	10	10
2 (not sufficiently affected)	18	18
3 (influenced)	31	31
4 (highly influenced)	34	34
5 (highly influenced)	7	7
Total	100	100

Citizens believe that the media can influence the Government, ministries, agencies, inspections and other state bodies to protect them from potential pollutants, ie to protect the environment (Table 8). The society is divided on this point. 31% think the media can influence, 41% think that they are very influential and have the highest influence on government bodies, 10% think that they have no influence at all, and 28% of respondents say that the government and ministries are not sufficiently or completely unaffected by the media. The table shows that the power of the media when it comes to influencing the Government and its ministries is 72%. Citizens believe that the media can influence the Government and ministries, and other state bodies, to address the protection of the environment and the protection of citizens from existing and potential polluters.

Conclusion

Humanity needs a highly developed awareness of the need for greater alignment between human creative activities in advancing social development and the need to preserve and enhance nature during such development. (Berberovic, Hanjalic, Saric, 1984: 295). Building environmental awareness is closely linked to increasing the impact of the media on the public. For these reasons, a person already living in a kind of “new media order” is advised to acquire a fundamental knowledge of so-called media literacy in order to obtain a more complete picture of the discourse in which the contemporary man is, a clearer definition of his attitude towards the media, but also according to environmental problems and challenges. The media should create the conditions for building a better world than the one in which we face the daily increase of environmental threats. Of all the pollution, the most serious is the pollution of human consciousness. In building and developing environmental awareness, the most important fact is contained in the need to find out the details of the environment. Some of the tendencies in the media sphere have been observed, which distance the media from their basic functions, but serve for new monopolizations, manipulations aimed at imposing the value attitudes of power centers that have a monopoly on capital. The results obtained

through a survey of 100 respondents from five cities in Montenegro clearly indicate that citizens are highly critical towards the environment, but they are also critical when assessing the quality of media coverage of environmental issues. Citizens place high demands on the media, which, according to this research, does not give adequate treatment to environmental problems. They are especially critical towards the local media, who are not adequately fulfilling their function when timely and meaningful reporting on local environmental issues is needed. The mass media significantly influence not only the formation of environmental awareness, but by shaping awareness, activating the educational function, they provide the recipients with the necessary information and value propositions on environmental issues, on the basis of which they make decisions about specific behavior. The media need to be aware of environmental issues in a timely manner, to report on them substantively, to reflect different opinions and attitudes, but also to initiate and assist the implementation of actions in the field of environmental protection. Environmental protection is a common goal of all participants in social processes.

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Ekologija i mediji

Sažetak

Početak novog tisućljeća i prethodnih petnaest godina karakterizira, svjedoci smo, buđenje ljudske svijesti kada je riječ o ekologiji i zaštiti okoliša. Čovjek koji preživi u doba digitalnih tehnologija polako razvija svijest da je potrebna nova organizacija društva i života u vremenu opterećenom modernim tehnologijama i pretjeranom upotrebom prirodnih resursa, a na nekim mjestima i već devastiranom i degradiranom okolišu. Suvremeno gospodarstvo preživljava od upotrebe živih i neživih prirodnih resursa. Došlo je do zagađenja zraka, vode, zemlje, izumiranja životinjskih vrsta. Iz tog su se razloga čisto ekološki problemi rješavali proizvodnjom i emitiranjem niza ekoloških programa na lokalnim, regionalnim i globalnim medijima. Ulazeći dublje u problem, moramo vidjeti da se problem mora riješiti prevladavanjem ekonomskih imperativa, istodobno, jačanjem etike svih ljudi na planetu, što bi dovelo do usvajanja obvezujućih normi koje bi utjecale na ljudsko ponašanje kada se radi o ekologiji i zaštiti okoliša. Mediji u tome moraju igrati ključnu ulogu.

Ključne riječi: ekologija, mediji, okoliš, etika, održivi razvoj.



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Virtualizacija žive umjetničke izvedbe u post – Covid-19 kulturi

Sažetak

Digitalna kultura realizira samu sebe društvenim skokovima, a ne samo praćenjem ritma linearnog toka razvoja tehnologije. Promjena globalne kulturne paradigme prihvaća se trenutno i bez rezervi, kako u slučajevima prva dva skoka (y2k milenijski bug i web 2. 0), tako i trećem, post – Covid-19. Komunikacija uživo, kao i drugi uobičajeni aspekti ljudske izvedbe uživo, postaje virtualizirana. Proces se razvija i održava pomoću obrazaca tradicionalne umjetničke izvedbe uživo, a poznatih iz dramaturgije kazališta i performansa. Takvi obrasci ugrađeni su u tehnologiju digitalne komunikacije otprije. Pozicija ljudskog izvođačkog tijela u novim okolnostima postaje predmet zanimanja strojne civilizacije. Bitka ljudi za održavanjem identiteta vodi se izvedbom i u post – Covid-19 diskursu, slično bitkama koje se povijesno vode s nad-sustavima moći.

Ključne riječi: digitalna kultura, virtualizacija, komunikacija, umjetnička izvedba, Covid-19.

1. PARODOS

Početak svake kazališne predstave, još od antičkih vremena, iščekuje se pogledom u prazninu tamnog prolaza, tunela ili pozornice, koji se proteže iz realnosti gledatelja u realnost drugoga ili realnost *iza*. Kada se u tom prolazu pojavi nešto, to trenutno mijenja realnost, započinje konstituiranje novog sučelja zajedničke realnosti svih sudionika. Izvođenje grčke antičke tragedije započelo bi naglo, zborom koji bi u trenutku nahrupio kroz tamu i tišinu prolaza koji povezuje skenu i prostore iza pozornice. Sve do danas pravilo je isto, onaj tko uspije prvi razbiti tamu i tišinu prolaza, koji proglasi sebe parodosom, pobjednik je. Jer jednom kada započne, konstituiranje nove realnosti odvija se bez promišljanja - nemilosrdno. Doba digitalne kulture staro jedva pola stoljeća, sagradilo je brojne manje prolaze i manje pozornice za svoja poigravanja s realitetima i linearnostima vremena. Zato ne čudi nespremnost kojom su i tehnološka i ljudska civilizacija odgovorile na nagli prodor novog tijela kroz već pomalo zaboravljen i zapušten globalni parodos. Iz neke druge realnosti iza, pojavio se izvođač koji je sva svjetla pozornice trenutno usmjerio na sebe. Odavno nešto ili netko nije imao tako vjernu globalnu publiku kao što je ima virus covid19. Prethodilo mu je globalno okupljanje još 2000. kada je cijeli svijet strepio zbog prijetnje računalnog milenijskog *bug-a y2k*²⁰⁹, računalne pogreške koja se širila logikom virusa. Prije toga, globalna pozornica uspostavljena je namjerno i kontrolirano 1969., direktnim televizijskim prijenosom misije Apollo 11. Svako od tih globalnih izvođenja promovirao je novi odnos tehnologije i organskih atributa ljudske civilizacije. Tehnologija je svakim takvim događanjem nehotice razotkrivala svoju pravu poziciju privremeno izlazeći iz skrivene pozadine u kojoj je do tada potišno djelovala. Ljudska realnost je na takva razotkrivanja tehnologije redovito reagirala proglašavanjem nove stvarnosti u kojoj se ljudsko tijelo uspješno integrira u zajednička sučelja. Kiborzi, podatkovna tijela, grinderi, virtualna tijela, digitalni predstavnici, tijela virtualne realnosti, kao i mnogi drugi oblici suradnje i sruza strojnog i ljudskog kao da uspješno kroče prema budućnosti koju Haraway opisuje kao prepoznavanje novog doba tentakularnih bića, onih koji šire svoje stvarne i metaforične pipke, živih i neživih bića koji su istovremeno tjelesni, ali istovremeno i mrežni: „pauci, prstolika bića poput ljudi i rakuna (...) Tentakulari su isto tako i mreže i umrežavanja, IT bića, u oblacima i izvan njih...“ (Haraway, 2016:32). Usprkos javno proklamiranoj suradnji ljudskih i strojnih tijela u kreiranju zajedničkih izvođačkih sučelja, realnost je međusobno nepovjerenje. Tijela zadržavaju distancu jedni od drugih. Iako ljudsko tijelo eksperimentira s različitim stupnjevima integracije sa strojnim tijelom to nikada ne vodi stvarnoj promjeni početnih pozicija. Strojno tijelo rado predaje svoja svojstva ljudskoj kulturi na upotrebu, ali svoj pravi potencijal kao da skriva za neko drugo doba u kojem će moći dominirati. 2019. pojavljuje se i *međutijelo*, ono koje nije ni organsko ni strojno, a ima obilježja jednog i drugog. Tijelo virusa covid19 neočekivano lako se kreće prostorima tjelesnih sučelja. Osvajajući ljudsko tijelo virus ugrožava i tijelo stroja. Degradiranjem tijela na mehaniku, virus uništava sve ono što je i ljudska i strojna civilizacija postigla na području samosvijesti. Drugim riječima, virus se kreće po proteinskim nakupinama koje su sastavljene principom strojnog

²⁰⁹ Bug, engleski za bubu u sustavu, kvar. Y2k, engleski: y = year/godina, 2k = dvije tisućita.

djelovanja; maleni *rnk* automati čitaju *dnk* kodove i tako savijaju proteine u tijela. Virus savršeno funkcionira obrascem stroja, mogli bismo reći kako njegov cilj nije bezumno samo-umnažanje već ograničavanje funkcija sustava na osnovne funkcije stroja. Takav nedostatak ambicije, izlišnost kompleksnih izvođačkih sučelja i potpuno odsustvo žudnje prema nedostižnom ili fikcionalnom, i ljudsku i strojnu kulturu ostavlja bez sučelja u kojemu se mogu nadmetati i u kojem jednom mogu pobijediti. Baudrillard u *Virusnom gostoprimstvu* piše: „Svatko od nas je sudbina drugog, i bez sumnje je tajna sudbina svakoga od nas da uništi (ili zavede) drugog, ne vrlinom kletve ili nekim drugim smrtnim nagonom, nego vrlinom naših vlastitih životnih opredjeljenja.“ (Baudrillard, 1993:161). Ljudska tijela pobjegla su od virusa kako bi sačuvala svoja životna opredjeljenja, svoje jedino oruđe u bitki protiv drugoga. Digitalna strojna civilizacija ponudila je ljudima sebe kao utočište, a zato da ne izgubi svojeg drugoga. Digitalna sučelja postala su izvođačka sučelja ljudskih tijela. Dogodio se još jedan od skokova u kojima je tehnologija prisiljena razotkriti svoju poziciju, a na što ljudi obično reaguju proglašavanjem nove kulture. Covid19 nova kultura stvorena je tako naglo i bez pripreme da se ljudska tijela doimaju osvajačima koji preplavljaju čistoću digitalnih krajolika. Strojna tijela pokušavaju održati kontrolu nad svojim sučeljem tako da ljude prikazuju kao izvođače ili stanovnike malih ekranskih kutijica. U takvim ekranskim kutijicama sva kompleksnost mogućnosti ljudske izvedbe svedena je na jednostavnost groteske. Kao da, bar za sada, izostaje očekivana integracija u jedinstveno tijelo, zajedničko izvedbeno sučelje. Nedostaje obrat, sličan onome o kojem piše Fischer-Lichte kada opisuje performativni obrat šezdesetih godina dvadesetog stoljeća, kulturni skok nakon kojega je svima samorazumljivo da je tijelo i izvođač i pozornica (Fischer-Lichte, 2009:27). U covid19 krizi, i ljudsko i strojno zadržava svoje partikularne interese, iako su prisiljeni međusobno surađivati. Ono što ih je na to prisililo, a to je prije svega kretanje virusa kao novog gospodara realnosti, analiziraju kao mogući izvor novih strategija u međusobnom nadmetanju. Virus ne teži isprepletanju kako bi stvorio zajedničko novo tijelo s domaćinom, novo sučelje ili novu realnost. Virus se samo kreće uskom stazom žudnje ostvarenja vlastite poetike. Taj put označen je u koordinatama virusne ovojnice, organskog zida koji štiti unutrašnjost virusa od bilo kakvog doticaja s okolinom. Bilo kakva drugačija realnost od one koju virus nosi u sebi spriječena je zidom ovojnice. Ali taj zid nije statičan, taj zid vibrira požudom za spajanjem s drugim, taj zid se kreće, spaja, obavlja i prodire. Cilj tako uskogrudnog djelovanja je zapravo veličanstven. Virus proživljava apoteozu vlastitog identiteta utiskivanjem u drugoga, uzdiže se u vlastito nebesko stanje mirnoće konačnim ostvarenjem predavanja sebe drugome. A tog drugoga prepoznaje tek kada je postao on sam, kada može promatrati samog sebe kao jedinu realnost.

U prologu za dramu *Messina*, Schiller piše kako nam je svima poznato da je grčka tragedija proizašla iz uvođenja kora, a kojega možemo promatrati kao „živi zid kojeg tragedija iscrtava oko same sebe kako bi se potpuno zatvorila od svijeta realnosti, i kako bi održavala za samu sebe svoje idealno tlo, svoju poetsku slobodu“ (Schiller, 2015). Ditirampski kor grčke antičke tragedije početak je izvedbene ovojnice kojom ljudsko tijelo okružuje sebe u sljedećim tisućljećima umjetničkog i svakodnevnog izvođenja. Izvedbena ovojnica, bila kazališna ili ritualna, vibrira u fuziji s publikom. Protuberance

jezika, gesti, grimasa, emocija, efekata, prodiru u tijelo domaćina/gledatelja, a kako bi stvorile inačicu samih sebe. Takvo stvaranje i održavanje terena za razvoj vlastite poetike, usprkos okolnoj realnosti, jedna je od osnovnih paradigmi i digitalne tehnologije od samih početaka njezinog razvoja. Umjesto mirnog, linearnog napredovanja, digitalna kultura razvija se skokovima, a koji su odraz stalnog rata između starih središta moći i kontra-kultura. Drugim riječima, strojno i ljudsko tijelo su u stalnom ratu za dominaciju nad sučeljem, ratu kojeg obje strane javno predstavljaju međusobnom suradnjom u potrazi za konačnim zajedništvom.

2. SKOKOVI

Hakirajmo svoju vlastitu realnost, poruka je s naslovnice magazina *Mondo 2000*, promotora *New Edge* pokreta u kalifornijskoj *Silicijskog dolini* sedamdesetih godina dvadesetog stoljeća. Bio je to jedan od brojnih kontra-kulturnih pokreta koji su zagovarali trend osobnih računala nasuprot centraliziranim računalnim konglomeratima vojno industrijskog kompleksa i državnog sustava. Entuzijasti okupljeni oko časopisa *Katalog cijele zemlje* (engl. *Whole Earth Catalogue*) promovirali su kontra-kulturni duh opirući se visokoj tehnologiji skupih i državno ili korporacijski kontroliranih uređaja, svojim uređajima kreiranim u garažama i studentskim sobicama, a pristupačnim i jeftinim dijelovima. Kultura osobnih računala, a koju je najviše promovirao pretplatnik i sljedbenik časopisa *Whole Earth Catalogue*, osnivač tvrtke *Apple*, Steve Jobs, promovira trend razmjene ideja i informacija između individualaca, a nasuprot tiranskim tendencijama sustava kontroliranog prikupljanja i distribuiranja informacija. Razlika u konceptima digitalne kulture vidljivija je u vremenima krize, kakva je i covid19 kriza. Redovita reakcija na krizu je pokušaj kontroliranja informacija i središnje izdavanje uputa, čemu se opire kontra-kulturna paradigma. Potonja pak, kulturom osobnih računala, sprječava posvemašnji pad sustava i tako onemogućuje tiraniju središnje kontrole informacija. Osim toga, kontra-kulturni osjećaj ugrađen u digitalnu tehnologiju potječe i od interesa za duhovno, za povezivanje s prirodom i unutarnjim sebstvom, tendencijama koje prepoznajemo pod nazivom *New Age*. Timothy Leary u svojoj knjizi *Kaos i Sajberkultura* piše kako neki od „... atributa riječi ‘duhovno’; mitsko, čarobno, eterično, netjelesno, nematerijalno, nematerijalno, bestjelesno, idealno, platonski također definiraju ‘elektroničko digitalno’“ (Leary u Zanderberger, 2010:162). U trenutku svojeg prisilnog i previše naglog „useljavanja“ u digitalno sučelje, a zbog krize tjelesnog prouzrokovane covid19 krizom, ljudi nimalo ne oklijevaju proglasiti *sajberprostor* svojom zemljom. Zabijajući zastavu svoje realnosti u pijesak novoosvojenog digitalnog kopna, proglašavaju se vlasnicima i upraviteljima novih kolonija u kojima mogu djelovati prema svojim kriterijima i otprije usvojenim obrascima. U tome im pomažu saveznici otprije ugrađeni u konstituciju *sajbersvijeta*; izvođačka narav sučelja, kultura mreže individualnih čvorišta, računala kao osobna svojina ljudskog individualca, kontra-kulturna tradicija koja permanentno proizvodi kulturu visoke napetosti, kao i sučelje bestjelesnog koje je poteklo iz ljudskog interesa za nematerijalno samoostvarenje.

2.1. Apoteoza tehnologijom

Strojevi su aktivno sudjelovali u bitki između dviju ljudskih koncepcija razvoja tehnologije, visoke tehnologije kontrolirane iz središta i, s druge strane, kulture osobnih računala. Ono što strojevi još uvijek ne mogu pojmiti jest to da kriteriji u takvoj jednoj bitki nije funkcionalnost jednog sučelja nad drugim, iskoristivost načina upotrebe tehnologije ili zadovoljavanje potreba većine. Kriteriji su izvođačka vještina, i to ne, ili ne samo, uspješnost izvođenja mekenzijevskog tipa²¹⁰, već bliže onome što poznajemo kao dramaturgiju umjetničke izvedbe. Primjer za to je, već ranije spomenuti, američki visokotehnološki projekt Apollo²¹¹. Političkim globalnim nadmetanjem motivirana utrka u naoružanju akumulira dovoljno znanja i sredstava koji tu utrku uspješno prebacuju u polje javne izvedbe. Ujedinjujući sve dostupne centralizirano kontrolirane tehnologije svojeg razdoblja, državno koordinirana izvedba predočuje se svojoj publici, a koju čine svi ljudi planete uključeni u direktan televizijski prijenos. Spektakl prvog leta i spuštanja čovjeka na Mjesec realizira se dramaturgijom demonstracije mogućnosti i prednosti visoke tehnologije nad tehnologijom osobnih kontra-kulturnih strojeva. Poruka izvedbe glasi kako samo ujedinjeni postićemo tisućljetni ljudski san, primjerice osvajamo drugu planetu. Porezni obveznici plaćaju doprinos koji se koncentrira u kontroliranim državnim fondovima, a mudrim odlukama rukovodstvo ga usmjerava u realizaciju veličanstvenih projekata. Mogućnost globalnog televizijskog prijenosa uživo, trenutni pogled svakog Zemljanina u dubinu svemira ili na površinu druge planete, raketna tehnologija razvijana stotinama godina omogućuje ljudima da ostvare san samostalnog putovanja u nebo. To je sve kontrolirano računalima, ali računalima kao alatom i uslužnim pomagačem, a takva računala kontrolira središnja vlast. Ostvaren je jedan od prvih globalnih skokova, ako ne i prvi, u kojima je tehnologija demonstrirala svoju prisutnost i time postojanje dramaturgije pozadine. Evolucijski razvoj u linearnom vremenu kojega je čovječanstvo rob stotinama tisuća godina kao da je postao nepotreban u doba ljudske mogućnosti skokovitog djelovanja pomoću tehnologije koju sam kreira.

U toj prvoj globalnoj demonstraciji postojanja tehnološkog sučelja kojemu ni nebo nije granica, zajedničko sučelje ljudskog i tehnološkog ostvaruje se tek u izvedbi, putem drugih sučelja kao što su vizualni ekrani ili radio komunikacija. Glavnu ulogu u ovom spektaklu ne igra privilegirani glavni glumac - tehnologija, nego nešto drugo, a oko čega publika može obaviti svoje emocije identifikacije i sažaljenja - ljudsko tijelo. Futuristički san o pretvaranju neba u pozornicu tehnologijom jest dostignut, ali to ne bi bilo moguće da središte ove izvedbe nije ljudsko tijelo.. Golo ljudsko tijelo se okružuje ovojnica, ditirampskim zidovima tehnologije. Kao što se tragedija okružila zidom kora da se zaštiti od realnosti, tako se i ljudsko tijelo astronauta ovilo tehnologijom da se izolira od realnosti koja teži da ga usisa, usmrti i uništi. Tijelo izvodi zahvaljujući dinamičnim zidovima kojima je okruženo: skafanderom, opnom rakete, dramaturgijom tehnologije u pokretu, emocijama koje su proizvedene režijom direktnog tv prijenosa, iskonskoj priči ljudskog junaka koji prodire kroz neprijateljski nepoznati teritorij koji je ovdje ultimativna opasnost, vakuum. Ljudsko tijelo, a

210 McKenzie, Jon. 2006. *Izvedi ili snosi posljedice*. Zagreb: CDU – Centar za dramsku umjetnost.

211 Koji se isprepleće sa sovjetskim projektima u istom razdoblju.

ne raketa koja ga okružuje, ono je što se uzdiže plamenom u nebesku apoteozu. Tehnologija putuje u susret bogovima, ali taj je put omogućen dramaturgijom izvedbe ljudskog izvođača. Tako je razvijena tehnologija omogućena izvanrednim naporom cijele ljudske zajednice. Da bi se taj napor materijalizirao potrebno ga je cijelo vrijeme održavati aktivnim. Junaci u sjajnim bijelim oklopima i spuštenim vizirima ne putuju sami prema tajnom znanju bogova. Direktnim televizijskim prijenosom cijelo čovječanstvo putuje s njima, te postaje su-dionikom nebeske tajne. Živo tijelo junaka mora biti vraćeno na Zemlju, među zajednicu iz koje je poteklo, a zajedno s tim tijelom vraćaju se i svi drugi virtualni putnici. Umjesto slave visokoj tehnologiji i njezinim vrhovnim svećenicima - upraviteljima fondova cijele zajednice, funkcionalnim se pokazuje sudioništvo cijelog čovječanstva u nekoj vrsti izvedbe monomita o čemu piše Campbell: „avantura junaka normalno slijedi obrazac... odvajanje od svijeta, ulazak u neki izvor moći, povratak obogaćenog života“ (Campbell, 2004:33). Ljudsko tijelo, a ne raketa, mora biti vraćeno na Zemlju kako bi se odvila globalna katarza. Ne može poput ruske kujice Laike biti ostavljeno u vakuumu i žrtvovano na oltaru uspona visoke tehnologije. Taj se uspon gradi i održava interesom čovjeka za izvedbu pitanja o svojoj vlastitoj svrsi, a na koje odgovor nije autonomija tehnologije i anihilacija ljudskosti. Zato današnji prodor ljudi u digitalno sučelje strojevi ne mogu promatrati kao invaziju barbara, jer nijedna strana nije dovoljno razvijena da može jednostrano nametnuti vlastitu isključivu poetiku.

Sljedeći skok tehnologije iz pozadine na globalnu pozornicu nedvojbeno je bio problem milenijskog *y2k bug-a*, a koji se prigodno dogodio 2000. Strojevi su bili prisiljeni pokazati svoju trenutnu poziciju izlaskom iz pozadine u kojoj su desetljećima tiho obavljali svoje radnje. Globalna panika zbog mogućnosti urušavanja sustava suvremene civilizacije nastaje otkrivanjem izvorne pogreške u najranijim programskim kodovima. Datumske sekvence novog milenija strojevi nisu bili naučeni prepoznavati. Većina ljudi nije do tada bila svjesna koliko su duboko računala i digitalna tehnologija integrirani u društvo, a to im je otkriveno izvedbom pogreške. Dogodio se *coup de theatre*, onaj trenutak koji sve prethodne kauzalnosti osvjetljava u novom kontekstu i sve stavlja u novi poredak. Nije se dogodio „kraj svijeta“ (Gere, 2008:209) u fizičkom smislu, ali je izazvao kraj svijeta u kulturnom smislu. Gere piše kako se ipak dogodila apokalipsa: „Bila je to apokalipsa u drugom smislu, apo-kalyptein, otkrivenje ili otkrivanje onoga što je prije bilo skriveno. Kao munja nad zamračenom scenom, ona je učinila nevidljivim ono što je dosad bilo nejasno; gotovo potpunu transformaciju svijeta digitalnom tehnologijom. Teško je shvatiti punu mjeru te transformacije, koja se, barem u razvijenu svijetu, može promatrati u gotovo svakom aspektu moderna života. Većina oblika masovnih medija, televizije, snimljene glazbe, filma, proizvodi se i sve više distribuira digitalno. Ti se mediji počinju sjedinjavati s digitalnim oblicima, kao što su internet, World Wide Web i videoigre, kako bi proizveli besprijekoran digitalni medijski prostor“ (Gere, 2008: 13). Dvadeset godina poslije milenijskog *y2k bug-a* može nam se činiti kako digitalno sučelje u potpunosti dominira društvom i ljudskom kulturom. Ipak, ne smijemo zaboraviti kako su originalnu krizu *milenijskog bug-a* riješili posebni „super junaci“ – ljudski izvođači u ulogama programera računalnog koda i hakera. Globalna publika napeto je promatrala pozornicu na kojoj se odigravala izvedba rata za spas ljudske

civilizacije. Vitezovi digitalnog doba ispravili su „griješ računala“ i divlje *tehno-zmajeve* vratili u sučelja služenja čovječanstvu. Digitalna kultura, proizašla iz krize *y2k* konstituirana je, dakle, i strojnim i ljudskim atributima. To dokazuje i pojava *web 2.0* paradigme. Početkom 2005. objavljena je pobjeda koncepta mrežne društvenosti, participacije, distribucije informacija digitalnom mrežom bez središnje kontrole i individualne kreativnosti, a koji se od tada naziva *web 2.0*. Za većinu globalne publike ova objava došla je kao iznenađenje jer nisu ni znali da se u pozadini odvija bitka između različitih konceptata upotrebe digitalne komunikacijske mreže. Korisnicima se dvostruka komunikacija, trenutani pristup informacijama i sloboda korištenja digitalnih mreža činila kao samorazumljiva osobina digitalne kulture. Malo tko je razmišljao o tome kako je digitalna mrežna komunikacija možda prva situacija u povijesti ljudskog društva u kojoj informacija nije distribuirana i kontrolirana iz jednog središta. Napuštanje takvog višestoljetnog mehanizma nije se moglo dogoditi dobrovoljno, nego je moralo biti pobjeda u teškoj, većini nevidljivoj bitki. Za ljude, izvedba, umjetnička ili svakodnevna, nije poprište nadmetanja u funkcionalnosti ili težnja za pobjedom boljeg izvođača, već ona sadrži i množinu nepoznatih, za funkcionalnost sučelja nepotrebnih i suvišnih elemenata. Možda je stroj zato popustio u ratu za dominacijom i pristao na ljudske individualne slobode i kreativnosti u mreži. Dugo godina smatralo se kako ta stečena sloboda ljudi u korištenju digitalne tehnologije ne može biti ničim ugrožena, jer obje strane mirno koegzistiraju i razvijaju se. Tu idilu mogla bi poremetiti samo pojava neke užasne katastrofe koja bi istovremeno ugrozila i strojeve i ljude, a što se, do 2019., doimalo nemogućim scenarijem.

2.2. Mrtvo / Živo sučelje

Novi igrač na globalnoj pozornici predstavlja se imenom ljudske godine u kojoj se pojavio, 2019. Nije ni stroj ni čovjek, nije ni mrtav ni živ. Njegov cilj je jasan, on želi osvojiti pozornicu samo za sebe. On ne pregovara nego prodire i to svojom jednostavnom izvedbom. Virus ne žudi za dominacijom nad sučeljem, on žudi za pretvaranjem sučelja u samog sebe. Virus je i izvođač i pozornica. Schnitzler piše, navodi Baudrillard, kako virusu ili mikrobu ljudsko tijelo predstavlja njegov pejzaž, njegov svijet koji se polagano uništava njihovim razvojem, te kako „iz točke gledišta nekog višeg organizma, čovječanstvo samo jest bolest; kako postojanje čovječanstva posjeduje taj viši organizam kao preduvjet, kao osnovni element, kao značenje, i kako mi zauvijek nastojimo – zapravo smo obavezni – uništiti ga razvijajući se (...) možda nam je dopuštena pretpostavka (...) interpretirati povijest čovječanstva kao vječnu borbu protiv božanskog koje, usprkos svojem opiranju, biva polako i iz nužnosti uništeno od strane ljudskog. U nastavku možemo spekulirati kako taj transcendirajući princip, koji nama izgleda – ili kojeg slutimo – božanskim, sam transcendiran drugim, još višim, principom, i tako u vječnost“ (Baudrillard, 1993: 162). Ovaj virus, covid19, ima možda najteži zadatak u povijesti virusa. Njegova pozornica nije samo jedna, nego, najmanje, dvije. Osim ljudskog tijela tu je i digitalno sučelje, pozornica u kojoj su ljudi potražili utočište. Digitalna sučelja svojim tvorcima kao izgubljenom djeci. nude *tehno kraljevstvo*. Omogućuju im trenutačan prijelaz iz fizičke u digitalnu realnost, spasenje. Uobičajene ljudske koordinate prostora i pravci

vremena suspendirani su i zamijenjeni kretanjem po svim osima i dimenzijama, a to su staze kojima virus iz organskog svijeta ne može uspješno napredovati.

Ljudi su naglo virtualizirali većinu svojih aktivnosti, a kako bi spriječili kolaps civilizacije, ali u toj virtualizaciji koriste nasljeđe kontra kulture otprije ugrađeno u sustav. Takvo nasljeđe osigurava slobodnu razmjenu informacija i preispitivanje odluka raznih središnjica koje ishitreno izvode svoju autoritativnost pokušavajući iskoristiti krizu. I opet se razotkrivaju pozicije tehnologije u odnosu na ljudsko tijelo i njegovu izvedbu. Ljudsko tijelo postalo je izvođač samog sebe u digitalnom sučelju. Dakle, ne radi se o odranije provjerenom i uvježbanom predstavljanju preko digitalnih posrednika, primjerice avatara ili chatbotsa. Tijelo, lice, ruke, glas i drugi dijelovi tradicionalnog ljudskog izvođačkog aparata se snimaju, digitaliziraju i prikazuju u određenim kontekstima koje sam izvođač ne može do kraja kontrolirati. Ljudski izvođač promatra samog sebe kao što je do nedavno promatrao sebe kroz digitalnog predstavnika, avatara. Sučelje koje nas takvima prikazuje nije više ni sučelje izvedbe uživo, umjetnička ili društvena pozornica, niti je sučelje ekrana izvedbe neživih izvođača.

Rođeno je Mrtvo / Živo sučelje. Takvo sučelje stalno izvodi dvostruko, koristeći dramaturgiju živog i dramaturgiju neživog izvođenja. Primjerice, ljudski izvođač u Mrtvo / Živo sučelje unosi sebe samog na način igranja uloge na realnoj pozornici uživo, svjestan da tako stvara izvođački entitet koji više ne može sam kontrolirati. Strojna komponenta Mrtvo / Živog sučelja s lakoćom obavlja dodijeljeni mu zadatak egzekucije traženih parametara kako bi ljudsko izvođenje u digitalnom sučelju bilo efikasno. Istovremeno, stroj djeluje i izvan okvira takve, uslužne djelatnosti, i izvodi po algoritmu vlastite žudnje - pretvaranje ljudskog izvođača u bazu podataka. Ljudski izvođač u covid19 krizi predaje svoje tijelo izvedbom stroju iako je upoznat sa strojnim načinom djelovanja. Primjerice, suradnja tvrtki Facebook i Cambridge Analytica²¹² razotkrila je način na koje suvremeni centri političke moći koriste ljudsku izvedbu, i uopće prisutnost na digitalnoj mreži, kako bi ljude sveli na objekt koji se sastoji od nekoliko info točaka. Takvi objekti služe dalje kao baza podataka za kreiranje povratnih kampanja prema ljudima kako bi im se promijenio stav prije glasanja za neku političku opciju. Zanimljivo kako su takve kampanje bile uspješne samo ako bi bile kreativne, fiktionalne intervencije koje koriste narative svima poznatih obrazaca usvojenih u djetinjstvu ili u društvenoj stvarnosti kojom smo okruženi.

Dvostrukost kao narav Mrtvo / Živog sučelja očituje se u mnogim aspektima njegovog korištenja, pa čak i skepsi koju mnogi ljudi izražavaju prema njegovoj korisnosti. Za vrijeme prve covid19 krize, u proljeće 2020., talijanski katolički svećenik Longo, frustriran zabranom održavanja misnog slavja uživo, pokušao je svoj pametni telefon iskoristiti kao pomagalo kojim će snimati samog sebe kako vodi misu. Tako bi vjernici na svojim ekranima mogli direktno pratiti misu. Bizarna radnja svećenika u svečanoj odori kako sam za sebe drži misu u praznoj crkvi, pretvorena

212 Dokumentarno istraživački film iz 2019. Great Hack, detaljno razotkriva suradnju Facebooka i britanske tvrtke za analizu podataka Cambridge Analytica, a koji su u svrhu utjecaja na izborne rezultate ilegalno prikupljali podatke o milijunima korisnika društvenih mreža.

je u grotesku kada je stroj samoinicijativno primijenio dramaturgiju izvedbe otprije ugrađenu u sebe te aplicirao različite zabavne filtere na svećenikovo lice. Tako su vjernici mogli vidjeti veliku žabu, žuto nasmiješeno lice ili zmaja kako ozbiljno predvode misno slavlje (Ridler 2020). Pristup tehnologiji kao pomagaču u ostvarenju naših žudnji uvijek razotkriva dvostruku narav sučelja, a koje se posve razotkrilo u Mrtvo / Živom sučelju. Ishii Hiroshi s američkog M.I.T.-a, kaže kako mi ljudi danas imamo dvostruko državljanstvo jer tijelima smo u fizičkoj realnosti a umovima u digitalnoj (Hiroshi, 2019 :13min.). Na mjestu njihova susreta, koje je poput mjesta susreta mora i kopna, nastaju kompleksne tvorevine. Nisu samo obogaćivanja ljudskog izvođenja u digitalnom sučelju takve kompleksne tvorevine, nego su i materijalizacija predstavnika digitalne realnosti u fizičkoj realnosti. Primjerice, japanska pop zvijezda s publikom od nekoliko miliona obožavatelja, Hatsune Miku zapravo je računalno generiran hologram, a koji je i službeno u braku s jednim ljudskim bićem. Drugi je primjer antropomorfni robot Sophie kojoj je jedna država službeno dodijelila državljanstvo. Mrtvo / Živo sučelje proteže se po svim osima svih realnosti. Grinderi, ljudska bića koja u svoja tijela ugrađuju različita tehnološka pomagala, čipove, rasvjetu ili kemijskim supstancama privremeno zadobivaju moći tehnološkog sučelja (poznat je primjer grindera koji dobivaju privremeni noći vid ukapavanjem određenih supstanci), pokušavaju iznaći put kojim bi ljudsko tijelo direktno ulazilo u stroj. Takav put podrazumijeva toleranciju na dvostrukost, na poigravanje s vlastitim identitetom i izvođenje drugih identiteta kao svojeg.

Najveći otpor virtualizaciji, alterniranju izvođačkog identiteta, u covid19 prvoj krizi dolazi iz krugova ljudske izvođačke umjetnosti, kazališta, opera, plesne umjetnosti i drugih. Ističe se nezamjenjivost fizičkog tijela u izvedbi i osiromašivanje ljudskog izvođačkog registra u njemu neprirodnom sučelju. To je samo rezultat dugogodišnje nespremnosti tradicionalne izvođačke umjetnosti da novu digitalnu tehnologiju prihvati kao nešto više od uobičajene inkorporacije novih medija u tradicionalnu strukturu predstava i drugih izvođenja, tj. multimedijalno obogaćivanje postojećih obrazaca. Stoljeće nakon Piscatorovog korištenja novih medija za atrakciju publike, kazališta i druge tradicionalne izvođačke umjetnosti ne znaju kako se obratiti svojim novim publikama. Najviše im otežava realnost publika raštrkanih, ne samo prostorno nego i vremenski, po digitalnom sučelju. Problem jedinstva mjesta i radnje kojim se kazalište bavilo stoljećima na pozornici kao da je sada eksplodirao u svim pravcima. I umjesto da iskoristi tu eksploziju za osvjetljavanje tame novog izvođačkog sučelja, suvremena kazališta na covid19 krizu odgovaraju bizarnim radnjama, primjerice korištenjem postojećih mrežnih kanala, poput YouTube, za prikazivanje starih arhivskih snimaka svojih predstava. Cijeli sustav financiranja i organizacije tradicionalnih umjetnosti koje ovise o ljudskom izvođaču doveden je u pitanje. Umjesto brze prilagodbe izvođačke pozornice digitalnom sučelju, korištenju mogućnosti mrežne komunikacije za približavanje izvođača publici i obrnuto, namjernog razotkrivanja kreativnog procesa, fragmentiranja predstava u dramaturški neovisne cjeline i sl., tradicionalna kazališta nude javne iskaze zaprepaštenosti situacijom u kojoj ljudski izvođač više ne može biti središte svake izvedbe.

3. SIMULCAST

Tako članovi ansambla Metropolitan Opere u New Yorku izjavljuju kako ništa ne može zamijeniti izvedbu uživo ili pjevačev glas koji se čuje u gledalištu prisutnom u istom prostoru i vremenu izvedbe (Gelb, 2020), iako ta kuća već godinama uspješno producira funkcionalno sučelje zajedničke izvedbe živog i neživog, *Simulcast*. U osnovi je to direktni prijenos premijerne operne predstave na pozornici Metropolitan kuće u New Yorku, namijenjen prikazivanju publici širom planete, a koja se nalazi u kino dvoranama opremljenim digitalnom tehnologijom. Predstavu na taj način može pratiti i bilo tko tko ima pristup sučelju preko drugih ekrana, primjerice računala, telefona i sl. Takvu predstavu, kao paralelno sučelje na svojim ekranima, može pratiti i publika koja sjedi u gledalištu uživo. Predstava koja se odvija na pozornici uživo razlikuje se i dramaturški od iste predstave koja se prikazuje u digitalnom sučelju. Publika digitalnog sučelja može vidjeti više detalja, može mijenjati planove izvedbe, jasnije čuti ton i sl. Publika digitalnog sučelja suočena je i s promjenom u načinu percepcije predstave. Naime, kamera ruši tradicionalno odricanje od nevjerovanja tako što prikazuje izvođače kako se presvlače u kostim, šminkaju, intervjuira ih neposredno nakon izlaska s pozornice. U pauzama predstave, publika ima priliku i vidjeti razgovore s dirigentom, redateljem i izvođačima. Publika digitalnog sučelja može odabrati i dodatnu vrstu izvođačkog ekrana jer ima i pristup digitalnoj mreži. Tako može pročitati podatke o predstavi i izvođačima, može pogledati snimku neke ranije predstave kako bi usporedila izvedbe, a može se i prebaciti na neku sasvim drugu aktivnost. Većina publike nalazi se u različitim vremenskim zonama, prostorima i grupama, ali cijeli mehanizam izvedbe svejedno funkcionira. Cijela ta dvostrukost izvedbe, višestrukost sučelja i kaos izvođačkog vremena i prostora izaziva svojevrсни očaj kod izvođača uživo. Oni su naviknuti na dramaturgiju postupnog građenja predstave, razvijanje do vrhunaca izvedbe u suglasju sa publikom uživo i njihovim reakcijama, optimizaciju pozornice kako bi iluzija bila besprijekorna i sl. Tako uskogrudan pristup izvedbi je zapravo protivan i samoj ideji izvedbe, ali i iskustvu izvedbe koje postoji izvan posljednja dva stoljeća zapadnog kulturnog kruga. Azijska kazališta još uvijek čuvaju princip fragmentacije izvedbe i raštrkanosti publike (Kulenović, 1983:223), a koji je normalno funkcionirao i u europskim kazalištima do kraja osamnaestog stoljeća. Publika bi prestajala ogovarati, međusobno glasno pričati, jesti ili pjevati tek kada bi se izvođač na pozornici približio nekom općepoznatom i od svih iščekivanom mjestu. Izvođač je bio spreman na takvu različitost u realnostima izvedbenih stanja, pa je i svoju izvedbu prilagođavao trenutnim okolnostima, a ne okolnosti izvedbi.

Nasljednici glumaca i izvođača koji svoju izvedbu uživo prilagođavaju dramaturgijama različitih sučelja odavno nastupaju pred ljudskim publikama raštrkanim po različitim prostorima i vremenima. Primjerice, mrežna platforma *Twitch* istovremeno na jedinstvenom ekranu prikazuje igranje računalnih igara, prikazuje ekranom u ekranu samog igrača uživo, prikazuje i ekran razgovora u kojem se vidi izmjena tekstualnih komentara korisnika, a često uključuje i audio komentare korisnika, razgovor uživo s igračem, kao i kakofoniju sveopćeg navijanja korisnika. Pojedini igrači imaju i po nekoliko milijuna pratitelja, a često direktno sudjeluje na stotine tisuća korisnika. Takva izvedba nije samo hibrid različitih spektakala, od sportskih igara do kazališta, nego je i posve funkcionalno

izvedbeno sučelje sastavljeno od različitih vremena i prostora izvedbe. Drugi primjer jesu virtualna kazališta u perzistentnom digitalnom svijetu, *Drugi Život* (engl. *Second life*). Umjesto blijede imitacije kazališta iz fizičke realnosti i korištenja avatara za recitiranje Shakespeara, sajberperformeri Eva Mattes i Franco Mattes²¹³ kreiraju predstave znajući kako njihova publika ne mora biti fizički prisutna, čak ni kao digitalni predstavnik, niti da mora opstojati u jedinstvenom vremenu, pa tako i njihova izvedba ne mora koristiti linearno izvedbeno vrijeme. Digitalno izvedbeno sučelje kao da se nalazi između dvije radikalne opcije; anemične simulacije tradicionalnog kazališta ili stvaranja izvedbenih formi koje ne trebaju tijelo glumca.

4. IZVEDBENI KONTINUUM

Dramaturgijom kontinuuma mogli bismo nazvati registar alata kojima uspijevamo locirati sva izvedbena sučelja koja konstituiraju cjelinu neke suvremene digitalne izvedbe. Kako izvedbena cjelina u digitalnom okruženju ne mora imati precizno određen početak ili kraj nego se može nastavljati unedogled i u različitim oblicima, tako je radije nazivamo *izvedbenim kontinuumom*. U takvom izvedbenom kontinuumu obično prepoznajemo elemente tradicionalne dramaturgije, primjerice tekstualni predložak ili redateljsku mrežu izvedbe uživo, ali i elemente nove dramaturgije masovnih medija ili dramaturgije digitalnog izvedbenog sučelja. Izvedbeni kontinuum se dakle, sastoji od mikro-dramaturgija izvedbenih fragmenata. Posebna vrsta dramaturgije, dramaturgija pozadine, nazvana po uzoru na izvedbeni kontinuum u srednjovjekovnim mansionskim crkvenim prikazanjima, usmjerava sve fragmente kao objekte u jedinstvenu cjelinu. Takva cjelina bliža je računalnoj bazi podataka nego tekstualnom predlošku koji se inscenira nekim oblikom naracije. Baza podataka može se uvijek iznova usmjeriti u novom željenom pravcu bez ograničenja hijerarhijske strukture naracije. Manovich piše kako „ovi medijski umjetnici još moraju naučiti kako bazu podataka i narativ sljubiti u novu formu“ (Manovich, 2002:18). Nova dramaturgija digitalne umjetničke izvedbe, ili izvedbenog kontinuuma, sve ulazne podatke, tekst, izvedbu, publiku, ekrane i dr. tretira kao obrasce izvedbenog ponašanja, te ih kombinira u izvedbene forme. Digitalna izvedba raste na bazama podataka i njihovom eruptiranju i orbitiranju.

Drugi konstitutivni element suvremenih digitalnih umjetničkih izvedbi je ljudska izvedba uživo prevedena na jezik baze podataka. Izvođač uživo koristi registar izražaja svojeg tijela, lica, glasa, maske, kostima, scenografije i dr. kako bi predočio određeni sadržaj u određenom emotivnom okruženju. U digitalnoj izvedbi ljudski izvođač svjesno predaje registar svoje izvedbe uživo kameri. Još Benjamin piše kako se izvođač ispred kamere osjeća kao čovjek pred zrcalom ali je njegov odraz odvojiv, prenosiv i daje se na uporabu i kontrolu nevidljivoj publici, djeluje svojom osobom, ali je lišen aure jer ne postoji kopija aure bez ovdje i sada (Beker, 1986:339). U covid19 krizi svaki čovjek je automatski postao izvođač u digitalnom izvedbenom okruženju. Sada ljudski izvođač ne predaje svoju izvedbu kameri kao odraz koji je odvojiv i kojega može kontrolirati nevidljiva publika, nego

213 <https://0100101110101101.org/i-know-that-its-all-a-state-of-mind/>.

svoj izvedbeni odraz predaje kameri kao izvedbenom oruđu naslijeđene moći. Mould piše kako „moć koja je utkana, naslijeđena u kameri ili komadiću scenografije može biti jednako toliko moćna ili nasljedno moćna (engl. power-inherent) kao verbalne ili gestualne upute od redatelja (koje same ne bi bile moguće bez neljudskih aktanata, poimenično: kamere, videomonitora, megafona pa čak i redateljeve stolice). Ako slijedimo Latoura, svaka akcija u produkciji medija koja je iznesena ljudskim izvođačem (redateljem, gaferom, montažerom) završava u akciji neljudskog (pokreta kamere, sheme svjetla, digitalizaciji snimke).“ (Mould, 2009:204). Kamera je 2019. prisutna posvuda, na računalima i pametnim telefonima, i djeluje kao *skener*, a ne više kao mehaničko oko - produžetak ljudskog oka. Skenirani odraz ljudskog izvođača automatski se pretvara u impersonalne podatke, čvorišta mreže koja se gradi u sučelju. Publika koja svojim interesom ili ne-interesom kontrolira izvedbeni odraz više nije televizijska ili kino publika, okupljena na jednom mjestu ili u jednom vremenu i oko zajedničkog izvođenja. Publiku digitalne izvedbe sučelje priziva samo i, nerijetko, konstituira samo. Publika izvedbu percipira posredno kao kodificirani proces. Ljudska izvedba u takvoj konstelaciji pokazuje sklonost shematizaciji, Artaudovim hijeroglifima tijela ili Meyerholdovim biomehaničkim pozicijama, a koje se čine više kompatibilne s digitalnim izvedbenim sučeljem nego što bi to mogao biti ekspresivni tjelesni grč kao kod Grotowskog. Diskurs izvođačkog tijela uživo kao da je ušao u sivu zonu. S jedne strane kodificiran je ritualnim, društvenim ili umjetničkim obrascima, a s druge strane opire se shematizaciji, odbija biti kodom u algoritmu mehaničkog izvedbenog sustava. U nastupajućem periodu uzbudljivog otkrivanja novih mogućnosti umjetničke izvedbe u srazu ljudskog i strojnog ne smije se zaboraviti kako su upravo ljudski izvođači uspjeli transcendirati vrijeme i prostor, kao u performansima trajanja Marine Abramović ili Tehching Hsieh-a.

5. POPRIŠTE RATA

Svjesni pretvaranja svojeg izvođačkog tijela u odraz kojeg stroj skenira i razlaže u baze podataka, glumci tradicionalnog kazališta namjerno izazivaju bitku s izvođačkim sučeljem stroja, a kao subverzivni čin prema novom sučelju. Američko kazalište *Poprište rata* (Theatre of war²¹⁴) poznato je po kazališnim predstavama ratne i poratne tematike. Iako to kazalište djeluje kao tradicionalna izvođačka forma: glumac-pozornica-publika, vrlo često u svoje izvedbe uključuje i elemente participativne izvedbe. Primjerice, nakon izvedbe uživo redovite su diskusije s publikom. U covid19 krizi u prvoj polovici 2020. to kazalište izvodi Sofoklovog Kralja Edipa. Ta izvedba postavljena je kao tradicionalna glumačka predstava uživo, ali je izvedena na digitalnoj mrežnoj platformi Zoom²¹⁵. Kazališni glumci pokrenuli su ovu izvedbu kao svojevrsnu bitku sa strojnim sučeljem, a u cilju dokazivanja kako je moguć funkcionalni kazališni doživljaj i u uvjetima neprisutnosti izvođača i publike uživo. Ističem kako se ovdje namjerno opisuje izvođenje tradicionalne kazališne predstave

214 Naziv kazališta je dvosmislen, može se prevesti i kao Ratno kazalište ali i Poprište rata. Engleski jezik pojam Theatre upotrebljava u širem smislu, kao opis područja na kojem se nešto događa, posebno za ratne operacije.

215 Zoom je jedna od najpopularnijih mrežnih digitalnih platformi za telekonferencije. Kao i Skype, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams i mnoge druge, Zoom omogućuje korisnicima telekonferenciju u realnom vremenu, a pomoću sučelja mikroekrana u ekranu gdje svaki korisnik ima svoj ekran i istovremeno vidi sve ostale ekrane.

nastale prema klasičnom predlošku starogrčke tragedije, a ne eksperimentalni izvođački čin kojemu za cilj nije izazivanje kazališne katarze, kao u slučaju hibridnih digitalnih izvedbi u području suvremene umjetnosti. Cilj je bio dokazati da je moguće kazalište koje ne može postojati ni bez digitalnog sučelja niti bez glumačkog tijela u živoj izvedbi. Zadatak glumaca je pomno izgrađivanje kazališne emocije i izazivanje katarze kod gledatelja, a bez znanja koliko ih ljudi gleda, tko ih gleda i da li njihova izvedba tehnički uopće funkcionira u određenom trenutku. Glumci izvođenjem uživo ostavljaju tragove, a te tragove čitaju drugi, strojevi ili ljudi. Način izvođenja mora biti takav da ne dopusti dominaciju interpretacije tragova po volji stroja ili nevidljive ljudske publike, već da interpretacija bude u skladu s dramaturškom namjerom izvođača. Radnja ove izvedbe je svojevrsno „osvajanje pozornice“ kako Fergusson tumači ono što rade Pirandellovi likovi u „Šest lica traže autora“, „jer tu pozornicu svaki lik želi preuzeti i pretvoriti je u sučelje za svoj vlastiti „racionalizirani mit koji jest ili će biti njegovo pravo biće... Pirandello vidi sam ljudski život kao nešto teatralno. Što teži tragičnoj epifaniji i može sa samo kroz nju ostvariti“, a to otvara mogućnost za izvrtanje konvencije modernog realizma koja traži pretvaranje kako pozornica nije pozornica nego primjerice salon, pa se tako sada može pretvarati da salon nije realan, „nego je pozornica koja sadrži mnoge ‘realnosti’“ (Fergusson, 1972:187). Glumci američkog kazališta Poprište rata nisu zajedno u fizičkom prostoru jedinstvene pozornice nego svaki od njih izvodi na svojoj vlastitoj pozornici, a koja je njihova vlastita kuća. Umjesto scenografije vidi se kuhinja, radni stol, hodnik, dnevna soba i sl. Na ekranu računala ili televizora gledatelj vidi izvedbu uživo glumca koji je u svojem vlastitom kazalištu – ekranu. Ponekad su ti ekrani svi zajedno na sučelju, a ponekad samo jedan ili dva, ovisno o dinamici izvedbe koju određuje nevidljivi dramaturg / redatelj. Za tog skrivenog koordinatora pretpostavljamo da je čovjek, ljudski operater sučelja koji izvodi uživo. Istovremeno smo svjesni da montažu ritma izmjenom broja vidljivih ekrana može izvoditi i stroj. Glumci namjerno svoja nenašminkana i nemaskirana lica primiču bliže kameri, a kako bi tako zauzeli veći dio svojeg ekrana / pozornice. Likovi koje glumci igraju označeni su i tekstualnim obavijestima na ekranu svakog od njih. Glumci gledaju ravno u kameru, a što se na skupnom ekranu izvedbe interpretira kao da svi gledaju ravno ispred sebe. Komuniciraju jedni s drugima tako da i dalje gledaju ravno, umjesto da koriste usmjeren pogled u ekran lika kojem se obraćaju. Tako su kreirali zajedničku pozornicu u umu gledatelja.

Glumci u ovom „Zoom Edipu“, koriste tradicionalni registar izvedbe uživo, izgovaraju tekst u različitom ritmu i tempu, balansiraju emocijama, koriste grimase i geste kao obrasce, dominiraju izvedbenim sučeljem kada je red na njih da govore. Iako ova izvedba ne koristi nijedan očekivani scenski efekt, nema glazbe ili audio efekata, nema maske, šminke ili kostima, nema posebnog osvjetljenja i sl., ona ipak uspijeva stvoriti emotivni naboj kod publike koja izvedbu prati preko ekrana. Sam obrazac izvedbe, digitalno sučelje, pozicije glumaca u malim ekranima koje sugeriraju panoptički prostor nad-kontrole (Foucault, 1995:200), a sve to kombinirano s promišljenom glumačkom interpretacijom, stvara atmosferu visoke napetosti. Visoka napetost je preludij za magijsko očaranje kakvo je vjerojatno postizao i antički glumac pomoću svojih „ekrana“: karakterne

maske, podignutih čizama i iznenadnih pojava strojnih bogova. Sraz tehnologije, dramaturgije, režije i ljudskog izvođenja u ovoj je izvedbi toliko balansiran da je izvedbena maska sam ekran u kojem je glumčevo lice integrirano. Svako dodavanje, primjerice derivata antičke maske, dovelo bi do otežavanja izvedbe asocijacijom na pretjerana maske – filtere kakve upotrebljavaju aplikacije digitalnog sučelja *SnapChat* ili *Instagram*. Pozornica je izrađena od elektronske statike iscertane u obliku ekrana, ali je i dinamična jer se ti ekrani stalno izmjenjuju u brojnosti i dominaciji. Upravo izmjenom broja prozora na ekranu postiže se rudimentarna scenska napetost. Primjerice, od ekspresivnog Edipovog govora u jednom ekranu, prizor se širi na više ekrana iz kojih govore Tiresija, Zbor, Kreont. Svađu koja se tako rađa zaustavlja Jokasta. Ona je za nas gledatelje prisutna kao nijemi lik koji otprije promatra radnju iz svojeg ekrana. Zbog takve pripreme gledatelji spremno prihvaćaju identifikaciju s Jokastom kada ona progovori. Radi se o promišljenom dramaturškom postupku. Ali dramaturgija funkcionira i kod digitalnog sučelja. Primjerice svi glumci / likovi gledaju u prazno, ispred sebe. Gledatelj to doživljava kao pogled u njega. On taj pogled kanalizira i usmjerava u novo sučelje koje povezuje sve poglede. Pogled lika teče kroz gledateljevu pozornicu uma nazad prema drugom liku ispred gledatelja.

Sofoklo svima poznat mit o Edipu koji je nehotice ubio vlastitog oca, spasio grad Tebu od Sfinge pa sam postao kraljem, te oženio vlastitu majku i s njom dobio djecu, započinje usred epidemije koja ubija grad. Edip želi opet pobijediti ne-ljudskog neprijatelja. Usprkos savjetu onoga koji je povezan s drugim realnostima, Tiresije, da se ne trudi previše oko toga, on uporno analizira tragove. Tako postepeno gubi zidove kojima je bio okružen i oslobođen od realnosti istine. A ta, istinita realnost, uništava onoga koji je spozna. Digitalno izvođačko sučelje danas, u covid19 krizi, kao da ljudima savjetuje da se ne trude čitati tragove virusa, već da se prepuste novoj realnosti. Uostalom, tehnologija se već u samim počecima pokazala kao uspješno lječilište ljudi. Bolesnici s fobijama suočavani su s posebno generiranom grafičkim sučeljima računala animiranima na način da pacijenta vode suočenju sa strahom i potencijalnom izlječenju. Novija istraživanja i izvedbu antičke tragedije povezuju sa medicinskim tretmanima, osobito liječenjem oboljelih od ratnih trauma. Arheološka istraživanja nedvosmisleno ukazuju na povezanost starogrčkih kazališta s ritualnim i medicinskim diskursom. Kazališta su hodnicima povezana s hramovima Asklepijusu, bogu medicine, a koji su bili i lječilišta. Katarza kojom je Aristotel opisivao utjecaj tragedija na publiku možda je primarno imala medicinsku ili religioznu konotaciju, piše Batuman (Batuman, 4:2020). U izvedbi Kralja Edipa kazališta *Poprište Rata* korištena je tradicionalna dramaturgija kontrole razvoja interpretacije kako bi došlo do zajedničkog osjećaja katarze, a svaka intervencija gledatelja koju omogućuje digitalna tehnologija onemogućena je unaprijed. Primjerice, u telekonferencijskim aplikacijama poput Zooma korisnik može proizvoljno birati koji će ekran / ekrani biti vidljivi na sučelju, koliko će dugo trajati pojedini ekran, može mijenjati pozadinu kao scenografiju, dodavati različite filtere i maske i sl. Onemogućavanjem takve diversifikacije pažnje autori projekta Kralj Edip omogućili su postizanje klasične kazališne katarze obogaćene i katarzama interakcije stroja i čovjeka. Ipak, nije teško zamisliti buduće digitalne izvedbe koje zadržavaju tradicionalna obilježja kazališne interpretacija,

ali u kojima je publika aktivno uključena različitim mogućnostima intervencije u izvedbu. Takvo proizvoljno mijenjanje fokusa, pogleda, pravca i sl. dovelo bi do razlaganja jedinstvenog osjećaja katarze u područja u kojima je ona do sada bila nezamisliva. Primjerice područje odgođenog, odsutnog, bezvremenskog ili čak uporabnog u fizičkoj realnosti. Arhive ljudske izvedbe koja je uspješno pretvorena u objekt analize možda bi mogle biti nadopunjene i arhivama privremenih i nestabilnih procesa poput izvedbe kazališne katarze pomoću podataka u bazama.

6. ČOVJEK JE STROJU ČOVJEK

Covid19 kriza povećala je potražnju za digitalnim kanalima komunikacije koji omogućuju simulaciju izvedbe ljudskog tijela. Različiti telekonferencijski kanali omogućuju istovremenu komunikaciju stotina korisnika uživo i to licem ili cijelim tijelom. Ljudski korisnik takvih kanala ponaša se kao da izvodi na pozornici, bez obzira što se radi o poslovnoj, neumjetničkoj komunikaciji. Korisnik svjesno ili nesvjesno, ali prema otprije usvojenom obrascu, uređuje okoliš koji će se emitirati kao njegova pozadina i tako ga pretvara u scenografiju (takvu scenografiju moguće je i kreirati elektronskom simulacijom), namješta posebnu rasvjetu, pazi na ozvučenje, pažljivo bira odjeću, uređuje svoje lice, priprema mali scenarij onoga što će govoriti, razmišlja o boji glasa i dinamici nastupa. Takve postupke jasno prepoznamo kao dramaturške procese iz stanja umjetničke izvedbe uživo. Korisnik digitalnog sučelja može koristiti i brojne dramaturške i režijske alate koji su mu na raspolaganju u digitalnim bazama podataka, primjerice maske i filtere kojima može jasnije pokazati svoj karakter drugima. Takve maske i filteri korisnicima su ponuđeni i kao standardni set za predstavljanje na društvenim mrežama poput *Facebooka* ili *SnapChata*. Ljudski korisnik digitalnog sučelja naviknut je na stvaranje ubrzane osobne predstave pomoću instant dramaturških alata. Čak se i tekstualna komunikacija aplikacijama pametnih telefona instant označivačima pretvara u kompleksan izvedbeni čin, predstavu. Primjerice, korisnici često u tekstove ubacuju vizuale poput *emotikona*, stvaraju sami oznake za emotivna stanja pomoću slova i interpunkcije raspoređene u simulaciju lica ili tekstualnim skraćenicama jasno određuju emotivno stanje koje žele komunicirati. U covid19 krizi digitalna sučelja koriste se sve više kao pozornice za izvedbu uživo ljudi. Ali umjesto da ljudsko lice, ili čak cijelo tijelo koje izvodi na ekranu osigura jasniju predodžbu o emocijama i informacijama koje se žele komunicirati, često dolazi do zagušenja i krivog ili nepoželjnog tumačenja izvedbe. Taj problem je sve izraženiji na neumjetničkim izvedbenim sučeljima, a gdje se zahtjeva poslovna točnost prenesene informacije i izvedbe. Zato je sve izraženija tendencija uvođenja mikro-dramaturških postupaka, a kojima se ljudskoj izvedbi u elektronskom ekranu dodaje tekst, zapravo tekstualna skraćena. Primjerice, u desnom gornjem uglu ekrana pojavljuju se slovna oznaka „/s“ koja označavaju da ljudska izvedba u ekranu izvodi sarkazam, „/j“ označava šalu (engl. joke), „/th“ prijetnju (engl. threat) itd. Marcus ih naziva *indikatorima tona*, a podrijetlo im je u medicinskim pokušajima da se jasnijim označivanjem pomogne disleksičnim, autističnim i drugim osobama s teškoćama u točnom prepoznavanju i određivanju emotivnog stanja sugovornika (Marcus, 2020). Ovim načinom i stroj može točnije analizirati ljudska emotivna stanja, te pomoću umjetne

inteligencije učiti kako da ih (zlo) upotrijebi. Stroj tako iskazana ljudska emotivna stanja arhivira u svoje baze podataka, slično kako se arhiviraju cijeli sklopovi ljudskih kretnji i izvođenja emocija. Primjerice, voditeljica laboratorija za eksperimentalnu muzeologiju pri EPFL²¹⁶ u Švicarskoj, Sarah Kenderine, predvodi projekt prikupljanja skenova cijelog tijela izvođača različitih sekvenci kretnji. Izvođači su ljudi koji svojim tijelom mogu izvesti sačuvane kretnje nekog značajnog ljudskog događanja, primjerice japanske borilačke vještine ili sekvenci kretanja pradavnog rituala. Skenove kretnji ljudskog izvođača Kenderin arhivira kao trodimenzionalne objekte, pretvarajući ih tako u muzejske izložke (Kenderine, 2020.). Takvi izložci su zapravo baze podataka, a koje se lako mogu upotrebljavati u različite svrhe, u igrama ili edukativnim programima, za stvaranje umjetnih osobnosti i uopće izvedbu. Ljudski izvođač uživo tako postaje samo-promatrač, ne samo sebe osobno, nego svoje ljudske izvođačke esencije pretvorene u informatičke točke. Ono što ljude u takvom slučaju razlikuje od podatkovnih izvođačkih tijela, avatara i drugih rastjelovljenih entiteta generiranih računalom u svrhu predstavljanja tijela ljudskog korisnika, jest upravo svjesnost ljudi da sudjeluju u emulaciji. Kramer ističe kako je zamjensko tijelo generirano u skladu s pravilima i fikcijom igre za koju je kreirano pa se tako savršeno uklapa u pozornicu, a sam ljudski igrač manipulira to tijelo i sam svijet igre, te promatrajući rezultate svoje manipulacije postaje svoj vlastiti gledatelj, dakle igranje igre svojim podatkovnim tijelom je neka vrsta samopromatranja (Rippl, 590 od 692). Samopromatranje je oduvijek dio glumačkog postupka kada na pozornici izvodi ulogu, jer je to ono što ga osigurava od stapanja s konstruiranim tijelom uloge. Ako samopromatranje izostane, glumac ili izvođač ne može se više vratiti u svoje ishodišno tijelo i ostaje stalno u stanju koje je trebalo biti privremeno. Primjeri su nemogućnost izlaska iz stanja ratne traume, ili stapanja ljudskog identiteta sa strojem u simulacijama ili preozbiljno shvaćenim igrama. Spoznaja o procesu koje je Giacomo Rizzolatti nazvao *ogledalnim neuronima* ljudima omogućuje potrebnu distancu od izvedbenog sučelja. Ogledalni neuroni su istovremena aktivacija istih neuronskih impulsa u mozgu čovjeka koji izvodi i onoga koji tu izvedbu samo gleda (Rizzolatti, 2008: passim). Ogledalni neuroni aktivni su i u mozgu ljudi koji promatraju izvedbu generiranu strojem ili izvedbu samog stroja. Ekvivalent ljudskim ogledalnim neuronima kod stroja koji promatra izvedbu, ljudsku ili neljudsku, još nije definiran, ali analiza tragova svjedoči o njegovom postojanju. Sposobnost stroja da uči promatranjem izvedbe i naučeno samostalno primjenjuje nazivamo danas umjetnom inteligencijom, iako se radi o imitaciji izvedbe, svojevrsnoj demonstraciji ispaljivanja naboja strojnih ogledalnih neurona. Na sličan način stroj komunicira s ljudskim korisnikom, a pomoću prethodno naučenih obrazaca. Takva komunikacija podsjeća na magijske rituale u kojima je potrebno izvesti točno određenu izvođačku sekvencu kako bi se materijalizirao rezultat, primjerice promijenilo stanje i status sudionika rituala. Tako se i pritiskom ljudske ruke na tipkovnicu računala ili ljudskog prsta na ekran osjetljiv na dodir pokreće točno određena strojna sekvenca i postiže željeni rezultat. Vremenski raspon između dodira ljudskog tijela i povratnog rezultata stroja, a koji se očitava na ekranu i produžuje retinom u ljudski um, ispunjen je procesima poput računanja, ispaljivanja električnog naboja, konzultiranja baza

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podataka, optimiziranja odgovora prema trenutnim parametrima i sl. Tako živo ljudsko tijelo emulira ditirambski kor kojim se grčka antička tragedija okružila kako bi spriječila prodor realnosti. Aktivno dodirivanje stroja ljudskim tijelom pokreće tako stvaranje novih autonomnih poetika izvan okruženja samo jedne realnosti. Takva komunikacija nije više ograničena samo na jednostavni pritisak koji izaziva jednostavni odgovor, primjerice utipkavanje prstom slova ili broja. Stroj je pomoću haptičke komunikacije s ljudskim korisnikom sposoban prepoznati sve veći broj uputa i sve više nijansi dodira. Haptička komunikacija ljudskog tijela i stroja označava se kao aktivni dodir, a derivirana je iz istraživanja percepcije okoline slijepih ljudi (Jansson u Hersh, 2008: 137). Haptičko komuniciranje omogućuje stroju da, shodno svojem kapacitetu, prepozna odjeke informacija kojima je konstituiran ljudski korisnik / izvođač. Kada pritišćemo ekran osjetljiv na dodir to činimo cijelim svojim tijelom koje se koncentrira u vršku prsta. Način našeg pritiska je uvjetovan našim kulturnim slojevima i memorijama, ali i informacijama po kojima je naše tijelo konstituirano. Ljudsko tijelo kao da žudi ući u stroj, u telematičku realnost, bez posrednika. Ljudsko tijelo u izvedbi odjekuje i uputama svoje dnk, a koje su sekvence nastale i kao odjek borbe naših predaka s pradavnim virusima. Način pritiska ljudskog prsta na ikonu aplikacije ovisi o tim naslijeđenim faktorima našeg tijela, a koji određuju raspone izvedbe. Haptička komunikacija to razumije i prenosi tu izvedbu ispod ekranske površine, u digitalne dubine. Tako se pokreće izvedba stroja, reakcija na komunikaciju s ljudskim tijelom. Odgovor se uzdiže poput erupcije vulkana informacija i razlaže na ekranu u obliku prijevoda na ljudima razumljivi jezik. Predlaže se ljudskom tijelu da izabere neku od ponuđenih (digitalnih) maski i započne izvedbenu igru s digitalnim sučeljem. Isprepletenost dramaturgije ljudi i dramaturgije stroja privremeno stvara novo izvedbeno sučelje, tijelo komunikacije i tijelo izvedbe. Sve se to događa u najmanjem impulsu vremena i na privremeno kreiranom prostoru, a samo zahvaljujući dramaturgiji prenosivog kazališta smještenog na našem dlanu.

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Virtualization of Live Artistic Performance in Post – Covid-19 Culture

Abstract

Digital culture realizes itself by social leaps, not following the linear flow of technology development. The change of the global cultural paradigm is accepted immediately and without reservations, both in the cases of the first two jumps (y2k millennial bug and web2.0), as in the third post-covid-19. Live communication, like other common aspects of human live performance, is becoming virtualized. The process is developed and maintained using patterns of traditional live artistic performance, known from theater dramaturgy and performance. Such patterns have been incorporated into digital communication technology before. The position of the human performing body in new circumstances becomes the subject of interest of machine civilization. The battle of people to maintain identity is led by performance in Post-covid-19 discourse as well, similar to the battles historically fought with super-systems of power.

Key words: digital culture, virtualization, communication, artistic performance, Covid-19.



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The Tipping Point – when, how and why did We start thinking “Pandemically”?

Abstract

*Suspended between theories of manipulation and the public health catastrophe that continues to shake our world, there is a whole range of answers to the questions posed by scientists, doctors, politicians and ordinary folk – when, where, how and why did it all begin? Given the various concepts and ideas on the future **corona** world, it is important to keep asking and (still) avoid simple and mind-numbing answers. The world of media has also reached or surpassed a tipping point – can we even shake the illusion we deserve some “new normal”? Or perhaps the future holds a “new abnormal” world, alongside the “old abnormal”. On the one hand the pandemic has changed our behavioural patterns, and will continue to do so, but it has also changed our way of thinking, reaching conclusions and perceiving the external world and the world within us. On the other hand, are we in part historically regressing through our acceptance of half-dictatorship, lockdowns, immovability, blandness and hiding our smiles? Why and how might the philosophy of the media help with this challenge of views in some new **techno-feudalism**? Will we adopt any new lessons? We must first remember the legendary children’s show **Sesame Street** and its revolutionary insight – you can teach children only if you attract their attention first...*

Key words: pandemic, crisis, media manipulation, tipping point, future world.

A world that follows the rules of epidemics is a very different place from the world we think we live in now.

Malcolm Gladwell

Numerous aspects of our lives, of physical phenomena as well as the psychological, human reactions to new and unexpected circumstances, have been marked by the age of corona, which still has not passed, and in some aspects it practically won't ever disappear. It will continue to change our world alongside all the challenges and (lack of) adaptation stemming from our attempts to control what has befallen us. First however, it should be noted that the issue is not only the reaction and adaptation to an emergency health phenomenon, which is complex also in terms of its medical aspects and attention focused on the World Health Organization and the globally present pandemic. It stretches all the way down to our individual lives, endangered not only by the actual disease, but also by the fear and anxiety due to the possible consequences, progression of the disease and spread of the contagion. The role of media, faithful followers and interpreters of such crises should also be examined.

The global pandemic²¹⁷, faced basically by all countries and regions of the world to a higher or lesser degree, with more or less serious consequences, is actually also a specific global phenomenon within which there is also the non-medical and non-healthcare aspect. This aspect is interlinked with events relating directly to the spreading, stopping or weakening of the disease, and is still stimulated, whether we like it or not, by the specific social and psychological reactions to the disease. It is becoming increasingly evident that the impact of the coronavirus on healthcare processes is also closely linked to the influence of politics (as *the art of the possible* but also as manipulation with public opinion), and interest appetites of elite groups²¹⁸ as well as other social classes facing these new circumstances. Also, it may turn out that these non-medical causes and effects (which do not necessarily have to be unscientific or inexperienced) "work at" strengthening their influence or even use it in order to manage social and media changes or trends.

217 A pandemic is the spread of a disease to large areas, covering different countries, a whole continent, more continents or the whole world. Until today, the term was used for infectious diseases such as the plague, cholera or influenza. Lately, pandemic diseases can also be said to cover AIDS, which across a span of several years covered all continents and almost all countries of the world. Further reading at: <https://medicinski.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=10508> But in comparison with previous pandemics, the corona pandemic became the "most global" one not only due to its harmful consequences for the human health (mortality rate) but due to the literal participation of the whole world in its progress, as well as the global reach of the media.

218 An elite is a group of people, a minority that holds influence and surveillance over some or all aspects of social life. The idea of a ruling political minority was first developed by Plato, who gave this status to philosophers... Classical theorists of elites, including V. Pareto, G. Mosca and R. Michels, believe that societies are always divided into the ruling, managing elite and an underprivileged mass. An elite is made up from individuals who have reached the highest level in their specific areas... <https://enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?ID=17725> However, in terms of corona, an elite can also be a group that believes itself to be "chosen and privileged", which enables it to decide in the name of everyone (and in their absence) on the necessary limitations, not only in terms of healthcare, but in all other aspects as well...

We therefore aim to explain the significance of “new” events precisely through the discussion of the extent to which the pandemic and its consequences and circumstances have impacted opinion, everyday politics, corporate economy, practical sociology and philosophy... This is specifically important in terms of media, freedom of media and mass media actions. It means accepting the simultaneous strengthening of previously hidden or at least socially less acceptable instances of curtailing or limiting freedom, whether in terms of space, time or democratic and civil rights. Unfortunately this is a matter of interdependence and feedback in which effects and consequences on health are increased or changed precisely by politics, interests and interest groups, lobbyist and corporate activities, influenced by the hunger for profit, as well as the factors of human depression, helplessness and inactivity.

The coronavirus and its effects on global society, regional perspectives as well as individual affinities and possibilities – all of which can collectively be termed *the future of social changes* – in the first months of 2021 faces new energies, changes and reversals. It is becoming increasingly clear that – partly due to the changing climate in parts of the world where winter is coming to an end, but also due to the wider use of vaccines – that the severity and death toll of the virus will gradually decrease. The problem will be “different” from the healthcare point of view, as well as from the previously mentioned non-medical aspect, and we should ask ourselves whether we are ready for change and a return to the “old state of affairs” under circumstances in which activities of political institutions will continue to change, as will our psychological reaction to the existing crisis. Actors, passive and active throughout the crisis, transform and seek new positions in which to strengthen their power of surveillance and the “never-ending dream” – achieving the greatest possible amount of control over our actions, motivations, wants and driving forces of our minds.

In order to address this issue, one needs to go back chronologically, thematically and purposefully to the moment when the first twist slapped us in the face – when we were suddenly yanked out of what we considered to be the old normal into some new circumstances. The question remains whether the previous state of affairs was either old or normal. At the beginning, these new circumstances did not seem like possible or logical causes of some global turning point affecting regions and territories. Much has already been written, analysed and discussed on the coronavirus, but here we aim to examine those moments, or rather the time when we started thinking pandemically. When, how and why did we agree to changes we have “spun” to such an extent that we have become very active participants in further changes, which we at the same time regarded as something unknown, unexpected or alien?²¹⁹ Changes we have often refused to name as such.

219 In some Tibetan temples passersby can roll large prayer wheels containing old inscriptions, and they keep spinning smoothly and continuously, never-ending. Each passerby and visitor tries to spin them again (as fast as they can go)... the symbolism of transience and one’s own participation in what is now and what is to come i.e. leaving the responsibility to one’s heirs and people (strangers) to continue the karmic journey. The difference between these wheels and a situation in which we keep “spinning” the same thoughts and fears about corona, is perhaps in the fact that in Buddhism, what you leave behind needs to be filled with warmth, joy and positive thoughts for the ones who will follow – despite the transience and the possibility of negative outcomes...

We should also clearly and purposefully focus our efforts on the (mass) media sphere and (mass) media dimensions²²⁰ of this global event that in a short time managed to instil deep changes in almost every aspect of our lives and activities. Comparisons with other historical periods and circumstances when different epidemics spread dangerous diseases through old civilizations, the medieval and modern era, may bring a range of deeper insights and conclusions, or even help us in psychosocial coping with what we are faced with. But it is certain that no epidemic, regardless of its severity or mortality rate, has ever taken place with such a presence and impact of the media, ranging from print to electronic media, especially the Internet.

Pandemic or infodemic – the chicken or the egg of the media?

It can be stated as fact that the media themselves were one of the main actors in the pandemic, impacting the situation in both positive and negative ways, because the pandemic event was actually more global than ever or anywhere in history. The use of the neologism *infodemic* is thoroughly justified if we take into account that the media as a whole and in individual instances, served as the main instigator of the whole atmosphere due to their type and function. Not only in terms of providing information on the causes and effects of the pandemic, but because they also served as the goal and means of a complete reversal towards a more unsettled, frightened, and in a way, sicker society. Of course, here we do not discuss the goals of the medical profession or efforts and hard work by healthcare workers and those who truly care about fighting for the good health and lives of individuals.

The issue in fact is the interference and efforts to hasten the transformation of epidemiological circumstances into pandemical ways of thinking which would instrumentalize the development of events, this time not only in the medical sense, but also in terms of changes in social circumstances, environment and psychological aspects. These would then finally bring about an economical struggle and pause in economic activities and the current dynamic within global, regional and national frameworks. These are no conspiracy theories which could be discussed in a whole separate paper, but rather these are emerging structures formed from elements of a *post-truth* society and community, from the *fake news* of weapons and tools used by the media, and the use of the current state of affairs for crudely and strictly political goals and purposes.

The pandemic can and should be analysed as an infodemic from the perspective of the philosophy of the media, when examining the general and specific current role and effect of the media and its mediation in human relationships. This also includes the impact on the exchange of everyday and

220 It should be noted that we consider the media in general through the impact of mass media, the largest and most prominent (global and local) keepers and distributors of information, and through the impact and work of social networks (Facebook, Twitter... as well as forums and the activity of haters, trolls and average users). In the following ideas and analysis, *mass media* are defined through the term and phenomena of the *media* as the totality of what is realized and interpreted by the media during the pandemic, as it creates and gains infodemic characteristics of pandemical thinking.

mental data of every conscious human being from the outside in and vice-a-versa. The lessons and messages we receive in this fashion can surely help as part of the analysis and evaluation in this age that we can rightly define as a moment in which the already known idea of the media constructing reality instead of truthfully mirroring it is further developed and confirmed. The media aims to represent reality with as much fuzziness and manipulation as possible, thus ceasing to serve as correctives in line with traditional journalistic and professional values. Instead they obscure reality and become the ones who justify a newly constructed reality that serves their own interests or rather, the interests and goals of the quasi-elite.

If we are to achieve a wide-ranging explanation of the context in which this medical phenomenon appears, alongside the causes and consequences of the problems affecting (mass) media in the local and global sense, we should not merely focus on the beginning of the epidemic or the official proclamation of a pandemic. We must examine the changes in reporting styles and interpretation in the media, as well as the consequences on public opinion and the general public in the global sense, and on other levels, all the way down to the mentality of the individual.

It is therefore first necessary to examine the so-called tipping point, the (spatial and temporal) watershed that changed our established way of thinking not just as readers, listeners or viewers, but also as critically analytical individuals that could be said to represent a healthy society and a healthy general public.

Let us begin with the idea by Malcolm Gladwell who posited in a sociological sense that “the best way to understand the emergence of fashion trends, the ebb and flow of crime waves, or, for that matter, the transformation of unknown books into bestsellers, or the rise of teenage smoking, or the phenomena of word of mouth, or any number of other mysterious changes that mark everyday life is **to think of them as epidemics**” (text bolded by N.V.)²²¹ Gladwell begins his extensive research with the notion that ideas, products, messages and behaviours also have their “medical” characteristics – they are activated and begun, spread and developed as infectious diseases.

Gladwell lists three main rules of an epidemic (or in the case of corona, a pandemic) – the first one is *contagiousness* with clearly noticeable patterns of infectious behaviour in psycho-sociological phenomena like the ones in infectious disease. The second rule relates to the fact that *little causes can have big effects*, and third, that *change happens not gradually but at one dramatic moment*. It is similar to the principle of how for instance, chickenpox spreads through a classroom or how the flu returns every winter.

Gladwell sees this third principle as the most important one – the idea that epidemics start or end in one dramatic moment we may or may not notice, but after which things and circumstances are quite different and therefore require different types of behaviour and solutions. He notes that it is this principle “that makes sense of the first two and that permits the greatest insight into why modern

²²¹ Malcolm Gladwell, *Točka preokreta. Kako male stvari mogu dovesti do velikih promjena*, Jesenski i Turk, Zagreb 2011, p. 10. (Tipping Point, Hachette Book Group, New York 2002);

change happens the way it does. The name given to that one dramatic moment in an epidemic when everything can change all at once is the Tipping Point.”²²²

Gladwell translates sociological phenomena ranging from fashion trends to crime rates, into healthcare or biological aspects in order to deepen the sociological and/or psychological meaning regarding human society. For example, contagiousness is for him a general rule which, like epidemiological causes and characteristics may turn into a contagion of laughter, shopping for clothes or surprising characteristics of anything in our environment. Little changes can truly lead to big results, for example, the speaker’s motivation or the tireless presentation of one’s own example. Such is the possibility of a sudden and drastic change after relatively expected gradual advent of smaller oscillations, whether in the development of illnesses or trends – the sudden moving of homeowners from areas controlled by criminal groups for example, or sudden migrations or the spread of new technologies.

Such phenomena of course also have their dialectical cause and interpretation, not just as sociological or epidemiological changes. Our aim is to learn if and how it is possible to examine a “reversed” process – can contagiousness, small changes as precursors to big results and sudden surprising changes lead to a turning point in the current global state of affairs? Applying this idea onto our situation, we come to the conclusion that these three rules are currently true, as the world of the coronavirus pandemic has led to what we are now experiencing in the media and psychosocial sphere – the phenomenon of pandemical thinking. This also means a lack of critical thinking, preponderance of fear and disbelief, and pandemical behaviour we have been led to, or which has partly been imposed on us.

One thing can be ascertained with some ease – the Covid-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus pandemic, was first identified as a new respiratory disease Covid-19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019). The condition first appeared in late December 2019 in the city of Wuhan (11 million inhabitants) in the Hubei province in China. In January 2020 it grew into an epidemic in China, and then spread to numerous other countries and reached all continents. It was sparked by the previously unknown coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. In order to stop the spread of the disease in countries with no efficient healthcare systems, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an international state of emergency on 30 January 2020.²²³

²²² Ibid, p. 11.

²²³ https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandemija_COVID-19 Here we won’t discuss fake news and politicized comments on how “China deliberately (!) spread the virus”. It has been shown that China, and other countries such as New Zealand or South Korea, fought coronavirus decisively, not only in the medical sense, but owing to the culture of the population and their following of prescribed measures. In this way it managed to suppress the coronavirus, much to the chagrin of Western “mainstream media” of Trump’s era, and became an actual role model for procedures taken by the government as well as the public and population. At the moment of writing this text – January 2021, the coronavirus continues to be an extensive problem mainly in the so-called Western world, while countries in Asia and Africa, and their experience with the coronavirus are no longer the focus of Western mass media (on purpose?)...

As early as 9 February 2020, the number of registered fatalities surpassed the total number of deaths during the SARS virus pandemic in 2002/2003. The speed and dramatic extent of the epidemic were also evidenced by the WHO report from 26 February 2020, the first instance when a greater number of people were infected outside of China than within its borders. Furthermore, starting from 28 February 2020, WHO analyses and reports assessed the risk as “very high” on the global scale, in comparison to the previous estimation of a “high” risk. Finally, on 11 March 2020 the WHO officially identified the epidemic as a pandemic, making it the first pandemic after the one of swine flu, in 2009.

In Croatia, the first case was confirmed on 25 February 2020. This was a 26-year-old who visited Milan in the period between 19 and 21 February (Italy was among the countries with a sudden rise in the number of those infected). After he tested positive, he was hospitalized in the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases Dr. Fran Mihaljević in Zagreb. Two new cases were confirmed on 26 February, the twin brother of the first patient and one Croatian who had been working in Parma. After 29 February, Croatia had a total of seven confirmed cases, and then the number of those infected doubled in just 10 days. On Wednesday, 11 March 2020, the Minister of Healthcare in Croatia, Vili Beroš issued the *Decision on declaring the epidemic of the disease Covid-19 caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus* on the whole territory of the Republic of Croatia, and the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on the same day.²²⁴

Although it may not appear so at first, analysing the statistics and recorded cases is somewhat easier than to examine, determine and assess the moments or period in which we “started” thinking and acting first “epidemically” and then also “pandemically”. In part this is due to the fact that for a while, numerous elements were interpreted in two different ways – one part of the general public did not perceive the coronavirus as something dangerous, and some were quick to disregard published facts. All of this was aided by the often conflicting views by experts, as well as all kinds of self-proclaimed experts, and by new legions of haters and trolls, alarming and confusing the public, as could be expected in this world and age of image and superficiality.

Social networks, forums and anonymous paid or volunteering instigators of fear and anxiety, unfortunately became the centre of spreading infodemic aspects, which proved to be no less dangerous than the pandemic ones. This included the obscuring of actual events, casting doubt on science and medicine, as well as common conspiracy theories which were once again resurrected.

Of course one should always note that conspiracy theories are not to be mixed with the usual logic of capital and megacorporations, of governments and elites that favour manipulation, and for whom

²²⁴ During 2020 the number of newly infected people in Croatia increased in hundreds and thousands, by the end of the year reaching up to four thousand newly infected a day and dozens of deaths. The beginning of 2021 brought lower numbers, but this time measures weren't relaxed.

<https://zdravstvo.gov.hr/userdocsimages/2020%20coronavirus/odluka%20o%20progla%20c5%a0enju%20epidemi-je%20bolesti%20covid-19.pdf>

https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandemija_koronavirusa_u_Hrvatskoj_2020.#Dolazak_i_%C5%A1irenje_koronavirusa_u_Hrvatskoj

the foundation of economy, management and conquering structure is in imposing force and often absurd rules that the masses and most of the general public do not understand. Although radical conspiracy theories (aliens and lizard men...) and critiques of society and media often start from similar (partial) information, the relevance and conclusions by conspiracy theorists (even the most persuasive ones) compared to well-intentioned social critics are quite different in their nature and scientific methods.

Attempts to merge specific manipulation techniques, instances of exaggeration, generalization and averting attention by established elites and ruling classes, with absurd theses about the perennial “external” influences on the helpless and innocent public, prove to be fertile ground for the further “contagion” with fear and anxiety. Problems do not necessarily arrive from the outside and from other countries, regions, ideologies and religions, as members of these quasi-elites would have us believe. The general public and the elective body are not always innocent either, as they very often elect the same options or do not even participate in the elections, thus passively voting for the next or same “elite”. The issue of helpless, atomized individuals continues to be one among the more or less hidden foundations for the ruling and privileged classes. This is the essence of their political and economic power, and often the psychosocial power as well.

Ivan Krastev, an intellectual and expert on Eastern European studies and modern Europe, has an interesting view on circumstances surrounding the coronavirus. In a particularly well executed study of the coronavirus pandemic, he emphasizes the changes in the pandemic world which we did not see coming, although there were some warning signs. The National Intelligence Council predicted as early as 2004 that it is “only a matter of time before a new pandemic appears, just like the influenza virus which killed millions people worldwide during the 1918 – 1919 pandemic”. Such an event, the report continues, might “stop world travel and trade during a longer period of time and stimulate world governments to spend huge amounts of resources on the struggling healthcare system”.²²⁵ Furthermore, Krastev notes that in a TED talk²²⁶ from 2015, Bill Gates predicted and announced a global epidemic of a highly contagious virus, in addition to warning that the world and various countries are not prepared enough to face it. Even Hollywood had its continuous “warnings” through horror movies on global deadly contagions.²²⁷

225 Ivan Krastev, *Pandemija nostalgije. Kako koronavirus mijenja Europu* (The Nostalgia Pandemic: How the Coronavirus is Changing Europe), TIMpress, Zagreb 2020, p. 9.

226 TED, an abbreviation of Technology, Entertainment, Design, was established in 1984 and organizes motivational talks on specific topics. The length of the talks ranges from 3 to 18 minutes, and speakers include various notable individuals, experts from across the world, famous or important for their discoveries or successes in various areas such as education, business, science, technology and creativity. Available at: www.ted.com

227 Here we should note that neither Krastev nor the author of the current paper, take into account any conspiracy theories that “reveal” planning and conspiring to release a contagious virus from a laboratory, nor do they link Bill Gates with plans for the mass chipping of humans or radiation of 5G technology. However, such ideas were most often used, not only by members of obscure organizations and regular trolls and haters scouring social networks, but also by journalists and the media in general, especially some news websites whose influence increased during corona and surpassed the impact of print media. The influence was mainly due to casting doubt and worry, in short, the manufacture of anxiety and fear of technology, which then increased the number of “clicks” on these webpages. We emphasize the possible warning signs before the so-called tipping point itself, which have not been heard or understood well enough, which

The crisis as a chance or time wasted?

The pandemic of thinking (about corona) i.e., thinking about the pandemic may be said to have begun with the moment when the disease was officially declared a pandemic. This however is not entirely true, since it was still often not clear in the public or the media, what was actually happening, even when the number of those infected began to rise significantly. It could be said that a healthcare crisis was beginning, while the more overwhelming crisis – mental and social, local and global – appeared somewhat later. This included the already mentioned absurdity that during this period the general public started dividing into groups – “apologists” of the pandemic, often named as scared servants to the global conspiracy theory, and the opposing side, often seen as irresponsible and unreasonable. The media followed its superficial and sensationalist instincts, pitting one group against the other, while increasingly disregarding the “third” category of moderate readers, listeners, viewers and online news readers, actual experts, scientists, doctors and those who were interested in solutions instead of bouncing off problems in the media.

Unfortunately, ever since the first reports and comments, the pandemic also became an infodemic, in its multitude of contagious texts, newspaper articles and approaches following the goals and styles of a post-truth society. The basic tenet here is that truth is not as important as inciting emotions and likes through things like corona deaths or statements that need to carry the punch of great tension and anxiety. This then of course increases the likelihood of clicks and frantic searches for *opinions-we-approve-of* and decreases the need for verified and true facts on the extent and consequences of the disease.

The American sociologist C. Wright Mills already warned of the fact that “wielded power becomes manipulation” and such methods and techniques later developed precisely in the wake of disasters such as wars or mass starvation. They are also present in the definition and spread of “deadly democracy” and forced freedom – an oxymoron preferred in particular by Western governments, participants and instigators of warfare and economic operations in the Third World. This is the so-called soft control in which people and the public are smothered within the rules of the system instead of being directly eliminated – “in a modern society, coercion has been monopolized by the democratic state, and is rarely necessary as a continuous measure, but those in power often use it in hidden ways.”²²⁸

Such involvement by the government in the turn of events during the corona crisis, depending on the character of its rule and actual level of democracy, was the determining factor in the gradual move from pandemic events to pandemic thinking in the community, at the local and global level. Regardless of their autocratic or democratic characteristics, the already corroded democratic rule in a large number of countries, ranging from the U.S. to Europe and Asia, acquired new holes and

was also the case with other dramatic and sudden changes in history, not only related to medicine.

228 Further reading in: Slobodan Reljić, *Kriza medija ili mediji krize* (Crisis of the Media or the Media of the Crisis), Službeni glasnik, Belgrade 2013, p. 112.

patches, as the ruling class, governments in general and the so-called elite understood how the corona pandemic as an emergency situation could be used for increasing control.

As opposed to historical attempts to implement something similar, the control of the pandemic provided a reasonable and justified goal, which could also be aided by technology in numerous ways and in planetary proportions. Mass media as modern technological tools are now liberated from the traditional requirement of being a corrective and mirror to society that cooperates with the public in order to strengthen its critical faculties and intelligence. By their nature being alienated things and aspects, mass media now enter into pacts with the government. They do not do this openly, of course, but gradually, in the mere *failure to do something* and the disregard for the standard and accepted rules of reporting and sharing information.

Of course we must not overgeneralize, as there is no clear distinction between black and white in terms of media, even though some wish there would be. Those months when the power of the coronavirus weakened, revealed how some media returned to their original principles and (again) started exploring and exposing the levels of corruption, injustice, poverty or economic and military domination. For some luckily and for others unfortunately, the coronavirus spread not only through physical space, but also in the media. The wish to increase the extent of political power was stronger first for governments, and indirectly for some elite groups, so they continued to exploit the situation. However big or small, totalitarianism is a life form that grows and learns quickly, aided by the fresh water provided by the media.

As rightly noted by Sead Alić, “the crisis makes it impossible to infinitely perpetuate the system of flagrant reiteration of untruths as a form of ingraining the preferred way of thinking into the heads of viewers as potential citizens. Once the resources run out, needed for paychecks, pensions, payment of accrued interest etc., then the flickering smiles on the screen, the game of promises, false security and pre-emptive attacks – lose their footing.”²²⁹ However, the weakening of the disease and the (apparent?) return of citizens to their half-forgotten circumstances, as well as the relaxing or tightening of measures, can make media users go slightly crazy. Within the superficial fight and worry for human plight and the already mentioned return to “how it was”, the media actually offer increased anxiety and fear, fuzziness and distraction. These are individuals and actions that did not meet expectations during the emergency situation, or cannot satisfy them anymore, but are kept in place by the institutions and governments because – any kind of power tastes just as sweet.

In the media sense, every crisis, including the pandemic, therefore strives to offer interpretations that are either optimistic or pessimistic, depending on which emotions are to be invoked in those who click and pay for the advertisements. However, the only correct interpretation would be to show things in their reality! “Every crisis is primarily caused by the need to redistribute media space among the political, economic, religious and cultural actors/agents/groups/classes in society. Just

229 Alić, Sead, *Masmediji zatvori bez zidova. Tekstovi filozofije medija* (Mass Media – A Prison without Walls: Essays in the Philosophy of the Media), Centre for Media Philosophy and Research, Zagreb 2012, p. 66.

as a nation can be led to war owing to the media, it cannot be led out of the war without them. The crisis helps us understand the media. Understanding the media is the beginning of a new era.”²³⁰

Slobodan Reljić is openly critical of certain media, and emphasized even before the appearance of the coronavirus that in some media, journalism is in fact “wholesale trade in poison”. Such an endeavour constructs the public into a mass, preferably an uncritical one and susceptible to excessive emotional outbursts which in a vicious circle reproduces mass without solidarity. A critically aware public should contain solidarity at its core and in the way it acts.

However, the increasing influence of media on the lives of individuals and society as a whole seems to be taking place in a paradoxical back-and-forth direction. At the same time there is increasingly a lack of trust among the general public and the masses in the veracity of media truths, as well as the growing level of mistrust, contempt and even hatred among the public and online forum commenters towards the media (not necessarily only among the haters). The sentiment of the media towards its consumers is sometimes similar. However, in the end all these negative thoughts and (media) hatred constitute the poison we all drink, certain that someone else will be the one poisoned.

The audience gives different amounts of attention to different news. According to one research by Doris Graber within the PEW Research Centre²³¹ carried out between 1986 and 2003, the most prominent stories were the ones on endangering the safety of media users or violating social norms. “Fear-arousing situations attract the largest audiences... These are reactions to events that threaten survival, and these reactions mobilize cognitive resources inducing attention... News (particularly images) can operate as sources of stimuli equivalent to lived experience. Hatred, anxiety, fear, and high elation are particularly stimulating and are also retained in long-term memory.”²³²

The silent (voluntary) death of media and journalism

What then is the biggest – and not always recognized – (harmful) role of media among centres of power, different forms of manipulation, faster technological and social communication, in terms of the relationship between power and media? “Politics is the process of allocation of power in the institutions of the state... power relationships are largely based on the shaping of the human mind by the construction of meaning through image-making... ideas are images (visual or not) in our brain. For society at large, as distinct from a given individual, image-making is played out in the realm of socialized communication. In contemporary society, everywhere in the world, the media are the decisive means of communication.”²³³

230 Ibid, p. 68.

231 PEW (*Pew Research Center*) – independent research centre based in Washington. <https://www.pewresearch.org/>

232 Manuel Castells, *Moć komunikacija*, Multimedia Clio-RTS, Belgrade 2014, p. 195; (Communication Power, Oxford University Press Inc., New York 2009, p. 156)

233 Ibid, p. 234 (2009: p. 193).

Castells sees the overall media system as a system and set of communication organizations and technologies that encourage individuals' own decisions or what they believe are their own decisions. It adapts to close-knit social groups, famous role models (whatever they may be) and strengthens or weakens communication in a society, which proves to be extremely important during pandemic times. In the context of the coronavirus, media policy is not only the fight for their users or for survival – a fight in which print and even electronic media are falling behind social networks. In the symbiosis between government and media which exists during pandemical thinking – the generally accepted way of thinking – the meaning of media is gradually transformed into managing media politics within the media, while politics as an art of the possible primarily becomes media policy.

A pandemic way of thinking makes objects, individuals and groups susceptible to focusing on mere numbers of those newly infected, sick, hospitalized, dead, without really understanding the meaning of these categories. At the same time numbers of those who have recovered are barely mentioned, even though this should be one of the ways to give some hope to the population. But is that really necessary at all? Maybe it would decrease anxiety and stimulate solidarity and activism, which are among the greatest dangers for the calculated union between the media and pure politics.

Pandemical thinking also includes the belief that there is no need for messages, organizations and leaders not closely related to the coronavirus, or rather its sensationalist and spectacular aspects, to even be present in the media. Thus it is impossible for them to gain any significance or permanence in the mind of the public. "The fact that politics is essentially played out in the media does not mean that other factors (for example, grassroots activism or fraud) are not significant in deciding the outcome of political contests. Neither does it imply that the media are the power-holders. They are not the Fourth Estate. They are much more important: they are the space of power-making. The media constitute the space where power relationships are decided between competing political and social actors."²³⁴

Here however we must depart from a mere criticism of the media during the corona crisis – among the institutions, groups, social classes and decisions, who would then survive the criticism of all those descriptions, explanations, comments and interpretations of measures and requests by the government and healthcare professionals? Or who would speak truthfully of their own mistakes, information traps, personal interpretations, ego-trips induced by haters and trolls, everyday wise guys and conscious individuals.

In this case who would "cast the first stone at the media who have received and taken on a difficult task – to report on the situation with the virus, the state of different countries and nations, the global situation, internal affairs, foreign threats, global, regional and local changes happening every hour of the day? They are analysing global changes which are practically without precedence in modern history (not taking into account epidemics like ebola or the plague) down to individual personal

234 Ibid, p. 235. (2009: p. 194).

behaviours and, first and foremost, the relation to Oneself and to Others in times of overarching emergencies like wars or epi/pan/demics.”²³⁵

Criticism of the media, a Sisyphean task of trying to separate the roles and goals of so-called serious journalism and media on the one hand and social networks on the other during times of corona, should not in the end be a fruitless task. We must remember that journalism as a whole began to die out many years before the coronavirus appeared, after suffering several difficult illnesses threatening the profession. It was already losing its breath when the coronavirus came along as a momentary relief at a time when the media patient lay in its bed. Leo Rafolt also comments on this situation, noting that “the world is shaped today on the slopes of information, beyond the binarism of truth and lies, and so tries to take over what we once called the news. In late winter and early spring of 2020, the world was ravaged by one such news item, in the form of information. They named it corona, then Covid-19, and it was simply a virus, one of many modulations existing on the border between living and nonliving, biology and chemistry. The information itself soon became a virus. The virus became information.”²³⁶

In his book, Rafolt identifies moments and phenomena that actually pull members of masses or elites away from reality, mainly away from the comforting world in which everyone had to know their place. Hashtags, numbers of those infected and dead, limited travels, social distancing as the bogeyman of the new era, these have spread like a virus through Europe and other parts of the globe. Alain Badiou painted the age of corona in even harsher and direct terms, probably due to his intellectual experience and images lived through, saying that “one will need to show publicly and dauntlessly that so-called ‘social media’ have once again demonstrated that they are above all – besides their role in fattening the pockets of billionaires – a place for the propagation of the mental paralysis of braggarts, uncontrolled rumours, the discovery of antediluvian ‘novelties’, or even fascistic obscurantism”.²³⁷

Velimir Šonje is another critic who analysed the situation when Croatia was firmly in the grips of the corona crisis. A scientist and economist, he meticulously analyses the circumstances, the psychosis and collective social reaction. This includes facts²³⁸ which will luckily remain recorded in his exhaustive research on the so-called five riders of the apocalypse, that is, the five bad ideas that were “catapulted to the surface of society” due to the spread of fear about the coronavirus.

235 Nenad Vertovšek, *Drveno željezo medija* (The Wooden Iron of the Media), Medijska kultura, Nikšić 2020, p. 157.

236 Leo Rafolt, *Virus in fabula*, Meandarmedia, Zagreb 2020, p.11.

237 Alain Badiou, *On the Epidemic Situation*, Verso, 23 March 2020 – cited in L.Rafolt, *Virus in fabula*, p. 11. (<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4608-on-the-epidemic-situation>).

238 One needs only keep in mind that Vili Beroš, the Minister of Health, who was at one moment celebrated as a hero by the media, said in conversation with *Sobodna Dalmacija* on 26 February 2020 that corona was a “disease similar to the common flu”. This happened only two days before the WHO declared a “high level of risk”, not even two weeks before corona was recognized as a global pandemic... Velimir Šonje, *Korona ekonomika* (Corona Economics), Arhiv-aanalitika, 2020, p. 10.

He believes that bad ideas²³⁹ include “helicopter money” (giving money to citizens), then the fact that the European Union is compromised, and the striving for self-sufficiency in which global capitalism is replaced by national economy frameworks. There is also the idea of a state-mother as reaffirming state power and intervention and finally the inescapable suspension of democracy and civil rights. Šonje’s point of view is that of an expert economist who warns about the disregarded effects of the pandemic on the economy, which provides a starting point for the five negative actions and ideas. These might seem like a gentle step or two backwards, from liberal capitalism to medieval and feudal “sanctuaries” of body, spirit and soul.

Šonje notes that some experts and journalists in the Croatian media claimed that any questioning of the official doctrine of the Government and Crisis Headquarters on the corona situation, also included the possibility that “the young and healthy, and the entrepreneurs sacrifice the old and infirm, for profit and to stimulate the economy...”²⁴⁰ This of course wasn’t true, but could be used by the media alongside similar statements for inflating someone’s alleged Nazi-sociological or fascist tendencies towards methods of eliminating the older population. This simultaneously turns the attention away from mistakes made by the Government and its politically allegiant Crisis Headquarters in their inability to introduce and maintain protection measures. Certain sins and dilemmas of the government in dealing with the crisis may be understood and justified, but the refusal to admit to the mistakes and improve or change the measures, brought on new confusion and gradually decreasing trust of the public in the decisions and activities by the government and the Crisis Headquarters.

A particularly professional and humane comment by the CNN journalist Fareed Zakaria can be used as an example for analysis and interpretation on why and when people started to think pandemically alongside their thinking about the pandemic. This change additionally blocked the implementation of measures in global terms and in individual countries, depending on the importance given to the main goal – the health of citizens irrespective of interference by the political elite striving to keep its privileges and customs. Depending on the cooperation by some media (mostly social networks and online news services) the government accused “the others” of its own selfish interests, those apparently not following the proscribed measures thus sabotaging all efforts by the healthcare system and good intentions of the government and the elite. This again could be used for excuses that the coronavirus cannot be controlled and new and more strict measures should be imposed, while part of the privileged classes and those aspiring to be like them again broke the rules. This happened again and again.

Zakaria’s work *Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World* offers a range of interesting insights. He reveals good medical knowledge, but also the ability to include additional effects in his thinking, such as populism, limitations on travel and freedom of movement for people, goods and services,

239 V. Šonje, *Korona ekonomika*, p. 103.

240 Ibid, p. 12.

or the positive and negative sides of digital inventions during the challenges posed by corona. Zakaria notes that some topics such as equality, have been forgotten, and due to global lockdowns and breakdown of economies, this leads to the neglect of increasing global inequality and poverty. There is also a lack of empathy and real compassion for those most hit by the crisis, regardless of their continent, region, gender, age or state of health and health standard.

The people should listen to the experts – and the experts should listen to the people – Fareed Zakaria emphasizes, warning that numerous politicians and statesmen did not listen to the experts. Their approach was hypocritical and populist, as they claimed the experts can be calmly ignored.²⁴¹ This of course includes instances where the experts themselves, occupying the heights of their Mount Olympus, failed to listen to *vox populi* (already quite a *normal* approach taken by politicians) i.e. check up on their own statements, actions and theories in the feedback of everyday life and troubles of common folk.

Lessons and messages from the past, for the future

This seems strange and absurd, since it would appear that at the beginning of 2021, after one year has passed since the first victims of the coronavirus, there are no hopes for the end, or the weakening of the pandemic and its consequences. At the same time this does not include the significant part of the world population living outside of Europe, and North and South America. Experiences from history can prove quite useful when we analyse the overarching consequences and changes that happened in a similar way, first medically and then according to rules we noted in the writings of Malcolm Gladwell.

For example, the Spanish flu in fact does not provide us with a good comparison since this was a misfortune that literally wiped out parts of the already suffering humanity, especially in Europe, right on the heels of the catastrophe of the Great/First World War. Since this could surely be a theme for a separate paper, here we limit the similarities to the contagiousness and drastic changes in the population, without the factor of a global audience like the one that witnessed the birth of corona.

The historian Nikola Anušić very precisely and meticulously analyses the Spanish flu pandemic in northern Croatia, from demographic to close statistical indicators of the situation and its

²⁴¹ Zakaria, Fareed, *Deset lekcija za svijet poslje pandemije* (Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World), Fraktura, Zagreb 2020, p. 85. Zakaria notes that during his nomination at the 2016 election, Donald Trump claimed he talks “most with himself because he is very smart”, and later explained how he does not rely on experts because “experts are terrible people”. At the same time, Michael Grove, a British politician and advocate for Brexit, was asked to list economists who agree with his view that leaving the European Union would be good for business. He answered that “people in this country are sick of experts”... Trump and similar highly positioned politicians like the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson or Jairo Bolsanaro, President of Brazil and a plethora of others, expressed their contempt for expertise before the corona crisis as well, but their “stumbling” and “imposed populism” in manipulating the people in the name of that same people, has proved to be particularly fatal for hundreds of thousands of people during the corona crisis.

consequences. As an introduction to the analysis of events in northern Croatia, an area that was hit in particular like the poorer parts of Europe, he talks about the new variant of the influenza A virus, of a mysterious origin, that spread over the world in three pandemic waves, infecting over half a billion people and killing 50 to 100 million across the world. “No pestilence, war or any period of hunger in human history has ever before killed such a great number of people in such a short period of time. The great Spanish flu pandemic in 1918 was the strongest global demographic earthquake the world had ever experienced.”²⁴²

We emphasize the apparently absurd circumstances, as Anušić notes, that such a great and dramatic watershed for a large proportion of humanity, was later almost forgotten?! The scientific and historiographic interest for the greatest pandemic in history soon almost disappeared and overviews of world history rarely mentioned the Spanish flu pandemic, while some studies on World War I don't even mention it. Anušić is surprised by “its swift and total disappearance from the collective memory of humanity. As noted by R. Collier, there are no songs, legends or works of art inspired by the great pandemic in the cultural history of the world and references to the Spanish flu in world literature, even among the famous contemporaries of the pandemic, are so slight they don't deserve to even be mentioned... we might say that today people on average know more on the Black Death of the 14th century than the Spanish flu at the end of World War I.”²⁴³ In the period between the 1957/58 Asian flu pandemic and the 1968/69 Hong Kong flu pandemic there was some increasing interest in studying the Spanish flu.²⁴⁴

Krastev also discusses this topic, noting that the Spanish flu might have killed more people than the First and Second World War in total – about 67 million people, as opposed to the approximation that the “Spaniard” killed between 50 and 100 million (according to different sources). Laura Spinney points out that most answers to the question on the greatest misery of the 20th century fail to mention the Spanish flu.²⁴⁵ Krastev notes that most scientists/historians have forgotten about this epidemic. In 2017, WorldCat, the largest catalogue of books in the world, listed about 80 thousand books (in over forty languages), of which only 400 (four hundred) were on the Spanish flu, in only five languages. The question is – “why do we remember wars and revolutions, and forget about

242 Nikola Anušić, *U sjeni velikog rata. Pandemija španjolske gripe 1918.-1919. u sjevernoj Hrvatskoj* (In the Shadow of the Great War. The Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918-1919 in Northern Croatia), Srednja Europa, Zagreb 2015, p. 1.

243 Ibid, p.2.

244 The work of the doctors Jeremić Rista and Jorja Tadić “*Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnika*” (Towards a History of the Health Culture in Old Dubrovnik) provide us with an interesting confirmation that after the Spanish flu epidemic calmed down, there is a lack of historical data, i.e. there are holes in the collective written memory, unlike for example, the data on the 14th century plague. The valuable historical heritage of Dubrovnik is a source of knowledge on numerous epidemics ranging back to 871, but it was in the 14th century that consequences of up to ten epidemics and the appearance of the plague are described in more detail. The archive also describes in detail numerous epidemics of the 15th and 16th century. See chapter Epidemics and Sanitation, pp. 65-111. What will happen with the official archives on Covid-19?

245 Laura Spinney, *Blijedi jahač: kako je španjolska gripa 1918. promijenila svijet* (Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How It Changed the World), VBZ, Zagreb 2019.

pandemics, although they also change our economies, politics, societies and city architecture just as thoroughly”.²⁴⁶

It might seem somewhat strange or irrational to now take the work of a novelist, G.G. Marquez, and his *Love in the Time of Cholera* written in 1985, for the purposes of a broader and more creative analysis of the subject of pandemical thinking and its causes as well as the (long term) consequences. At first analysing a love story at the turn of the 20th century in the Caribbean may look like “missing the target”.

Marquez won the Nobel prize three years before this novel, and the silent questions on the reasons for this comparison may become clearer if we try to find the relation between a fictitious love during the cholera epidemic that actually happened, and the current real emotions and corona pandemic. This disease of the 21st century has already caused unforeseen changes and will in the future influence our emotions ranging from love to hatred.

The novel in fact focuses not on the medical aspects, but on the love relationships and triangles during emergencies. It would be more true to say that it focuses on a somewhat old-fashioned, but quite modern obsession with how things and emotions of fear, love, wonder and expectation, look during times of crisis, especially when we are not certain what is even happening. It should be said that the term cholera in Spanish (*cólera*), can also mean passion or anger, similar to the English adjective *choleric*.

However, why should we use a novel in a discussion like this and find similarities other than the six-letter words (cholera-corona) that give these infectious diseases their names? We do not mention this novel in terms of history (medicine) or historicity of the actors, locations and similarities between the main characters and our lives at the end of the second decade of the third millennium. The more important message is how today’s actors, individuals and the whole society (as well as the media), are facing and will face changes, that are entirely unexpected but at the same time not so surprising.

Will we (ever) forget about the pandemic?

What is the element in which we reinforce the memory and remembrance of the past in terms of the current “passionate” character and background of modern media during the corona crisis? We can use the words of this famous novelist – “From the time the cholera proclamation was issued, the local garrison shot a cannon from the fortress every quarter hour, day and night, in accordance with the local superstition that gunpowder purified the atmosphere. The cholera was much more

246 I. Krastev, *Pandemija nostalgije* (The Nostalgia Pandemic), p. 10. Laura Spinney also adds an interesting note that “it is easier to count those who have been killed by bullets than by the coronavirus.” But there are numerous disagreements and doubts about recorded victims of the coronavirus and the mortality rate, presented in different media, ranging from traditional print press to online news. The criteria are sometimes unclear in media texts and there is a variety of comments and statements by experts, epidemiologists and politicians, who act as official interpreters of the consequences and current news on the coronavirus.

devastating to the black population, which was larger and poorer, but in reality it had no regard for colour or background. It ended as suddenly as it had begun, and the extent of its ravages was never known, **not because this was impossible to establish but because one of our most widespread virtues was a certain reticence concerning personal misfortune**” (text bolded by N.V.).²⁴⁷

The loves in this old novel and our everyday life do not need to be human in their depth or passion, and in their impact on our emotions and impulses for love, anticipation, hope, or dependence. In the historical novel these are human loves, and for us these are media loves, the evidence given by “those in the media sphere” that oxymorically love and hate us at the same time.

During the time of corona these are then “media loves to be recognized, developed and revealed in the relationship between the *public* (made up from individuals) and the *state* of the media, that once served as correctives and mirrors while now they are constructors and active partners to social elites in shaping our mental capacities of (failing to) understand what is happening to us or what has happened to us.”²⁴⁸ Or, as noted by Marquez and the previously mentioned authors, if love and media can change our emotions and ways of thinking and behaviour, they also produce the oblivion of crisis and disasters, and warn indirectly that we should already start thinking about the future post-pandemic thought.

As there have already been repeating periods of great epidemics and multilevel crises throughout history, we should start wondering – what next? We should not forget that we have been “warned” multiple times, in the modern era also through the inescapable role of the media that participated in these chaotic phenomena. We should also learn from the reactions of individuals and the society in recent health crises that brought fear, vaccinations and the humiliating and necessary quarantines and intervention costs. As if following an experiment, media-political psychoses relating to world events appear cyclically – the Western Nile virus in 2002, SARS in 2004, bird flu the following year, swine flu five years later. After a short break, here comes 2014 and the Ebola virus, Zika virus in 2016 and finally Covid-19 which seems to be turning into Covid-21.

The role of rulers (whether by name or actual characteristics), elite groups and social classes during the corona crisis will probably need to be judged and evaluated in the years that follow. However, even now, alongside analyses from the period before the coronavirus, we should note the warnings and statements that served as (now particularly necessary) guidelines and frameworks for professional and ethical judgements on the actual role of some media or mainstream media in the global medical, physical and mental *lockdown* we are currently experiencing.

In a particularly insightful and uncommon way, Sead Alić exposes this role of media institutions alongside the technological development of the media, in his comment that centralized media

²⁴⁷ Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Ljubav u doba kolere*, V.B.Z., Zagreb 2018, p.128; (Love in the Time of Cholera, translated by Edith Grossman; Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1988).

²⁴⁸ N. Vertovšek, *Drveno željezo medija*, p. 156.

houses for publishing books and newspapers “helped” begin the First World War. The radio as a media had a similar role in World War II, while mass media enabled and developed totalitarian systems of the 20th century, as they encouraged the extermination of whole nations and fighting those who think differently.

In several instances Alić therefore emphasizes how philosophy of the media is necessary to truly uncover the hellish nature of the media body and spirit, as well as the vicious symbiosis and misuse of media and technology development. “Human responsibility for every uttered word is multiplied with each technical means that multiplies this word... the task of every serious opinion is then to question the influence of media on the behaviour of individuals and groups, the influence of technologies on human experience and how the multiplication of messages impacts medio(demo)cracy. The manufacture of lowly passions in media consumers is a logical product of liberal capitalism. The consequence is a state of war waged on multiple levels in multiple forms and among different interest groups, organizations and institutions. Television likes wars and helps them, as *Bilwet* would say – survive. But not just the wars waged along different latitudes, but also those within our deep or shallow souls.”²⁴⁹

So if we wonder where we are now and where we are going at the beginning of 2021, it is better not to read and watch frantic forecasts or crazy clowns of modern mass media. We must steer clear of social networks psychopaths, as well as lower our dependence on “serious”, otherwise distinguished experts and politicians with some sense of responsibility. We must recognize those who have sensed like vultures that the coronavirus also brings fear and lack of knowledge – which is their favourite food. Existing hunger nudged into action comedic souls and dangerous couch-generals as well as mental masturbators, frustrated careerists and unrealised instigators of fear and stupidity.

Ivan Krastev already talked and wrote about the deep changes that would be introduced by Covid-19 in modern economy, politics, way of life and everyday relationships. He envisages the dwindling power of the U.S., and the need to transform the European Union if it wishes to keep its integrity after the corona crisis. He sees the past century as a century of separation, marked by the disintegration of globalization trends, and the coronavirus as a crisis and challenge in which one needs to act much faster and wiser than it has been achieved in certain countries, regions, continents or the world as a whole. “I was certain that the world would change, but I did not think that the direction of these changes was predetermined. I also knew our predictions were less reliable even than those first tests for the virus during the early days of the pandemic.”²⁵⁰

In analysing what might actually happen, Krastev offers a careful selection of seven lessons following the emergence of the coronavirus, and later (after lockdowns) he rephrases them as seven paradoxes. The analysis goes deeper but this short summary can provide an overview of the veils that obscure

249 S. Alić, *Masmediji – zatvori bez zidova*, p. 33.

250 I. Krastev, *Pandemija nostalgije*, p. 17. When he discusses the changes brought on by the coronavirus and those it might still introduce, Krastev brightly cites the novelist Stephen Leacock and his *Nonsense Novels*: “Lord Ronald said nothing; he flung himself from the room, flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions”.

our vision. The first paradox is the discovery of the dark side of globalization, to which the pandemic simultaneously acts as an “agent”. The second one is the increased speed of deglobalisation trends but also the revealed limits of renationalization. The third paradox notes that in the early phase the fear of the virus encouraged a state of national unity in various countries, but in the long run it actually deepens existing social divisions.

In the fourth paradox, democracy has been put “on hold” – in the beginning people gave all authority to their governments without question, but the suspension of civil rights will lead to a resistance when health problems are replaced by economic, social and psychological ones. The fifth paradox is the non-participation of the EU during the early stages of the pandemic and the way it almost ignored the problem, but the danger lies not only in new territorial *brexits* but in the fact that the Union itself might become irrelevant. The sixth paradox shows that the pandemic encompasses three earlier crises – the war on terrorism, the refugee crisis and the financial crisis, but at the same time it re-examines and makes possible different outcomes of the final story. The seventh paradox deals with the relative autonomy of individual countries and healthcare systems which led to a situation in which Brussels first represented a symbol of openness and autonomy, but then strict lockdowns and stronger integration became possible in some spheres.

Techno-feudalism and the repression of reality

All of this together reveals influences by several emergency aspects that encourage one another although this has mainly been seen as the process of deglobalization. The crisis of repression and impression of another reality both relate to the information, communication and production environment, the current economic situation as well as forecasts that appear grimmer and worse than the consequences of the pandemic. Maybe that is why mass media, especially those partners to autocrats and unrealized dictators, do not like to talk about this – although fears and anxieties are their sustenance, as they gently avoid the topic of economic disasters.

Is this the media-animalistic instinct through which they sense there is a greater cause for fear than the one they produce every day? However, this Fear might truly scare the media themselves, lulled by news websites and social networks with their heights of hypocrisy and fake news. Do they still think they are immortals of the media, capable of surviving anything? They seem to believe that mere mortals, especially users of social networks, will forever be blinded by their “gifts”, but once they wake up, this might lead to bigger changes in the relationship towards large technological and media companies.²⁵¹

251 Jeffrey Tucker from the American Institute for Economic Research warns that WhatsApp users are choosing other services for encrypted messaging ever since the Facebook-owned app updated its Privacy Policy. He notes that some companies are losing the trust of their customers and “this is actually an important moment on the technology market of social media.” <https://www.logicno.com/politika/zbogom-big-tech-ljudi-gube-povjerenje-u-platforme-drustvenih-medija-tvrdi-ekonomist-za-boom-bust.html> More time will be needed to evaluate the extent and reach of these trends, not only as a reaction to the blocking of Donald Trump.

What of the times after the pandemic? This is a question with certain “traps”. The first one relates to how we have been soothed and distracted – especially by the media – with the notion that this is some “new normal” which would one day in the bright future become the “old normal”. This helped not so much in overcoming the fear and anxiety about corona, but in promoting the hope that all of this would end before the summer of 2020. But as it often happens in fairy tales, especially ones spiced with the predatory aspect of the media, the wait for the new tipping point was prolonged into the autumn and winter of that year, and the whole cycle practically began again at the beginning of 2021. Only now instead of endless discussions on mask-wearing and social distancing, we had the vaccines business, discussion on their form, country of origin etc., the more absurd the better.²⁵²

It would be more correct to expect a “new abnormal” instead of the old normal, if we even need such slogans and sayings. Expressions such as “stay home” or “be responsible”, were compromised (regardless of their good intentions) mostly due to rule violations or inconsistencies, especially in the case of the privileged classes who through violation of the rules during the corona crisis showed their power and special status. They held the power to act according to their own whims, different to what they publicly declared. This unfortunately is a custom inherited from the past, because times of crisis exist, we might say ironically, so that the quasi-elite might show its power and protected status.

And so, following the second wave, it seems that we (again?) ask ourselves, will this ever end? When will the strictest measures stop? Is there another tipping point in store for us – if not “something better”, then definitely “something different”? Some kind of “end” of the pandemic seems possible with warmer days in the Northern Hemisphere, but it remains to be seen whether after the summer passes the old reflex will again crop up, moulding the opinion that an authoritarian approach (or should we say, dictatorship) is just the thing that the confused flock needs.

New social experiments may be next, probably until all the types and forms of vaccines are sold, and the second and/or third doses given, while “the best vaccine” will be determined depending on the ideological and (geo)political situation. If there was a tipping point for pandemical thinking, what can be said of the tipping point at the end of the pandemic cycle, which is always welcome, given the appetites and wishes of the great controllers of our world? This role might be played by new variants of the virus, new viruses, new experiments, but without the detailed analyses and

252 A whole separate paper might be developed on the lucid behaviours and statements by our most prominent experts, for e.g. Krunoslav Capak, director of the Croatian Institute of Public Health. At a press conference of the Crisis Headquarters he said the coronavirus vaccines are not wasted because actually six doses can be extracted from one Pfizer vaccine bottle instead of five as noted by the manufacturer. “Colleagues reported that they managed to get out six or seven doses. We asked for an explanation and Pfizer said this is possible because they had received complaints from other countries. Then they said we would now be charged for 6 doses per bottle” – Capak said. Asked by the journalists how it was possible that the manufacturer was unaware of this fact before, he merely replied “Ask Pfizer...” Available at: <https://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/capak-javili-smo-pfizeru-da-iz-jedne-bocice-mozemo-navuci-sest-doza-cjepiva-sadnam-vise-naplacuju-1461210>

evaluations of what actually happened previously. There is a possibility that everything will be simply forgotten, like those lessons from epidemics of the past.²⁵³

We showed how Malcolm Gladwell sees rules of emerging epidemics not only in the medical sense, but within the beginnings of new trends, movements and changes in behaviour, habits and thinking. Common rules for the coronavirus, or new trends in fashion in music, as well as important and key changes in psychosocial environment in general, are actually similar and comparable. They are influenced by global changes, but also by small social and economic details which may suddenly – and contagiously – spread to unexpected areas and aspects of life. “Epidemics are strongly influenced by their situation – by the circumstances and conditions and particulars of the environments in which they operate. This much is obvious. What is interesting, though, is how far this principle can be extended. It isn’t just prosaic factors like the weather that influence behaviour. Even the smallest and subtlest and most unexpected of factors can affect the way we act.”²⁵⁴

The special and specific combination of various circumstances, things and facts, may lead to great changes, not only in the health and economic sense, but within the system of thinking, ethical frameworks and seemingly small and unimportant details. Just as in other great epidemics and pandemics, the cause, in this case the Covid-19 virus, is very small, but in the end it very abruptly and dramatically changes the physical and mental capacities of numerous human beings. The return to something “old” is practically impossible, as we are taught by history, and remains at most – a form of nostalgia.

Before Covid-19 the world only seemed to be better, freer and always promoting progress, although warnings already existed, and not only in terms of new epidemics (as we previously listed several different viruses of the early 21st century). This was something the media earnestly and continuously warned us about, and this included the more serious and mainstream media as well as news websites that sprung like mushrooms after an international rainfall. Fareed Zakaria notes that after the Cold War, the new international system was determined by three forces – the geopolitical, economic and technological, reflected in American power, the free market and IT revolution.

All this, aided by globalization, seemed to be leading towards a better and more successful world. But it was still a “world filled with crises – some of which may spin out of our control. These include the Balkan Wars, the Asian financial crisis, 9/11 attacks, the global financial collapse, and now Covid-19. Although all of these constitute different crises, they all have a common key element.

253 Prime Minister Johnson said that the new UK variant of the virus is “70 percent more infectious than the original” (!), which was immediately reported by the diligent media across the EU. This overshadowed difficulties with the first vaccine that was supposed to come from this country but was then stopped when sudden negative side-effects were discovered. Although the WHO said that these new variants are not as dangerous as reported and that vaccines will be effective against them as well, the new Pandora’s box was again opened, bringing in new levels of fear. <https://www.telegram.hr/politika-kriminal/situacija-s-novim-sojem-eskalira-zemlje-jedna-po-jedna-ukidaju-letove-iz-britanije-svi-cekaju-potez-eu/>

254 M. Gladwell, *Točka preokreta*, pp. 25-26.

All of them appeared as *asymmetrical shocks* – something that begins small, but in the end sends seismic shockwaves across the world.”²⁵⁵

It should be noted that such asymmetrical shocks should be something we have already “learnt” as a society and as individuals, at least those of us for whom history was at least a schoolmate if not a life’s teacher. However, large parts of the masses and the general public, and even the elites – disregarding those who need international shocks for their international businesses – will need to make the physical and mental effort to better understand media messages, consequences of the crisis, totalitarian appetites or technological visions of the future. At the same time they won’t take into account that these are actually different sides of the same paradoxical coin. Sead Alić rightly notes – “totalitarianism is no longer a matter of different parties. It is initiated by technologies that require it. In order to establish a totalitarian society, one needs only a lack of critical faculties. The media initiate everything else by themselves.”²⁵⁶

Zakaria also establishes this well as a message for the future when he says – “The post-pandemic world is going to be, in many aspects, a sped-up version of the world we knew. But when you put life on fast-forward, events no longer proceed naturally, and the consequences can be disruptive, even deadly... life after the pandemic may be different across different countries, companies, and especially individuals. Even if economics and politics return to normal, human beings will not. They will have been through an unusual, difficult trial and have a sense of newfound, hard-won opportunity.”²⁵⁷

One needs to stay focused in this apparent possibility of choice – on the one hand, we will need to have a good long think in order to understand more deeply the unity and connection among different aspects of epidemics. On the other hand it remains to be seen if we will need to repeat all of this at some new tipping point – in terms of healthcare, economy, in the sociological aspect, technological, communication, philosophical... It would appear that this time we almost do not have any other alternative.

Do we really see a possible new tipping point – a type of *techno-feudalism* which we have already tasted in fragments? Another lockdown within territorial borders, no quick travels and new knowledge from other parts of the world through the media and social networks engulfed in everything – fake news stories, word of mouth with no critical analysis, dangers to the body, mind and heart, through stories and fairy tales on huge amounts of money, about noblemen, kings and princesses...

255 F. Zakaria, *Deset lekcija za svijet poslije pandemije*, pp. 18-19.

256 S. Alić, *Masmediji – zatvori bez zidova*, p. 31.

257 F. Zakaria, *Deset lekcija za svijet poslije pandemije*, p. 13.

Will we really wish to return to a sort of Middle Ages and feudal limitations on freedom, the movement of people, goods and capital? With the high level of technological development and focus where one smartphone or android seems like a special steel sword used for ending permanent depression, tension and anxiety, capable of striking the enemy before he strikes at you. What a tipping point for the future!

Merry Crisis and Happy New Fear!

Graffiti by an anonymous author on an unidentified wall, made during the corona crisis, photograph published on Facebook in December 2020.

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Točka preokreta – kada smo, zašto i kako počeli misliti pandemijski?

Sažetak

Između teorija manipulacija i zdravstvene nepogode koja je potresla svijet nalaze se brojni odgovori na pitanja znanstvenika, liječnika, političara i običnih ljudi – gdje je, kada, kako i zašto sve započelo? Obzirom na razne koncepte i ideje o svijetu **korona** budućnosti, bitno je stalno postavljati pitanja i ne (još) priklanjati se jednostavnim i zatupljujućim odgovorima. Svijet medija također je dostigao ili prešao točku preokreta – možemo li se uopće riješiti iluzija kako zaslužujemo nekakvo „novo normalno”. Ili, naprotiv, čeka nas svijet „novog nenormalnog”, ali i uz „staro nenormalno”. Pandemija, s jedne strane, mijenja i mijenjat će ne samo naš način ponašanja, već i naš način razmišljanja, zaključivanja i percepcije svijeta unutar nas i izvan nas. S druge strane, vraćamo li se dijelom i povijesno unatrag, pristajući na polu-diktature, zatvaranja, nekretanja, bezličja i skrivanje osmijeha. Zašto i kako bi filozofija medija mogla pomoći u ovom izazovu mišljenja u nekakvom novom **tehnofeudalizmu**? Hoćemo li nešto naučiti? – moramo se najprije sjetiti legendarne dječje TV serije **Ulica Sezam** i njene revolucionarne spoznaje - djecu možete naučiti nešto samo ako im privučete pozornost...

Ključne riječi: pandemija, kriza, medijske manipulacije, točka preokreta, svijet budućnosti.



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Archaism and Hegel in the Supply Reel

A Philosophical Look at André Bazin's Realism

Abstract

André Bazin's notion of cinematic realism has been either denigrated as "naïve" or been deformed to fit lines of thought in film studies that are at variance with the nature of his thought. However, as this article shows, there are strong influences of what one might call "archaic thought" in Bazin's conception of realism. However, there is another influence on his thought: a substratum of Hegelianism, which often ignored in the reception of his work, contributing to its misrepresentation. At the end, we conclude if we forfeit this residual Hegelianism, not only we can have a better grasp of what realism truly is, but we also can have a more synchronous relationship between cinema and other art forms.

Key words: *André Bazin, philosophy, philosophy of media, film philosophy, Hegel, Plato, archaism, French film criticism.*

Introduction

The richness of cinema in philosophical possibilities is vast. Perhaps one of the first to make full use of the philosophical range of cinema, both in the filmic practice as well as in the theoretical field, was André Bazin (1918–1958). To Jean Renoir, Bazin is “greater than his subject.”²⁵⁸ Although his writing is well known and his legacy as a co-founder of *Cahiers du cinéma* is tremendous, the appreciation of his role as a philosophical thinker of cinema is still underdeveloped. However, on closer examination, the basis of his thought has deep connections to philosophy. Researchers have acknowledged the profound impact that Modernist Catholic theology of the 1920s to the 1940s had in his formative thought, especially in relation to his early contributions to the Personalist journal *Esprit*, for instance.²⁵⁹ Many ignore this connection, as if it were only one more influence on him, as if it had no greater impact on the substance of his work on cinema and the nature of image—but that is misguided. The matter is that philosophy is at the very root of his greatest insight on film: the *realist* vocation of cinema.

However, many do not notice the profound philosophical vision behind that insight. That may have to do with the fact that his definition of realism is somewhat pious. As Peter Matthews stated, “his refusal to follow due [academic] process” made his realism amount to “little more than a loose patchwork of ideas that never coalesced into a stringent system but remained dangerously impressionistic.”²⁶⁰ As I will show below, I do not think that Bazin’s impressionism is a problem *per se*; the source of the problem is deeper. For instance, his use of the word “metaphysics” is choked with the twentieth-century reserve against immateriality. It is not that he is afraid of the word; but when he uses it, he gives it a *materialistic* definition. Therefore, we have in Bazin a transcendental kind of realism that never escapes the realm of materiality, even though Bazin clearly implies this “will” to transcendence.

In this manner, at the core of Bazin’s thought, we have a kind of duel: he is at once a Hegelian and a “Platonist,” as Professor Tom Gunning mentioned *en passant* in his essay in *Opening Bazin* (2011).²⁶¹ To me, it is capital to solve this problem because so far it has been his Hegelianism that has prevailed, which kick-started a two-fold ramification of Bazin scholarship, so to speak:

258 Jean Renoir, Foreword to André Bazin, *What Is Cinema?* 2 vols., tr. and ed. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 1:v.

259 Dudley Andrew, *André Bazin*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), Ch. 1. See also Peter Matthews, “Divining the Real: The Leaps of Faith in André Bazin’s Film Criticism,” *Sight & Sound* 9, no. 8 (1999): <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/andre-bazin-divining-real-film-criticism-overview>; Dudley Andrew, *What Cinema Is! Bazin’s Quest and Its Change* (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 113; and Philip Rosen, “Belief in Bazin,” in Dudley Andrew and Hervé Joubert-Laurencin, eds., *Opening Bazin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

260 Matthews, “Divining the Real.”

261 See Tom Gunning, “The World in Its Own Image,” *Opening Bazin*.

1. on the one hand we have the “spiritualists,” those who accepted Bazin’s theory of the emanation of a certain kind of spectral reality steams from the screen in the work of certain directors. The spiritualists generally accept that Bazin was the first to understand cinema’s capacity to translate spiritual reality by means of formal expositions by means of the image. This gave birth to the criticism of Rohmer, Truffaut, the early Godard, and the “MacMahon school” of criticism. “Reality” is *feeling* and *arousal*;
2. on the other hand, we have the “revolutionaries.” These are latecomers, emerged in the late 1970s and curiously understood Bazin’s “realism” as “possibility.” Perhaps the most flagrant case of this kind is that of Deleuze:

The idea of cinema as an adhesion to reality [*al reale*] in its unpredictability, and hence as a device in which its specified is that of remaking movement and duration,... precedes Deleuze’s thought, and is present in the reflections of André Bazin.²⁶²

These two views are still philosophically wanting. (1) makes cinema merely aesthetic and sentimental, at odds with the principle that art cannot be irrational.²⁶³ Mere aesthetics impoverishes the artistic experience because it reduces art to a mere pushing and pulling of our emotional buttons. (2), however, spouses an even poorer view, not only of art, but of the *kosmos* as a whole; one that makes politics the teleology of everything in existence—an “one-minded,” theo-epistemic view; in short, a vision aligned with what Eric Voegelin called revolutionary gnosticism, the congenial view of modernity.²⁶⁴ Not unlike those who use cinema as a foil for their philosophical views, this group uses cinema to read political ideology into cinema. As the *Cahiers* historian Antoine de Bæcque puts it,

It was said, after Bazin, that cinema is “all-natural” since the camera and the film stock are made with this in view, “reproducing” reality. But the *Cahiers* labeled this “reality,” as well as the technical apparatus made to reproduce it faithfully, were “entirely ideological.”... [The post-1968 *Cahiers*] were eminently revolutionaries.²⁶⁵

²⁶² Daniela Angelucci, *Deleuze e i concetti di cinema* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2012), 14.

²⁶³ Plato, *Gorgias*, 465A. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, “Art in Indian Life,” apud Brian Keeble, *God & Work* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2007), 6: “In every work of art there [must be] a combination of formal-intelligible... and material-sensible... factors, the former corresponding to the ‘ear’ as a symbol of angelic understanding, the latter to the ‘eye’ of sensational experience.”

²⁶⁴ Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, in *Modernity without Restraint*, ed. Manfred Henningsen, *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 5 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 175ff.

²⁶⁵ Antoine de Bæcque, *Les Cahiers du cinéma. Histoire d’une revue*, 2 vols. (Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma, 1991), 2:230–1.

Despite Professor Gunning's observation about Bazin's "Platonism" (more accurately, a traditional or archaic aesthetic view) intermingled with Hegelianism, I feel that this subject has not been so far explored in Bazinian studies, especially in the light of the fact that only six percent of Bazin's writings "have been republished in anthologies or edited essay collections."²⁶⁶ This means, in the long haul, that his definition of realism has not been fully understood or has not been fully explored, paving the way to mischaracterization. Not only that hurts a correct comprehension and appreciation of his thought, it also sets cinema apart from the study other art forms, such as painting or literature, that had the chance of being studied in a more archetypal and traditional light; that is, in opposition to the more sensorial and aesthetical light that, in the best of cases, researchers and thinkers use to interpret cinema. In this article, I will try to show the nature of Bazin's archaism, his Hegelianism, and what profit we might gain by discriminating these two aspects of his thought.

Bazin's Platonism (or Hegelianism)

Bazin's *What Is Cinema?* begins with his most famous text, "Ontology of the Photographic Image." It is the text that heralds his metaphysical and essential understanding of cinema. This "essential" understanding is aligned with a meaning that is comparable with the meaning that the Scholastics held on that word: essence meaning nature or substance. As St. Anselm puts it, "Therefore there is some thing which, whether it is called an essence, a substance, or a nature, is the best and the greatest, and of all the things that are, the supreme."²⁶⁷

Bazin refers to mankind's "mummy complex": our desire to cast out time and its corruptive nature to our bodies and to the world around us. To him, however, this need is psychological:

The Egyptian religion, which entirely directed against death, made survival dependent on the perennial preservation of the material body. This satisfied a fundamental need of human psychology: the defense against time. Death is but the victory time.²⁶⁸

To Bazin, the entire meaning of the plastic arts gravitates around this psychological need. It is necessary to literally "exorcise time,"²⁶⁹ and neither mummification, nor the labyrinths that make the finding of the sarcophagus an ordeal, nor the statuary that used to stand by the side of the mummy in the pyramids could prevent the action of time ultimately to destroy the material body or its depiction. It does not escape Bazin that plastic arts, from this point of view, were firstly thought as something *religious*: "Thus is revealed, in the religious origins of statuary, its primordial function: that of saving the being through resemblance."²⁷⁰

266 Marco Grosoli, "André Bazin: Film as Social Documentary," *New Readings* 11 (2011): 1. Of these, says Lorenzo Fabbrì, "only a handful [have] been translated into English" ("Neorealism as Ideology," *The Italianist* 35 [2015]: 184).

267 St. Anselm, *Monologion*, iii, in *The Major Works*, eds. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 14.

268 André Bazin, "Ontologie de l'image photographique," in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma ?* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987), 9.

269 *Ibid.*, 10.

270 *Ibid.*, 9.

Even though we are speaking of religion, and therefore of metaphysics, to some degree, Bazin still stresses the need of depicting being photographically as a psychological matter. However, this link between preservation and the body entails that elusive catchword: realism. “If the history of the plastic arts is not one of its aesthetics alone, but more so of its psychology, then it is really about resemblance, or, if you will, of realism.”²⁷¹ By saying this, Bazin decidedly places film as a *noetic* matter—that is, a matter of the mind (*nous*). Evidently, this does not rule out the thesis that the production of meaning in pictures is a double construct of the film itself and the spectator, as Margulies points out.²⁷²

It is not surprising that elsewhere, especially in his writings about Italian neorealism, Bazin stresses time and again that realism has nothing to do with aesthetics *per se*, but with moral prerogatives that the director lays on the screen: “In [neorealist] *mise en scène*, the moral or dramatic significance is never visible on the surface of reality; yet we can’t fail to sense what that significance is if we pay attention.”²⁷³ Therefore, the mind must work to decode the symbolisms disposed on the screen, in a holistic and integrative manner. These symbolisms are not esoteric in kind, but express a species of reality that only the camera can record. It is not corporeal reality, but a reality of the mind; a moment in time captured by the camera and given new life when projected. Cinema is a gateway to a realm of pure intellectuality; it is movement minus time, or *outside* time. Cinema conquers what apparently ancient religions could not do: to extract from history (i.e., from time) and replay this little piece of history over and over again. “For Bazin, [the] moral duty [of photography] is ultimately a sacred one – the photographic media are, in effect, preordained to bear endless witness to the beauty of the cosmos.”²⁷⁴

This is not distant from an archaic or traditional understanding of time and art. By traditional, I do not mean merely a “conservative” view of art, but something in the etymological sense that the word *tradition* implies: “to deliver something.” Likewise, one must understand “archaic” in Mircea Eliade’s meaning of the word: something that is basilar to the conception of something, close to what St. Paul the Apostle writes in Hebrews 5:12: “You have need to be taught again what are basic principles of the words [*tēn arkhēs tōn logikōn*] of God.” It is important to stress that, because Bazin’s contention that cinema partakes of the traditional notion of preserving time—or better yet, of taking man *out of time* and replaying a fundamental action, reviving it over and over—is the true kernel of his notion of realism, which is also behind the traditional philosophy of art as reintegration of eternity into history.

It is not by accident that he used Ancient Egyptian mortuary practices as an example, but he could have used exempla from anywhere in the ancient world. As Eliade explained, one of traditional

271 Ibid., 10.

272 Ivone Margulies, “Bodies Too Much,” in Ivone Margulies, ed., *Rites of Realism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 4.

273 André Bazin, “Germany Year Zero,” in *Bazin at Work*, ed. Bert Cardullo, tr. Alain Piette and Bert Cardullo (London: Routledge, 1997), 124.

274 Matthews, “Divining the Real.”

man's basic urges is to escape from the *terror of time* and the *terror of history*. In very traditional societies, true actions do not happen *in time* since they reflect cosmogenic gestures made by god the gods at the dawn of the Creation. That is because "human nature has nothing to do with time,"²⁷⁵ so every gesture in fact is the coming-to-be of a primordial gesture; better yet, every gesture is the coming-to-be of an *eidetic* gesture, the gesture that is a Form. The perfection of each gesture is what validates life, is what makes life worthwhile. "This conscious repetition of given paradigmatic gestures reveals an original ontology.... The gesture acquires meaning, reality, solely to the extent to which it repeats a primordial act."²⁷⁶ In this perspective, art is repetition of primordial gestures rendered by symbols and examples, and the book of nature is choked with symbols: "Hast thou not considered how God sets forth an example [*mathalan*]?" (Qu'rān 14:24). The making of art abolishes the perception and the flow of time, in the manner that it does not serve only to the individual delight, but also to the use of society. Rites and communal acts make use of statuettes, masks, paintings, and other artistic artifacts because they symbolize these primordial examples and acts, something we can readily understand when we attend the Mass of St. Pius V or a communal ritual in aboriginal societies, where often the chief or a high-ranking individual speaks from within hollow statues that represent the founder of the tribe or the first in a blood lineage.²⁷⁷

This is a feature that the "Ontology" stresses, in its retracing of our drive to make realistic images as something dating from our early belief as humans in magic²⁷⁸ (which was probably the first kind of science and religion ever).²⁷⁹ Following this thread, in one of his most superb articles, "The Evolution of the Cinematographic Language," he boldly proclaims there are "directors who believe in the image and those who believe in reality."²⁸⁰ When defining image, he again offers a very traditional definition: "By 'image' I roughly mean everything that can be adjoined to the represented thing in its *representation* on the screen."²⁸¹

This is a definition fundamentally founded on a traditional, archaic, and archetypal figural thought. Let me adduce Erich Auerbach's observations on image in representation in the traditional Christian theory of the figure:

Figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfills the first. The two poles of the figure are separate in time, but both, being real events or figures, are within time, within the stream of historical life.²⁸²

275 Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Christian & Oriental Philosophy of Art* (New York: Dover, 1956), 124.

276 Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos & History* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1956), 5.

277 Leonhardt Adam, *Primitive Art*, rev. ed. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1949), 54.

278 Bazin, "Ontologie," 11.

279 See Christopher Dawson, *Progress & Religion* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 81ff.

280 Bazin, "L'Évolution du langage cinématographique," *Cinéma ?* 132.

281 *Ibid.*, 132 (Bazin's *emphasis*).

282 Erich Auerbach, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, Eng. tr. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 53. Some readers may argue that Auerbach presents an historical interpretation of the concept of figure in Christian thought, since he goes on to say that "the two poles of the figure are separate in time, but both, being real events

Bazin's definition also is kindred with a cosmetic or ornamental theory of image. Pay attention: I said "cosmetic" or "ornamental," not "aesthetic." Why? As Bazin says, our imagetic drive is not aesthetic. To Bazin, images reveal above all a reality that is not exactly corporeal, but *formal*; that is, *eidetic*, in the Platonic-Scholastic sense of the word. Though Bazin does not use the word formal in this sense (on the contrary, he uses it in its modern meaning of "style," as opposed to "content"),²⁸³ I am not risking infidelity drawing this conclusion. "Ornament" and "cosmetic" have Latin and Greek etymologies; both stem from the words *ordo* and *kosmos*, which mean the same thing: order. Ornament means "the furnishing of anything essential to the validity of whatever is 'adorned.'" It "enhances its effect, empowering it."²⁸⁴ Let us see what he draws from the evolution of Western painting since early modernity—

It is true that universal world painting had reached the point of equilibrium between the symbolism and the realism of the forms. But from the fifteenth century onward in the West, painting started to diverge from its primordial aim of reproducing the spiritual reality through autonomous means and started to focus on a combination of spiritual expression with a more or less perfect imitation of the outward world²⁸⁵—

—comparing it with the traditionalist author Titus Burckhardt:

A rigorous perspective in painting inevitably involves a loss of color symbolism: by their dependence on an artificial illumination that goes hand-in-hand with spatial illusion, the colors lose their direct nature. A Medieval painting is luminous, not because it suggests a source of light situated in the world depicted, but because its colors directly manifest the qualities inherent in light; they are glimpses of the primordial light that is present in the heart. The development of chiaroscuro, on the contrary, reduces color into nothing more than the play of an imaginary light; the magic of lighting carries painting into a sort of intermediate world analogous to a dream, a dream sometimes grandiose, but one that envelops the spirit

or figures, are within time, within the stream of historical life. Only the understanding of the two persons or events is a spiritual act, but this spiritual act deals with concrete events whether past, present, or future, and not with concepts or abstractions" (ibid.).

As we have seen, that may have to do with the linear kind historic conception, something necessary in a religion that awaits the coming of the Messiah (Judaism) or that awaits His second coming (Catholicism), an experience that brings about the concept of faith. As Eliade explains, a story such as Abraham's sacrifice points out to the slight difference between "the traditional conception of the repetition of an archetypal gesture and the new dimension, *faith*," created under the spell of the successive defeats of Israel in the military field and "the pressure of history" (*Cosmos & History*, 108–9, 106; *emphasis* Eliade's). Since there is a relation of time between antitype and type, but since there is a relation between antitype, type, and meaning, it entails a creation of a third element: the archetype that confers meaning to antitype and type. This element is necessary because Judaism and Catholicism are religions that still are in the "eternal now" that characterizes archaic thought, even though they are more attuned to the movement of time than, say, Hinduism. Without it, we have nominalism and association between figures by common agreement and not by essentiality. See Ghazi bin Muhammad, "The Traditional Doctrine of Symbolism," in Martin Lings and Clinton Minnaar, eds., *The Underlying Religion: An Introduction to the Perennial Philosophy* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2007), 159n4.

283 See Bazin, "L'Évolution," 136.

284 Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "Ornament," in *Coomaraswamy 1: Traditional Art and Symbolism*, ed. Roger Lipsey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 244.

285 Bazin, "Ontologie," 10.

instead of liberating it. Baroque art carried this development to an extreme, until finally spatial forms, suggested by chiaroscuro, lose the almost tangible corporeity conferred on them in Renaissance painting; at this point color seems to acquire an autonomous quality, but it is color lacking in sincerity.²⁸⁶

As I have already pointed out, Bazin does not equate realism with corporeality, or with naturalism, or with verisimilitude with the material world.²⁸⁷ If we meditate on this aspect of his thought, his criticism of Baroque art is not surprising at all, for this was the period when Western painting started to fooling the eye for good, mistaking reality for illusion—the illusion of perspective, which Bazin calls “the original sin of Western painting.”²⁸⁸ With perspective, Western art gained the false impression that pictographic euhemerism is the *nec plus ultra* of reality, that there is a perfect overlap of what we see and the meaning of existence.

In other words, Bazin is criticizing nominalism in art. The particular and individual image drenched in the fake realism of perspective had claimed universal prerogatives; that is, by reproducing what our eyes see—we, immanent creatures—had now thought that we could render reality as it is by our imitation of the corporeal in a more or less perfect manner.²⁸⁹ In short, beginning with the Renaissance and culminating in the Baroque, Western art now *put its faith in the image*, not in reality. Those directors who put their faith in the image and try to fool our eyes and minds are continuing the corrupted nature of Early Modern art.

Cinema is thus the art of reality, and the best director is he who can portray reality on the screen. We have seen how Bazin clearly proclaims the sacerdotal nature of cinema, but how exactly does cinema profess reality? Here we enter in the second most problematic realm of Bazin’s thought (the first being his semi-Hegelianism), and probably that aspect for which you either take him or leave him. Cinema renders reality and reality is something impersonal; additionally, images have no value of their own, being rather the language through which reality shines through. In painting, artists are not required to transmit in their images how they see the world: they have only to portray things as they are with the essential forms they have in their heads—and that form is not exactly the natural, corporeal presentation. How can one portray Jesus Christ naturally?²⁹⁰ This is what led Bazin to love Romanesque and Gothic art, to the point of starting to prepare a documentary on

286 Titus Burckhardt, “The Decadence and Renewal of Christian Art,” in *The Essential Titus Burckhardt*, ed. William Stoddart (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2005), 138. See also Coomaraswamy, *Christian & Oriental*.

287 Hence it is quite paradoxical to read Professor Margulies acknowledging that Bazin is not concerned with verisimilitude but insisting on the importance of *corporeality* in his realism (see “Bodies Too Much,” 4).

288 Bazin, “Ontologie,” 12.

289 Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (New York: New American Library, 1976), 16–7: “The most characteristic expression of this subjectivism is the emergence of a perspective interpretation of space which, originating with Giotto and Duccio, began to be accepted everywhere from 1330–40. In redefining the material painting or drawing surface as an immaterial projection plane, perspective—however imperfectly handled at the beginning—renders account, not only of what is seen, but also of the way it is seen in particular conditions. It records, to borrow Ockham’s term, the direct *intuitus* from subject to object, thus paving the way for modern naturalism and lending visual to the concept of the infinite.”

290 See Coomaraswamy, *Christian & Oriental*, 23–60, 117–29.

Romanesque churches.²⁹¹ However, in cinema's case, the camera renders the image of the world mechanically, disinterestedly. The director has nothing to add to it. Thus we are led back to the principles of Medieval art. The camera has reality as an end. Cinema is teleological.

Bazin's Hegelianism

Every end can be perverted, though. Thus, even if, as we shall see, Bazin admits that one can express reality in various manners, there are certain prescriptions that warrant the conveying of reality on the screen. Thus we have one of the most dogmatic pieces Bazin ever wrote, "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage," where we read that very striking rule, "When the essence of a scene demands the simultaneous presence of two or more factors in the action, montage is ruled out."²⁹² What worries Bazin in this essay is the convention that cinema is editing (*montage*) and that meaning (reality) is a creation of the cutting room. Instead, reality stems from that which is before the camera, on the set. Reality is something that speaks directly to the mind of the viewer, something that is *under-stood*—something to which we subject ourselves as true. Again, this is not something that has to do with verisimilitude or naturalism: it does not matter if what we see in the image is materially real. It suffices that the *idea* (form) that the finished picture conveys what the director had in his mind while making it. Hence, when discussing a scene from *Crin-Blanc* (1953) in which the young protagonist is dragged by the horse, he says, "It is of no consequence that the horse we see dragging Folco in the long shot is a double for Crin Blanc, nor even that for that dangerous shot, [director Albert] Lamorisse had himself doubled for the boy."²⁹³

Peter Matthews says that the absence of academic strictness allowed Bazin to "free play in an atmosphere as yet unhampered by Jesuitical nit-picking,"²⁹⁴ thus making his thought "infinitely more concrete, nimble and flexible than the lucubrations of those obliged to flag each theoretical move with a sheaf of footnotes" (like this very essay); however, as I have quoted above, "his refusal to follow due process" made his realism amount to "little more than a loose patchwork of ideas that never coalesced into a stringent system but remained dangerously impressionistic." I fully agree with Matthews, though I do not think that his impressionism is the source of danger. The real danger is the double-sensed nature that his use of the word realism has, and that is not something necessarily impressionistic. It is worth reminding that Bazin is a mid-twentieth-century author; therefore, an author that on the one hand has a transcendent vision, but that takes immanence as a part of his thought. As we saw, Bazin equaled ontology to psychology, and thus slapped the nature of cinema to a purely human endeavor, even though it had cosmic consonances. It is metaphysics, sure—but in doubt of its own nature as metaphysics. An example of his psychologizing, for instance,

291 This is what he was working on at the time of his passing. See André Bazin, "Les Églises de Saintonge," *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 100 (1959): 55–58.

292 Bazin, "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage," *What Is Cinema?* 1:50.

293 *Ibid.*, 1:48.

294 Matthews, "Divining the Real."

is his constant use of the word “obsession”: he treats it almost as a value necessary to making art, paralleling it with man’s will to overcome time—a notion that continues to this day when researchers talk about Bazin and obsession in general.²⁹⁵ However, on closer examination, what he means by “obsession” is closer to the traditional notion of “intuition,” the perception of the “essential,” after which “the rest follows as consequences or as application of this perception to the various orders of contingent realities.”²⁹⁶ If we observe that to Bazin cinema has a sacred vocation, and that in archaic thought intuition is “the most immediate and the most elevated of all kinds of knowledge,”²⁹⁷ then it is natural that the drive of its “priests” inspire them to portray the symbols of the paradigm they intuit, a notion not very far from what Plato says about the rhapsodist in the *Ion*: they are *seized* (*kathekhomenai*) by a *drive* (*dynamos*) to bring out their art from within—or from above, for that matter.²⁹⁸

* * *

If for one part his impressionism opens the door to misunderstanding (by himself and by others) about the meaning of his thought, it also leaves open the possibility to access a freer range of forms the image can convey realism. We can explore that by examining his relationship with neorealism and Roberto Rossellini. As he says in “Defense of Rossellini,” he has a “strong dislike for a notion of neorealism which is based, to the exclusion of all else, on what is only one of its present aspects, for this is to submit its future potential to *a priori* restrictions.”²⁹⁹ This has to do, of course, with the fact that for Bazin, neorealism (and realism as a whole) is “before all else a kind of humanism.”³⁰⁰ Neither of the two men ever framed neorealism in a purely materialistic or corporeal contingency. Rossellini himself stated that *Giovanna d’Arco al rogo* (1954) was “neorealism in the sense he always intended”³⁰¹—and Bazin and the *Cahiers* readily granted that.³⁰² But if we compare a picture like *Open City* (1946), one of the films that heralded the dawn of neorealism, with *Giovanna*, it would be hard to convince anyone that there are not aesthetic differences between the two of them—as there are differences between *Giovanna* and *Socrates* (1971). From what I have exposed so far, we cannot deny that Rossellini’s pictures are all *realist*, even if they do not partake of the same aesthetic principles. As Bazin himself said,

295 Cf. Philip Rosen, *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 21: “The existential desire to defeat death... can only continue to exist as an obsession not as a rational one.”

296 René Guénon, *La Crise du monde moderne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), 69.

297 *Ibid.*, 85.

298 *Ion*, 340A.

299 Bazin, “In Defense of Rossellini,” *What Is Cinema?* 2:95.

300 Bazin, “Évolution,” 138.

301 In interview to Maurice Schérer [Éric Rohmer] and François Truffaut, *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 37 (1954): 12.

302 The association between cinema and morality, or at least with a certain ethical human posture, was not lost to the early Bazinian critics: Luc Moullet’s “tracking shot is a matter of morals” and Godard’s “moral is a matter of tracking shot” decline from Bazin’s moral vision of cinema. Rivette’s evisceration of Gillo Pontecorvo’s *Kapò* (1960) is by its turn the application of that moral vision (“De l’abjection,” *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 120 [1961]: 54–5).

There is not one realism, but several realisms.³⁰³ The word “realism” as it is commonly used does not have an absolute and clear meaning, so much as it indicates a certain tendency toward the faithful rendering of reality on film. Given the fact that this movement toward the real can take a thousand different routes, the apologia for “realism” *per se*, strictly speaking, means nothing at all.³⁰⁴

Therefore, Bazin recognizes that realism is not a matter of visual graphy; but this does not neutralize his preference for the long take, deep focus, marginalized editing, and the prevalence of rational decoupage over montage. In other words, it does not rule out “The Virtues and Limitations of Montage.” Take, for instance, Bazin’s texts on CinemaScope.³⁰⁵

We are getting closer to the source of his Hegelianism. Why is the long take potentially more cinematic than Soviet- or even classic-style editing? As Gunning observed, one can deduce Bazin’s affinity with Hegel in his teleological and dialectical conception of the history of cinema:

Bazin’s ideal of total cinema might ultimately resemble Hegel more than Plato since it reveals itself in the unfolding of the history of film as one stage sublates rather than abolishes the preceding one, a history that has not yet reached its end.³⁰⁶

It is a good guess, but if we are to label Bazin as a Hegelian to any degree, we will not find the justification in his historical conception of cinema; we should rather single out his preference for the long take.³⁰⁷

As I quoted above, Bazin does not believe in aprioristic contentions to filmmaking or film philosophy. Realism has to do with moral postures, but not with dogmatic statements within the film itself. In contrast with the determinism of analytical (classical) or Soviet editing, in which each combination of shots has only one possible meaning (and here often he referred to the Kuleshov experiment),

303 “William Wyler; or, The Jansenist of Directing,” *Bazin at Work*, 6.

304 André Bazin, *Jean Renoir*, ed. François Truffaut, tr. W. W. Halsey II and William H. Simon (London: W. H. Allen, 1974), 85.

305 Some of them collected in *André Bazin’s New Media*, ed. and tr. Dudley Andrew (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), Pt. 6.

306 Gunning, “The World in Its Own Image,” 124.

307 I am at variance with Gunning’s interpretation of Bazin’s conception of the history of cinema as Hegelian because Hegel did not think that the end of history will be spiritless. I think Gunning got it backwards: the current historical stage gets us a step closer to the end of history and of the final form of the spirit of history, a spirit that progresses with each historical stage. This is why, as Christopher Dawson observed, he is so important to the philosophy of progress in modernity (*Progress & Religion*, 33–5). In point of fact, Hegel thought that the final form of history was the Prussian State and he was the philosopher of Prussia. That was something he, and only he, could deduce. The gnosticist implications of this philosophy are clear and other writers have explored it at length. See Eric Voegelin, “On Hegel: A Study on Sorcery,” in *Published Essays, 1966–1985*, ed. and intro. Ellis Sandoz, *Collected Works on Eric Voegelin*, vol. 12 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), Glenn Alexander Magee, *Hegel and the Hermetic Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), and Jacques D’Hondt, *Hegel secret. Recherches sur les sources cachées de la pensée de Hegel* (Paris: PUF, 1986). The final form of the *spirit* of history was a thing that Hegel personally believed was revealed to him. To Bazin, the *idea* (mind the difference) of film was something expressly stated by cinema’s pioneers. Either way, there is no way to get around the fact that both Bazin and Hegel are teleological thinkers in some manner and to some degree.

Bazin preferred the tranquil liberty of the long take. That is because in the long take, the meaning of the shot was gradually produced with each revolution of the supply reel of the projector—or of the spinning hard disk. The projection of each still amounts to a new piece of revelation; it is a new manifestation of the spirit of the picture. The longer the take, the freer this spirit is. Each cut is deterministic because it curtails the progress of this spirit, a spirit that ultimately dominates the viewer. The late Brian Henderson said that

the odd quality of the intra-sequence cut that it *reflects back on the scene* (and on *mise-en-scène*) and defines it or qualifies it in retrospect. The cut which ends a long take—how it ends it as well as where—determines or affects the nature of the shot itself. Looked at oppositely, the *mise-en-scène* requires a certain kind of cut at a certain time. The two categories are strictly correlative. If one begins talking about the one, he ends talking about the other; and vice versa. The cut is the limit or boundary of the shot and this boundary enters into and determines the nature of the shot itself. Hegel says: “A thing is what it is, only in and by reason of its limit. We cannot therefore regard the limit as only external to being which is then and there. It rather goes through and through the whole of such existence.”³⁰⁸

I guess the implications are clear. Even though Bazin admits cinema is a language, he does so cryptically and at the twilight of his life.³⁰⁹ In his mind, the ideal director lets reality be, so naturally reality will let itself be captured by the camera, as if it were some kind of unicorn approaching a virgin unaware of the hunters behind her. This is why continuity and flux are the best manner to portray reality. A picture is something historical; each picture is a complex whole, made of the historical progression of each shot, and every shot has its own spirit. It is only when the picture is over that its supreme spirit reveals itself. On the other hand, as I stated, Bazin admitted that there are other ways to render realism. Here is his archaism, at odds with his Hegelianism. In archaic aesthetical realist thought, immanent existence declines from the *eidōs* of that individual thing. In Hegelianism, the *eidōs* (in reality, the spirit; we cannot talk about *eidōs* in Hegel) is something that unravels itself only a posteriori.³¹⁰

The progress of Bazinian film criticism eventually squared “reality” with “emotion.” The emergence of the *politique des auteurs* (an idea to which Bazin had his reservations) is an element in the development of this thought. Realism is the natural vocation of cinema. Though we do not know exactly what it is, we know that there are a number of directors who time and again made effective realist pictures without resorting to didactics. The *Cahiers* canon of working Hollywood-based directors in the fifties is a good indicator of the general understanding of what was realism and auteurism up to that time: Allan Dwan, John Ford, Samuel Fuller, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock,

308 Brian Henderson, “The Long Take,” *Film Comment* 7, no. 2 (1971): 9. Hegel’s quote comes from the *Shorter Logic*.

309 He added the famous “On the other hand, cinema is a language” line in 1958, but the essay itself dates from the mid-1940s (Dudley Andrew, Foreword, *What Is Cinema?* 1:xiv).

310 Or, as he liked to say after Sartre (who said it after Heidegger), “existence precedes essence” (Bazin, “Pour un cinéma impur,” *Cinéma ?* 102).

Henry King, Fritz Lang, Joseph Losey, Otto Preminger, Nicholas Ray, Douglas Sirk, King Vidor, Raoul Walsh, and Orson Welles. What do these directors have in common? Running themes in their works, certainly; but what else? *An honest use of emotions*. Not “cheap emotions,” not “shock” (which would be the *Cahiers* equivalent to *art pour l’art*), but an intelligent and articulate use of emotions in service of a general idea of cinema. As a matter of fact, Godard made Fuller say as much in *Pierrot le fou* (1965) in the “Film is a battleground” monologue. For one reason or another, Bazinian critics eventually chose to zero in on the “emotional” aspect of this intelligence, until the emergence of the gnosticist group of Bazinian or soft-Bazinian critics I singled out earlier.

Conclusion

We have seen how Bazin’s diffuse use of the word “realism” led to a myriad of possibilities and interpretations of his thought. While I may grant that it indeed made the debate richer and while I admit the “epiphenomenal” nature of his thought made him more open to various kinds of possibilities in cinema, it also led critics to misuse the art or to ends that are contrary to its nature. Worse, this sparse and non-rigorous use of the word could not prevent authors from seeing cinema as a lesser art that needs the furnishing of other disciplines to become intellectually and philosophically rich, or as a merely emotional or aesthetic art form that can survive purely in the beatitude and placidness of its visual delights.

To demand rigor from an author that wrote for the most part in magazines and journals might strike as too much. It may be our job to unpin whatever treasures there might be in his writings and explore his perceptions about an art that still is, now in its second century of existence, in its infancy, even though many declare that it is already dead.

Not only we might gain many insights about cinema and its relations to the other arts and with reality itself, knowing, studying, and researching about Bazin can make us refocus the situation of philosophy and the intellectual condition in the twentieth century. As I argued above, at the center of the theater of his mind there were two blatantly different beasts: archaic, or traditional, thought and Hegelianism. Many other authors, oftentimes far removed from cinema, also had this duel going on in their minds. A good example is none other than Martin Heidegger, as some recent studies revealed.³¹¹

In relation to the cinema, Bazin’s almost Medieval and Scholastic vision of art as an integral art in which images point out to substantial wholes may help us to position cinema in a more heightened place than it currently holds in relation to more ancient art forms. By conferring it the same objective value that traditional civilizations conferred to painting, sculpture, music, and drama (in virtue of their relations to ritual and religion), not only can cinema escape from its merely commercial

311 David Walsh, “Voegelin and Heidegger: Apocalypse without Apocalypse,” in Lee Trepanier and Steven F. Maguire, eds., *Voegelin and the Continental Tradition* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011).

value to which it was almost immediately associated with at the time of its birth, but we can also see films in a more traditional light, even though most of the cinematographic canon was produced under the spell of commercialism or capitalism. If a picture such as Raoul Walsh's *Saskatchewan* (1958), one of the great works of classic Hollywood cinema, has to make concessions to *topoi* of commercial cinema—especially concerning its decadent love story—this has more to do with our current historical cycle than with its association with the romantic genre it belongs to, where love stories swarm, but not in the decadent and almost misplaced style *Saskatchewan* displays.³¹² There is no reason why the arts cannot be synchronic to each other and Bazin might help us to reach that synthesis.

Arhaizam i Hegel u kolutu filmske vrpce

Filozofski pogled na realizam Andréa Bazina

Sažetak

Stav Andréa Bazina o filmskom realizmu ili je ocrnjen kao "naivan" ili je deformiran kako bi odgovarao linijama mišljenja u filmskim studijama koje su u suprotnosti s prirodom njegove misli. Međutim, kao što ovaj članak pokazuje, postoje snažni utjecaji onoga što bismo mogli nazvati "arhaičnom mišlju" u Bazinovoju koncepciji realizma. Međutim, postoji još jedan utjecaj na njegovu misao: supstrat hegelijanizma, koji se često ignorirao u recepciji njegova djela, pridonoseći njegovom pogrešnom predstavljanju. Na kraju zaključujemo ako se odrekemo ovog zaostalog hegelijanizma, ne samo da možemo bolje razumjeti što je zapravo realizam, nego možemo imati i sinkronijski odnos između kinematografije i drugih umjetničkih oblika.

Ključne riječi: *André Bazin, filozofija, filozofija medija, filozofija filma, Hegel, Platon, arhaizam, francuska filmska kritika.*



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³¹² "Romantic" here is understood in Northrop Frye's sense of the word. See Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 186–206.